

THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

February 2022



The Magazine of the
United Reformed Church, Hadleigh, Essex

SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning service starts at 10.30am

For more information about services,
please phone 01702 557678

Heaven

Fish (fly-replete, in depth of June,
Dawdling away their wat'ry noon)
Ponder deep wisdom, dark or clear,
Each secret fishy hope or fear.
Fish say, they have their Stream and Pond;
But is there anything Beyond?
This life cannot be All, they swear,
For how unpleasant, if it were!
One may not doubt that, somehow, Good
Shall come of Water and of Mud;
And, sure, the reverent eye must see
A Purpose in Liquidity.
We darkly know, by Faith we cry,
The future is not Wholly Dry.
Mud unto mud! – Death eddies near –
Not here the appointed End, not here!
But somewhere, beyond Space and Time
Is wetter water, slimier slime!
And there (they trust) there swimmeth One
Who swam ere rivers were begun,
Immense, of fishy form and mind,
Squamous, omnipotent, and kind;
And under that Almighty Fin,
The littlest fish may enter in.
Oh! never fly conceals a hook,
Fish say, in the Eternal Brook,
But more than mundane weeds are there,
And mud, celestially fair;
Fat caterpillars drift around,
And Paradisal grubs are found;
Unfading moths, immortal flies,
And the worm that never dies.
And in that Heaven of all their wish,
There shall be no more land, say fish.

Rupert Brooke (1913)

Rupert Brooke is perhaps best known for two poems: 'The Old Vicarage, Grantchester', which offers a powerful vision of dreamy English life before the outbreak of the First World War; and 'The Soldier', a patriotic sonnet written shortly after the outbreak of the war.

I came across his poem 'Heaven' for the first time whilst looking for a wartime poem to use in the November 2021 'Remembrance' edition of the magazine. At least one online observer considers it be another classic "with its quietly satirical tone and clever use of metaphor". 'Squamous', by the way, means 'covered in scales'.

Brooke was not a prolific poet having died in his twenties. He was commissioned into the Royal Naval Division at the start of WW1 and took part in the disastrous Antwerp expedition in October 1914. In February 1915, he set sail for the Dardanelles. On board ship he developed septicaemia from a mosquito bite. He died on 23rd April 1915 on a hospital ship off the Greek island of Skyros and was buried in an olive grove on the island.

From the desk of the Interim Moderator

Dear Friends,

When you read this letter, one month will already have passed in the new year of 2022. New Year is treated as the very fulcrum of change by people, even though change goes on all the time. The new year celebrations were muted this year but in general one sees a turnout in London with hats thrown into the Trafalgar fountain, even people splashing about in there and celebrations throughout the country, all gilded with the wishes and hopes that the new year will be better than the old. That of course is a matter of hope since the new year holds the prospect of the unknown but those wishes and hopes for a better year comprise the signature of the secular entrance to the new year.

We have all been greeting each other with the words, 'Happy New Year.' But what should be the Christian message at new year, where does the Christian look at new year in the face of change and what of Hadleigh URC as we come into 2022? I shall give you shortly what I believe to be the Christian greeting and the Christian guide for the new year and it will be taken from the Letter to the Hebrews.

In the very early years of the church in Jerusalem the year AD66 heralded a change that was permanent and disastrous for the church members in that city. In that year the population of the city attempted a revolt against the Romans with terrible results. The Romans, whatever their cultural heritage, and some of that derived from the Greeks, were an exceedingly cruel people – in the case of an underperforming unit in the Roman army every tenth soldier was summarily executed. The Christians of Jerusalem very wisely fled the city before the worst of the Roman onslaught, leaving home comforts, friends, the beauty of their city and hurried to an isolated area of the upper Jordan valley. They had lost everything. These people were known as Ebionites, which is the Hebrew word for the poor, and their loss of the city and its place in the history of the church was permanent. The revolt of AD66 was followed by an even more serious revolt in AD 126 and the city was turned to rubble.

Jerusalem was the natural leader of the Christian church as Christ had walked its streets, died and resurrected in Jerusalem. The church was headed by the lord's brother James until his execution by the authorities and then by a cousin of the lord.

But the absence of the Christian community there meant that Jerusalem lost its leading place in the church. It was never to recover, partly owing to the further revolt of 126 which the Romans crushed with even greater savagery but also for doctrinal reasons because the Ebionites, who were of course Jewish Christians, rejected the doctrine of the virgin birth, claiming that it was a mistranslation of Isaiah's prophecy which had merely predicted a young woman becoming pregnant. This put them at variance with the rest of Christendom, who professed to believe in the virgin birth.

Given the poverty, hardships and isolation of the dispersed Jerusalem church members, the way was then clear for Rome, with its association with Peter and Paul and its leading place in the empire, to emerge as the leading church centre, especially with the eventual conversion to Christianity of the Roman Emperor.

In all their pain and deprivation, the Ebionites received what we have as the Letter to the Hebrews. The future for the Ebionites was appalling: they had lost everything; possessions, relatives, friends, homes and the position of their church. Yet the letter gave them a message on how to face the future, what to hold to when facing the uncertainty of what was to come and within that message is a verse that should serve for every Christian who faces the unknown of a new year. We find it in verse 8 of chapter 13: 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today and forever.'

What did it mean? It could hardly mean a promise of an ideal future on the earth since the Ebionites knew differently. They did not suffer from the misunderstanding that I think affects so many people who have a rather distant acquaintance with our religion and imagine, mistakenly, that if they become followers of Christ everything in the garden will be rosy. That is not so: Jesus promises us himself no more and no less. The Ebionites' lives were of constant hardship and misery. Jesus promises his followers himself, no more and no less. The latter is very important. It meant that whatever the future was to throw at these people they had Christ with them and they had Christ when they finally passed from the pains of this earth. Paul once wrote: 'Ye are Christs,' something that applies through bad times as well as good.

Whilst people may say 'let the new year be better than the old' and cling to the hope that it will be so, the Christian says 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever.' The Christian cannot control the future any more than those who throw their hats into the fountain but the Christian can face the future with Christ. There is pain and suffering in the world and being a follower of Christ does not mean avoiding that but it does mean enjoying the presence of Christ

in whatever the new year brings and belonging to him both now and in the future

May Christ be with you throughout this new year, whatever it may bring you.

Your friend and Interim Moderator,

Jim

Rev. Dr. James Tarrant.

URC Youth Assembly round up: 22-30 January 2022

For the first time in two years, young members of the United Reformed Church (URC) gathered in-person for Youth Assembly. Held at Whitemoor Lakes in Staffordshire from 28-30 January, the theme of jubilee 'commemorate the past, celebrate the now and create the future' radiated throughout the event. The weekend included activities, workshops, worship, Bible studies, fellowship and opportunities for youths to get creative.

URC Youth's dedication to ecumenism was echoed throughout the Assembly with a constant reminder that the unifying of churches was part of their foundation 50 years ago. URC Youth also showed a joyful and renewed commitment to following their ecumenical legacy and invited ecumenical youth reps from the Quaker, Methodist and Pentecostal Church to participate in worship and their youth decision making.

Jo Harris, URC Youth Assembly Moderator 2022-2023, said: "Over this next year I hope to inspire young people to challenge themselves and take steps outside of their comfort zones much like I have taking on this role. As a very ecumenical person myself I would like to develop strong relationships with the Congregational Federation, Quakers and Methodist Church and also make steps to reach out to other denominations that URC Youth currently doesn't have links with to plant seeds of ecumenical teamwork."

Keynote speakers included Rev. Dr Michael Jagessar, Council for World Mission's Mission Secretary for Europe and the Caribbean, Rev. Fran Kissack, a former URC Youth Moderator and hospital chaplain, and Rev. Sam Sheehan, a university chaplain and Special Category Minister serving the 18-25 Project with the aim to explore how congregations can engage with young adults.

The keynote speeches and worship can be viewed on YouTube – search for 'URC Children's and Youth Work'.

Poster found in a Church in France... (translated):

"When you enter this church it may be possible that you hear "the call of God". However, it is unlikely that He will call you on your mobile. Thank you for turning off your phones. If you want to talk to God, enter, choose a quiet place and talk to Him. If you want to see Him, send Him a text while driving."

Submitted by Pamela George

From the Editor

Welcome to the February 2022 edition of the *Hadleigh Messenger*.

After the December/January magazine was published, we made the decision to suspend the coffee morning from 23rd December and the serving of refreshments after the morning service. The good news is that we will soon be restarting both activities (see below).

We also cancelled the services on Boxing Day and 2nd January but this was mainly because the number of people who indicated that they would attend was very low.

Royston, our Church Secretary, is still finding it difficult to arrange preachers and we are very grateful to a relatively small number of ministers and lay preachers who have led our worship over the last few months. We thank particularly Major Geoff Ashdown, Adrian Tinning, John Amos, Macrina Ejaz, Heather Brown and our Interim Moderator, Rev. Dr Jim Tarrant.

Finally, if anyone would like to help with the cost of producing paper copies of the magazine in 2022, I would be happy to receive donations. The suggested donation is £5 plus any postage costs.

Malcolm Brown



Preachers in February 2022

Date	Preacher
6 th February	Mrs Heather Brown
13 th February	Mr Adrian Tinning
20 th February	Mrs Heather Brown (with Holy Communion)
27 th February	Major Geoff Ashdown

COVID-19 precautions

At our Sunday worship, we are still maintaining a register for Track and Trace purposes with hand sanitisation, social distancing and ventilation measures. From Sunday 13th February, we are returning to wearing masks only whilst moving around and whilst singing but they need not be worn whilst seated quietly.

Coffee morning & refreshments after the service

The weekly Coffee Morning was suspended in December owing to the high case rate associated with the Omicron variant. We have been more cautious than other churches but I am glad to report that the Coffee Morning will restart on Thursday 17th February. We hope to welcome some old and some new friends so please spread the word.

In line with the decision to restart the weekly Coffee Morning, refreshments will again be served after the Sunday morning service starting on 13th February.

Flower rota

Owing to uncertainty created by the pandemic, the flower rota has not been operating since the church re-opened in May 2021. However, from now on, donations towards the cost of flowers will be gratefully received. A donation can be used for flowers on a particular date, perhaps to remember a loved one's birthday or a significant date such as a wedding anniversary. If you would like to donate, please speak to Jean Reeve (01702 554907). A calendar list for the flower rota is now displayed on the vestibule noticeboard, in its usual place, and names may be added with a brief dedication, which will then appear in the magazine (from next month).

Malcolm Brown

St Martin of Tours, founder of Christian chaplaincy

St Martin of Tours (316-397 AD), whose feast day is 11th November, is credited as the founder of Christian chaplaincy. Unlike many early saints,



Stained glass window at St Martin's Church, Stoney Middleton, Derbyshire

about whom we know little, we know quite a bit about St Martin of Tours, thanks to a writer named Sulpicius, who devoted his life to following Martin, talking with those who were involved in his life, and writing a

biography of him before the saint died. Sulpicius recorded that Martin was a bishop in Gaul (modern-day France) who shunned the privileged status of that role to live in a monk's cell in the wilderness.

Before Martin became a Christian, at fifteen he was forced to join the army of the occupying Roman Empire. One day Martin was on duty in Gaul when he noticed a beggar, freezing in the cold. Martin, moved with compassion, went to his aid. He took off his thick army cloak and cut it in two with his sword. One piece he wrapped around the beggar and the other he kept for himself.

This act echoes the 'Golden Rule' common to many spiritual traditions, which Jesus called one of the two greatest commandments: 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Mark 12:29). That night Martin had a dream in which he saw the beggar with the piece of his cloak on his shoulders. But in his dream the beggar was Jesus. Sulpicius records that in Martin's dream-vision, Jesus said to the angels, 'Here is Martin, the Roman soldier – he has clothed me.' This recalls the parable of the sheep and goats from Matthew's gospel: 'Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me' (Matthew 25:40).

This vision of Jesus as the beggar transformed Martin, convincing him to give his life in service to the poor and neglected in his society as a monk. Finally he was able to leave the army to take up his calling, becoming a fierce advocate for the powerless to whom injustices were easily done.

The people loved Martin and wanted him as their bishop, but Martin wanted to remain a monk and

refused to take the office. So they tricked him by sending someone to beg Martin to come to visit his supposedly sick wife. When Martin arrived in the city, he was carried by the crowd into the church, where bishops had gathered to consecrate him. The bishops were repelled by this dirty, dishevelled man and thought his unkempt appearance proved him unfit for the office. But the people insisted – they hadn't chosen Martin for his outward appearance, but for his compassion, humility and commitment to justice. Overwhelmed by the acclamations of the people, the bishops consecrated Martin as bishop of Tours.

Martin's activism for the poor and love of people was matched by his commitment to solitude and prayer. He developed regional spiritual communities as places of hospitality for anyone, regardless of background, who sought direction or sanctuary. He instituted the practice, which continues today, of the bishop making pastoral visits to each of his communities at least once a year. This visitation was significant at a time when those in authority, who lived in the towns and cities, often neglected country people.

He lived simply and humbly, resisting status-seeking for himself. When he died, Martin was buried at his request in the cemetery for poor people. The Frankish Kings kept Martin's half of the cloak he had shared with the beggar as a precious relic. The guardian of this cloak became known as the capellanus in Latin, derived from the word cappa, meaning a cloak or cape. Cappelanus came to the English language via Old French as 'chaplain'. The place where the relic of Martin's torn cloak was kept became known as the capella, which is the origin of the word 'chapel'.

St Martin of Tours, reputed as the founder of the vocation of Christian chaplaincy, is the chaplain's prototype. He often travelled to the countryside, meeting ordinary people neglected by town officials. So chaplaincy today is also a fluid occupation, not confined to a desk and appointment schedule, but mobile, unobtrusively engaging with people in their everyday life, particularly those in need of support. Chaplaincy is defined by the same compassionate impulse as the incident of Martin with the beggar, and chaplaincy sees such acts as sacred.

Kieran Bohan

MitE Chaplain of YMCAs Liverpool and St Helens

Family News

Jean Hodges

Sadly, Jean died in the early hours of 28th January at the age of 103. She was the oldest subscriber to the Hadleigh Messenger. (A photo of Jean, taken on her 103rd birthday, appeared in the October 2021 magazine.) Jean was the sister of the late Gwen Bentley, whom some readers will recall.

Jean was born and brought up in Hadleigh and was married at our church in 1956. An obituary will appear in the March edition of the magazine. No details of funeral arrangements are available at the time of writing.

We send our sincere condolences to Jean's son, John.

Prayer Reflection - Growth and Rebirth

Observe how trees respond to the stress of Winter. In this country most retreat to their core and shed their leaves. Evergreens bend with the wind and have adapted their shape so that snow does not settle so easily on its leaves and branches. All, however, develop their roots ready for renewed growth when the climate improves. Pray that we have patience with those whose response to the challenges of the pandemic differs from ours. Ask, too, that we all rediscover our core faith.

Dig down into your root faith which enables you to stand firm despite difficult circumstances. Ask for guidance about how best we nourish our core belief in Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. Remember your joy when you first believed and look forward with renewed hope to the signs of rebirth both in nature and in society. May the church be at the forefront of renewal.

Rejoice in all God's people have done to help others during the pandemic. Thank God for the privilege and opportunity of service. Pray that the church as a whole and our congregation in particular is open to the movement of the Spirit so that we are ready to play our part in the spiritual renewal of the nation. Thank God for his patience with us all.

Prayer

Lord we pray for the renewal of our community and nation. May ever more people discover the truth of your love and our salvation in Jesus. Show us what you would have us do to work with you on this. May we be part of the answer to our prayer. Thank you Lord. *Amen.*

Beryl Hunt



URC News

Peter Pay

Peter Pay, Moderator of the URC General



Assembly, a former Synod Clerk and an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher sadly died on 18 December. He was a member of Salisbury URC.

Mr Pay had been living with a malignant brain tumour for some time and had bravely continued with his commitments until he was forced to step back towards the latter part of the 2021.

Rev. Clare Downing, Moderator of the URC General Assembly, said: "Peter has been a valued colleague and friend in various capacities over the years. His clear thinking and ability to ask pertinent questions has been a real asset to the life of the United Reformed Church. He brought a serious mind, tempered by a well-developed sense of humour to dealing with difficult issues. He will be much missed within Wessex Synod, the wider URC, and ecumenical partners."

Mr Pay grew up in the Kingston upon Thames area where his parents were active in the local Congregational Church. His parents had met and married there, and Peter served the church as a Sunday School teacher in his teens. One of his last commitments as Moderator was to preach at his childhood church. Ecumenicalism became important to him from early in his career: he attended his local Methodist Church while living in Midhurst where he ran a youth club and Bible group.

On moving to Brussels for work purposes, Mr Pay, and his wife Jo, who was brought up in the Catholic tradition, attended a Church of Scotland church. After returning to Britain, Mr Pay joined Wheatley URC where he was ordained as an Elder and then became an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher and started his work in the wider Church.

He worked for Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI, a former British chemical company) for about 30 years, initially as a marketing specialist in the paints division, and then as a training manager. Later, he worked as an overseas marketing

consultant in ICI's agrochemicals division. Mr Pay was granted early retirement at 50 and then spent 12 years working as an independent organisational change and management development consultant.

He served for 10 years as Wessex Synod Clerk, was a Trustee of the URC Trust and of the Wessex Trust, where he served as the Synod Ministry and Mission Fund Secretary.

He has served on the church's Training, Learning and Service (TLS) Management Group, Human Resources Advisory Group, Nominations Committee and Mission Committee, including a period as deputy convener. He became Moderator of the URC General Assembly, with Rev. Clare Downing, Moderator of the Wessex Synod, in 2020, and remained an active lay preacher.

Peter is survived by Jo, and their four children, Mark, Michele, John and Matthew, and grandchildren.

Remembering Norman Hart

Norman Hart, the Editor of Reform for 18 years



from 1977 to 1995, died on 19th September on his 91st birthday.

Beginning his career in 1953 as a graduate trainee with the Liverpool Daily Post, Norman found a love of 'light' writing,

especially theatre reviews, gossip columns and a column in the weekly women's page. Brought up as a Congregationalist, he had, in his words, a 'huge conscience about apartheid' and wondered if he could work as a journalist in Africa.

The Anglican Archbishop of Uganda wanted to start an English language newspaper and so Norman wrote, edited, produced and distributed New Day until 1965. Three years teaching journalism in Zambia followed, after which Norman went to the US for a year to guest edit Guideposts, a prestigious religious magazine.

A brief stint with the United Bible Societies in Stuttgart followed before he flew into London on a Saturday in 1977 to be interviewed for the role of Editor of Reform.

After his retirement, Norman continued as an editor of the Lion Walk URC monthly magazine, Lion Talk, sang in the church choir and continued as an elder and lay preacher in the local area.

Former GA Moderator elected President of Churches Mutual Credit Union

At its recent AGM, Alan Yates, a former



Moderator of General Assembly Moderator, was elected as the new President of the Churches Mutual Credit Union (CMCU), having been elected to the

Board of Directors in January 2020.

CMCU was established as a credit union in 2014 and offers mutually supportive finance, as part of an ecumenical partnership, to ministers, elders, church lay leaders and church workers. Its savers benefit from ethical investments and a dividend, depending on the prevailing bank interest rate, generated by loans. Its borrowers benefit from lending and credit with no hidden rates and no hidden charges, representing a major difference with borrowing from other financial organisations, such as high street banks and supermarkets.

Cardiff minister gains prestigious St John Ambulance award

Rev. Desmond Kitto, MBE, KStJ, Minister of St Andrew's URC in Roath, Cardiff, who joined St John Ambulance as a cadet aged 11 in 1961, has received the first aid charity's Ultra Long Service Medal and bar, marking



continuous service up to 2017.

Over the years Rev. Kitto has progressed through most ranks of St John Ambulance's uniformed section. In 2017, he was appointed a Trustee of the Priory for Wales and serves as principal officer of the Priory and chair of the People's Committee of the organisation.

As well as being invested by the Duke of Gloucester, as a Knight of Grace (KStJ) of the Most Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem in 2004, Desmond was also honoured as a Member of the British Empire (MBE) for voluntary service to the community in South Wales in 2008.

Rev. Kitto explained: "The service medal of the Order is awarded to volunteers and other eligible persons who perform properly recorded qualifying service over a requisite period of years. It was first introduced in 1885 and is the only British medal currently in use that depicts the head of Queen Victoria. The new gilt ultra-long service medal replaces the silver service medal after 50 years of qualifying service. Her majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Sovereign Head of the Order of St John, was presented with a similar gilt medal and three bars, in March 2020."

Celebrate URC's 50th anniversary with new all-age book

The United Reformed Church has created an



intergenerational book to help celebrate the church's 50th anniversary. Celebrate Together is a lively, colourful picture book designed for families to share together. The story, written by the URC's Head of Children's and Youth

Work, Sam Richards, and Ruth White, one of the Children's Youth Development Officers for the Wessex Synod, and illustrated by Mark Beech, tells the story of the URC and church life through a big party, with things to find out and questions to ponder. Each page has a flap revealing more about the URC, which came into being on 5th October 1972, with insights into the life and work of the URC today.

The book is available for free enabling local churches to give copies to every member and to everyone associated with the life of the church. Copies can be ordered through the URC Bookshop, for just a postage and packaging charge. Every church will receive a copy in the resource pack for local churches to kickstart the Jubilee year in January. The pack will include many other exciting resources.

An all-age service outline and prayer stations linked to the book will also be made available on the URC website, www.urc.org.uk/50.

Why you can probably keep milk longer than you think (and why you should)

Around one-third of the food produced globally every year never gets eaten. This waste often occurs along the supply chain before the food even reaches us. But consumers who throw away food because it's gone bad, or because they think it may have gone bad, are also responsible for a large proportion of food waste.

All food production results in greenhouse gas emissions. So wasting food is not only bad for your pocket – it's also bad for the environment.

Recently, Morrisons supermarket announced that it will move from putting “use by” to “best before” dates on milk. It says this could save seven million pints of its own-brand milk from being wasted each year.

According to British charity WRAP, milk is the third most wasted food item in the home (after potatoes and bread) with more than 490 million pints thrown away in the UK annually. So changing the advice to encourage people to keep their milk for longer is likely to be good for the planet. But is this move safe for consumers? The short answer is yes.

First, let's look at the terms “use by” and “best before”, which have long confused consumers.

“Use by” is the date until which the manufacturers know the product will remain safe. This is based on scientific analysis which has determined how long a product can be stored before there's a risk that any dangerous microbes could reach levels that will cause harm. You'll see use-by dates on foods that can pose a danger if they're stored too long, such as cooked meats and dairy products.

“Best before” relates to the quality of the product. This date tells you how long you can keep something before the product starts to taste less fresh, or decline in quality (for example, how long you can store bread before it gets a bit stale). But this doesn't mean the product isn't safe to eat after this date. You're likely to see best-before dates on preserved products, such as tinned or frozen foods, which you can safely keep for a long time.

What about milk?

You might think milk should sit firmly in the “use by” category – it is a dairy product after all.

But actually, shifting to a best-before date is safe for consumers, thanks to a process called pasteurisation. During pasteurisation, the milk is heated for a short time to a high temperature. This kills bacteria which can be present in raw milk and cause infections in humans (often called “pathogens”).

Although the pathogens are killed in this process, some non-harmful microbes remain in pasteurised milk. So milk is stored at a low temperature (in the fridge) to slow the growth of these remaining microbes. Nonetheless, they will still grow, and it's the growth of these non-harmful bacteria that cause the milk to spoil. As the microbes grow they produce enzymes to help them break down the milk, which causes the milk to curdle and produces the “off” smell we associate with spoiled milk.

Notably, for pasteurised milk (and we need to be very clear that this **ONLY** applies to pasteurised milk) even when the milk starts to go off, there's no evidence the microbes growing in the milk will cause you any serious harm. If you drink a significant amount of spoiled milk, you might find yourself with an upset stomach but there's nothing to suggest spoiled milk causes infections or severe illness.

The best-before date is the manufacturers' best estimate of how long the milk should last in the fridge before you can detect any spoilage, either by smell, taste or both. Every batch of pasteurised milk is different and will have more or less of these non-harmful bacteria remaining in it, so in reality the best-before date is an estimate of when the milk with the most bacteria left in it will spoil. But many batches of milk will be fine for much longer than this – hence Morrisons' change in advice.

The sniff test

Morrisons have advised using the “sniff test” to see if the milk is safe to use. This is sensible advice. If there is no detectable evidence of spoilage, the milk is safe to drink.

If you've lost your sense of smell, or don't fancy sniffing the milk, simply pour some into a cup of boiling water as if you were making a cup of tea. If it curdles then it's started to turn; if it mixes in normally then it's fine to use.

Should you throw milk away if it's started to spoil? If you're just using it for drinking, it's probably not going to taste too good. But milk that's starting to turn can be safely used as a substitute for buttermilk, yogurt or sour cream in recipes like rice pudding, pancakes and scones, or can be used to make cheese sauces.

Clearly if the milk has really spoiled (if it's fully separated, cheesy and slimy), it should be thrown away.

Once again, this advice applies only to pasteurised milk. Raw milk can still contain pathogens and should never be consumed beyond the use-by date.

Also, because different foods naturally contain different types of microbes, this advice cannot be generalised. In other kinds of foods pathogens can reach dangerous levels without any real detectable evidence of spoilage. So generally, the advice is to stick to the use-by date.

But when it comes to pasteurised milk, we can balance expiry dates with our common sense, and reduce the impact of food waste on the planet.

Cath Rees

Professor of Microbiology, University of Nottingham

Published on The Conversation website (<https://theconversation.com>) on 21st January 2022.

One use for milk past its 'best before' date – Buttermilk scones

A recipe by Nigella Lawson from the BBC Food website

Until you have made a batch of Nigella's buttermilk scones you won't have any idea how easy they are to throw together. Frankly, it shouldn't take longer than 20 minutes to make and bake them, from start to finish.



Ingredients

500g/1lb 2oz plain flour, plus extra for dusting
2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
2 tsp cream of tartar
2 tsp caster sugar
50g/2oz unsalted butter
25g/1oz soft vegetable shortening
300ml/10½fl oz buttermilk
1 free-range egg, beaten, for an egg-wash (optional)

Preparation time - less than 30 mins

Cooking time - 10 to 30 mins

Makes – 18 scones

Dietary – Vegetarian

Method

Preheat the oven to 220C/450/Gas 7. Line a large baking sheet with baking parchment.

Put the flour into a bowl with the bicarbonate of soda, cream of tartar and sugar.

Chop the butter and the vegetable shortening into pieces and drop them into the flour.

Rub the fats into the flour using your fingertips – or just mix any old how – and then pour in the buttermilk, working everything together to form a dough.

Lightly flour your work surface. Pat the dough down into a round-edged oblong about 4cm/1½in thick, then cut out 6cm/2¼in scones with a fluted cutter.

Arrange the scones fairly close together on your lined baking sheet, and brush with beaten egg (to give golden tops), if you wish. Cook for 12 minutes, by which time the scones will be dry on the bottom and have a relatively light feel. Remove them to a wire rack to cool, and serve with clotted cream and jam.

Recipe Tips

Nigella says: "I like to make up quite a big batch of scones and freeze some (they thaw incredibly quickly) to produce a near-instant cream tea at some future date. Day-old scones can be revived by warming in an oven preheated to 150C/325F/Gas 2 for 5–10 minutes."

Freedom

Dear Friends,

What is freedom?

Of all the false gods in our world today one of the most attractive seems to be freedom. It seems to be a clarion call to which is attached every real or supposed restriction that our world knows. We must be free. How dare you restrict me in my pursuit of enjoyment and life. It is a very biblical principle; after all, our Lord came to set us free. That was the whole purpose of His coming. To free us of our burden of sin and give us free access to communion with God the father.

Like many biblical concepts however it is only a small step from heresy. This occurs when we allow it to become too important and use it as the main guiding principle for our lives and neglect to view it through the perspective of the love of God. It is not a new problem since Paul corrects the wrong use of freedom in both the Corinthian and the Galatian church. It is therefore important that each appeal to freedom must be examined and judged and not assumed to be an inalienable right.

On what basis then are we to base these judgements? In Galatians, Paul suggests that one principle is that of sin. In effect he says if it is sinful then we are not free to get involved. In general, this is a sound way for me to restrict my own freedom of action. If God has shown me that a course of action is against His will then obviously if I want to please Him, then I won't do it. However, it is not so clear if I am looking at other people. Can my view of what God wants be used to govern their actions? While within the church this may have some relevance, once we move outside the church and try to force Christian principles onto the world in general, where the concept of sin is either very different or even non-existent, then we may have to think again.

In Corinthians, I think Paul is more helpful in these instances since he brings into the discussion the views of other Christians. He suggests that if what you are doing is going to cause someone else in the church to go against their conscience then we must restrict our own actions for their sakes. In this way freedom moves from being an individualistic principle to a community principle. My freedom to act becomes our freedom to act and as the sense of community is enlarged, we get a principle which may be applied universally.

So, the freedom of the west to enjoy the lifestyle we have may be challenged by the third world, many of whom do not have enough to eat. The demands for the Taliban to be free to exercise their power to bring in Sharia must be weighed against the needs of the Afghans to live normal lives. The freedom of one must not entail the slavery of the other.

Real freedom can therefore only exist in the situation where all the communities' needs and requirements are taken into account. So, in the church we strive to reflect the freedom that Christ comes to bring to our world. In as much as we achieve this, we display to the world the life that Christ came to bring. If Christ shall make you free, then you shall be free indeed.

It is therefore our differences and how we rub along with one another that sets us apart from the people around us. Let us pray that in the church at Hadleigh URC, the people of Hadleigh will see the freedom that the world in general seeks but cannot find. Let us work together to demonstrate the kingdom in action.

Adrian

Adrian Tinning is a member of Westcliff Free Church and a regular lay preacher at Hadleigh URC.



From the Bible

“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.– *Galatians 5:13(NIV)*

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”
– *2 Corinthians 3:17 (NIV)*

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” – *John 8:36 (NIV)*

Computer Corner

Ask NT Wright Anything

**Interesting
podcast**

A fortnightly podcast on Premier Christian Radio by well-known New Testament theologian Rt. Rev. NT Wright. Tom Wright is a former Bishop of Durham and has often featured on lent courses studied by Churches Together in Hadleigh.

URL: <https://www.premierchristianradio.com/Shows/Weekday/Ask-NT-Wright-Anything/Podcast>

Wordle for the BBC Micro (playable in browser window)

**Free
game**

The game Wordle seems to have taken the world by storm recently despite being quite a simple game which has been around for a long time under other guises. The official online version, which has been bought by the New York Times, allows only one game to be played per day. This version, written for the BBC Micro but playable in a browser, allows unlimited plays. (Note: If you enter a word that is not in the dictionary then use the backspace key to delete letters.)

URL: <http://bbcmicro.co.uk//game.php?id=4073>

digiKam

**Useful
free
software**

digiKam provides tools for importing, managing, editing, and sharing photos and runs on Linux, Windows, and MacOS. Although I haven't used it, the application comes out well in reviews of free photo management software. You can easily transfer photos and videos directly from your camera and external storage devices (SD cards, USB disks, etc.). digiKam organizes photos and videos into albums but also features powerful tagging tools that allow you to assign tags, ratings, and labels to photos. You can then use filtering functionality to quickly find items that match specific criteria.

Download from: <https://www.digikam.org/download>

Word Search – Spring flowers

N	Z	W	C	Q	Y	Y	A	I	T	E	R	B	U	A	F	K	Q	L	B
F	F	K	U	P	G	H	R	N	B	Y	T	U	L	I	P	B	Q	L	E
E	C	S	A	D	Y	H	Z	Z	N	F	A	V	A	M	S	U	B	E	X
B	L	N	U	N	P	X	Y	O	T	W	O	C	A	J	M	T	E	B	L
W	S	P	C	R	M	R	Y	Q	E	B	G	R	R	L	B	M	O	E	P
Y	I	A	C	C	O	C	O	C	R	A	S	G	S	C	L	B	Q	U	J
Z	E	S	E	Z	D	B	D	R	F	X	D	H	K	Y	O	I	O	L	Q
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ACONITE
 ALLIUM
 AUBRETIA
 BLUEBELL
 CLEMATIS
 CROCUS
 DAFFODIL
 FORSYTHIA
 FREESIA
 HELLEBORUS
 HYACINTH
 IRIS
 LILAC
 MUSCARI
 PANSY
 PULMONARIA
 SARCOCOCCA
 SNOWDROP
 TULIP
 WISTERIA

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

WHAT'S ON

A round-up of future events in the area

Sat 12 Feb 2022	- Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church from 10.00am to 12 noon with drinks, cakes and bric-a-brac stall. Every 2 nd Sat.
ditto	- Beat & Beans Café at St James the Less Church from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Live music from Monday Folk with coffee, tea and snacks. Free admission. Every 2 nd Sat.
ditto	- Coffee Morning & Book Sale at St Peter's Church Thundersley from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Every 2 nd Sat.
Wed 16 Feb 2022	- Coffee Morning at St Michael's Church, Daws Heath, from 10.30am to 11.45am. Held every Wed.
Fri 18 Feb 2022	- Benfleet Art & Craft Club at Hadleigh Methodist Church from 1.00pm to 3.30pm every Friday. Established 1945. New members welcome.
ditto	- Craft & Knitting Club at Hadleigh Library from 12.30pm to 2.30pm. Meet others who are passionate about craft and enjoy a chat. Every Fri.
Sat 19 Feb 2022	- Love Your Library Day at Hadleigh Library. Discover the huge variety of services on offer at Essex Library Services.
Fri 25 Feb 2022	- Fish & Chip Lunch at St Michael's Church at St Michael's Church, Daws Heath. Cost £4. To book, phone Sue Croucher on 07902 463829.
Sat 26 Feb 2022	- Mayoral Charity Quiz at the SA Hadleigh Temple at 7.30pm. Teams max 8 people. £5 donation per person. BYO snacks and soft drinks. Tea & coffee available. In aid of the Men's Shed at Thundersley Congregational Church. To reserve a table, e-mail mayor@castlepoint.gov.uk.
Tue 1 Mar 2022	- Happy Feet Walking Group - 90-minute circular walk around the Hadleigh Farm estate. Meet at The Hub café, Chapel Lane, Hadleigh. Starts at 1.00pm. Held every Tue. All welcome. No need to book.
Wed 2 Mar 2022	- Coffee Morning at St Michael's Church, Daws Heath, from 10.30am to 11.45am. Held every Wednesday.
Sat 12 Mar 2022	- Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church from 10.00am to 12 noon with drinks, cakes and bric-a-brac stall.
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Sat 26 Mar 2022	- Hadleigh & Thundersley Community Archive Drop-In at Hadleigh Library. Bring along old photos and documents for scanning, chat about your memories of the area. Books for sale. From 10.30am to 12 noon.
Sat 2 Apr 2022	- Hadleigh Heritage 'A Padgett Postcard Tour' slideshow presented by Malcolm Brown at St James the Less Church. Starts at 11.00am prompt. Refreshments served from 10.30am. Admission £3.00.

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