

THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

March 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

Lessons in Life – Written By Regina Brett, aged 90, of Cleveland, Ohio

This item was first used in the Hadleigh Messenger of May 2010. I thought it was worth another airing.

- Life isn't fair, but it's still good.
- When in doubt, just take the next small step.
- Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends and parents will. Stay in touch.
- Pay off your credit cards every month.
- You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.
- Cry with someone. It's more healing than crying alone.
- It's OK to get angry with God. He can take it.
- Save for retirement starting with your first paycheck.
- When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile.
- Make peace with your past so it won't mess up the present.
- It's OK to let your children see you cry.
- Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
- If a relationship has to be a secret, you shouldn't be in it.
- Everything can change in the blink of an eye. But don't worry; God never blinks.
- Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful.
- Whatever doesn't kill you really does make you stronger.
- It's never too late to have a happy childhood. But the second one is up to you and no one else.
- Over prepare, then go with the flow.
- Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.
- The most important sex organ is the brain.
- Frame every so-called disaster with these words 'In five years, will this matter?'
- Always choose life.
- Forgive everyone everything.
- What other people think of you is none of your business.
- Time heals almost everything. Give time time.
- However good or bad a situation is, it will change.
- Don't take yourself so seriously. No one else does.
- Believe in miracles.
- God loves you because of who God is, not because of anything you did or didn't do.
- Growing old beats the alternative – dying young.
- Yield.
- All that truly matters in the end is that you loved.
- If we all threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab ours back.
- Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.
- No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up.

This is an edited version of the original list of 45 lessons in life forwarded by Jeanne Spackman.

PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR MARCH 2022

Sun 6 th Mar	10.30am	Morning Service	Mr Adrian Tinning
Sun 13 th Mar	10.30am	Morning Service	Mr John Amos
Sun 20 th Mar	10.30am	Morning Service with Holy Communion	Rev. Dr Jim Tarrant MA MTh
Sun 27 th Mar	10.30am	Morning Service - ^{Mothering} Sunday	Mrs Heather Brown

FLOWER ROTA

Sun 6 th Mar	
Sun 13 th Mar	Jean Reeve - in memory of her Mother
Sun 20 th Mar	
Sun 27 th Mar	Heather Brown

ELDERS' MEETING	CHURCH MEETING
Wed 16 th Mar 3.30pm	No meeting this month

United Good Friday Service on 15th April

Owing to continuing cases of Coronavirus, the Elders felt unable to offer the church as the destination of a possible Good Friday Walk of Witness this year. The church is usually very crowded on such occasions. Nor was it felt desirable to offer the church for a united service as its relatively small size would not allow any social distancing, which we still practice in our own services.

By way of something different, Roger Kingston of Hadleigh Methodist Church has now arranged for a united service to take place at St Michael's Church in Daws Heath and as a consequence, there will be no Walk of Witness. Anyone wishing to attend the service who does not have transport is welcome to travel with me provided I have space available.

Malcolm Brown

<p>HADLEIGH URC OFFICERS</p> <p>Interim Moderators: Rev. Jim Tarrant/Rev. Celia Whitman</p> <p>Hon. Secretary: Mr Royston Brackin (01702 558862)</p> <p>Acting Hon. Treasurer: Mr Royston Brackin</p> <p>Serving Elders: Mr Royston Brackin Mrs Heather Brown (01702 557678) Mr Malcolm Brown (01702 557678) Miss Jean Reeve (01702 554907)</p>	<p>Useful information</p> <p>Address: 1 Church Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet, SS7 2DQ Website: www.hadleighsexurc.org.uk</p> <p>An invitation</p> <p>We invite you to join us for worship and fellowship at any of our services where a warm welcome awaits. If you are in need of help that the ministry of the church can supply then be assured of our interest and concern. If you are suffering from ill health, loneliness or bereavement and feel that we could help, or if you would like to ask for a prayer or personal visit then please let one of our church officers know. All such requests are treated in the strictest confidence.</p>
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The Lord's Perfect Timing

The measurement of Time began with the invention of the sundials in ancient Egypt sometime prior to 1500 B.C. Psalm 19:6 tells us the sun: "rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other." So people rose with the sun and stopped working at dusk. Mechanical clocks were invented back in the 16th century. Time was viewed differently, as it was now divided into nice hourly segments. Time sweeps us along. We live by schedules, emails and appointments. We try to manage and save time and we stress ourselves out if we don't make whatever it is on time.

In many situations, time and timing is important. Jesus knew about both. More importantly, He also knew that time could be redeemed. Even with His compassion and desire to help others, He needed time to withdraw by Himself in prayer and meditation. He needed to escape from the hustle and bustle, the distractions and interruptions of life. Above all he desired to spend time in His Father's presence: "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." (Mark 1:35).

An important lesson for us to learn: after spending time with His Father God in the wilderness, Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, begins His public ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth. In His boyhood home, in the place He worshipped in throughout the years. He reads one of the great OT passages, Isaiah 61, that looks forward to the coming of the Messiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor..." (Luke 4:18) and He says, "The Scripture you've just heard has been fulfilled this very day!" (v.21).

God's perfect timing! People have waited 700 years since Isaiah first spoke those words of encouragement and salvation and now Jesus tells them: *'This is the moment, you don't have to wait any longer, the time of the Lord's favour has come...'* Right here, right now in this small insignificant congregation in a small town in Galilee, the Good Lord is keeping His promises. The time has arrived, and it's vital to listen. Why?...Because when we read verses like this we see that the Word of God is confrontational. It calls us to account for the way we live out our faith. It tells us about God and His nature, His might, love, power and dominion.

Here, Jesus is getting His contemporaries to take notice of these things. At first the reaction is positive; v.22: "All spoke well of him and were amazed by the gracious words that came from his lips." Sounds encouraging, although at the same time they are dubious, "How can this be...isn't this Joseph's son?" Then Jesus quotes from the stories of Elijah and Elisha to show that God has always been greater than Jewish expectation. That's where the trouble began.

During a famine, God provided for Elijah, but not in Israel. He was sent to the land of Sidon where food was provided for him through a widow. Her unselfish devotion, her faith and obedience meant God redeemed Israel. Later, God used a captured slave-girl to tell a Syrian general, a gentile, an outsider, of the God who could heal him from leprosy by washing in the river. Elisha was the prophet God used to make that happen.

What's this? Non-Jews receiving miracles from God. The people knew these stories but didn't care to hear them; after all Jews are the favoured ones, salvation belonged only to them, not heathens. This new preacher was meddling, telling them they needed to trust God like everyone else, when he should be talking about prominent Jews, maybe men of the community, who had demonstrated faith in Yahweh, not some poor widow from way up north! We know human sin is not confined to one nation and neither is God's salvation. When Christ was born, He was adored by Jewish Shepherds and Gentile Magi. Equally, it's a Jewish thief and a Roman centurion who come to faith at the cross. Likewise, we're gentiles saved by grace too!

By the time Jesus finished speaking, the congregation are not in the mood to say, "*Nice sermon*". Those in the synagogue were furious. They dragged Him outside, took Him to the edge of a high cliff and were prepared to throw Him to His death. They wanted a Saviour who fitted their picture of the Messiah, someone who would help them sort out their lives, sort out the Romans, get rid of corruption in the temple, get the Pharisees off their backs with their joyless rules and regulations.

From a strictly human point of view, what a temptation it would have been for Jesus to prove Himself to this mob. However, the moment wasn't yet. It wasn't the right time. As Jesus told

His mother in John 2: “My time has not yet come.” Jesus lets them go so far and then simply walks through them, leaving them with their distorted concept of the Messiah and His ministry.

How many of us think God owes us something? If we spare an hour of our valuable time in worship every Sunday morning then surely that will guarantee us good health, good fortune, good income and good relationships – won’t it? Be careful! If we want to control God our motives are wrong. When we don’t see these things in our lives, it can be very easy to have the same attitude as shown by this multitude in the Gospel: *“I’m mad at God for not treating me the way I want to be treated. I’m mad that He doesn’t end the suffering in the world. I’m not happy that I don’t hear the things I want to hear. I’m not going to believe in Him anymore!!”*

Ok fine. Let’s go our own way, as there are plenty of people elsewhere in the world who want to believe, and because the prophetic promise goes right back to Abraham in Genesis, there is nothing narrow or patriotic about God’s saving grace as: “All the families of the earth will be blessed.” (12:3). This is the Lord’s time of deliverance and in His perfect time, He sent His Son, who is the only one, as there is no other name under heaven, in which people can be saved, to proclaim the time of fulfillment that the prophets had anticipated.

Jesus is the Son of God not just the adopted son of the local carpenter. He defies all expectations. If we’re not willing to listen to His good news,

“...He will pass right through...and go on His way” just as He does in this passage. (Luke 4:30). C.S. Lewis makes the point well in his Narnia stories. *“Aslan is a lion...the Lion...the great lion.”* “Ooh”, said Susan, *“I’d thought he was a man. Is he – quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion”* “Safe?” said Mr Beaver – *“Who said anything about safe? Course he isn’t safe. But he’s good. He is the King, I tell you.”*

Jesus is the King of kings yet He paid His taxes to Caesar; He was accused of having a demon, yet He cast out demons. He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, yet He is the Good Shepherd. He was sold for 30 pieces of silver, yet He saved the world. He feeds people who are hungry, for He is the Bread of Life. And what He does in the synagogue is pronounce His manifesto. “...God has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, and the oppressed will be set free...” (Luke 4:18).

So as this teaching draws to a close, let’s remember that the Scriptures testify to Jesus. Let’s pray that we don’t reject Him for not meeting our expectations. Let’s make it a priority to spend time in His presence, through prayer and Bible reading, so that we may receive the blessings of the Gospel – the promised freedom from spiritual oppression and blindness to the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Rev. Tim Mullings

Minister of Tettenhall Wood & St Columba’s URC.
Posted on 13th February 2022.



Build a nest in the golden air

Build a nest in the golden air
That blows through the trusting tree,
Out of reach of the mists of care
And the waves of the doubting sea;
What though the storm winds rock and roar
What though the raindrops fall,
Your nest is safe for evermore
In the hand that is holding all.

A poem from the collection of Jean Hodges

From the Editor

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

I hope that Storm Eunice didn't cause too much damage in your neighbourhood. We got off fairly lightly, losing one of our old Bullace plum trees (which never gave us any plums) and a few plant pots. Our next-door neighbour lost a fence panel and a ridge tile. I saw the tile fly off whilst videoing the demise of the plum tree. It was quite a lethal weapon so I'm glad I was not standing outside at the time. The thing that caused most inconvenience was a 24-hour power cut, something that we're not used to nowadays. When I ascertained that it was very localised, I

went to the church to boil some water for storage in flasks and charged a couple of our mobile phones. Where would we be without those!

The damage caused by Storm Eunice pails into insignificance compared to what is happening in Ukraine. I probably watch far too many news programs about the war but its relative proximity and the knock-on effects are very depressing. Let us pray that the war will end soon and that peace, freedom and justice will prevail.

Finally, thank you to all those who have made a donation towards the cost of producing paper copies of the magazine. It is appreciated.

Malcolm Brown

Out of the mouths of babes...

Jesus had a cow and a donkey but I think he would rather have had a hamster - Brent aged 6.

Old people read to you until they fall asleep - Craig aged 6.

My sister says she eats men alive but she's only pretending - Mandy aged 6

My uncle is a religious Maniac but I think he has another job as well - Stephen aged 6.

If a traffic warden sees you kissing in a car you get cramped - Alice aged 6.

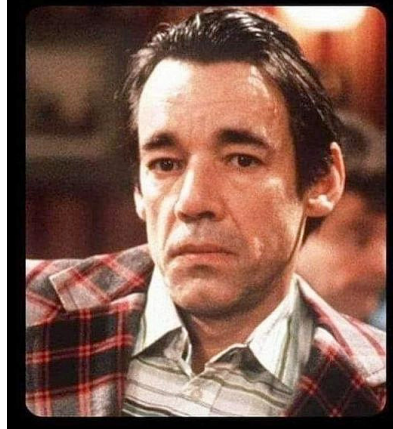
My mummy cried on my first day at school so I had to take her home - Penny aged 5.

Our vicar tells you off on Sundays but he's nice when he's out shopping - Marsha aged 6.

These humorous quotes were taken from a book entitled "The Best of Love", a collection of children's sayings compiled by Nanette Newman.

Found on Facebook

"Fuel prices going up don't affect me.. I only ever put £20 in".



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

Family News

Jennifer Brown

Heather Brown writes:

“Readers with long memories may remember that in 2013 our daughter Jennifer had her long hair cut and donated to the Little Princess Trust. The charity makes real-hair wigs for children undergoing cancer treatment or suffering from conditions like alopecia. During the pandemic, Jennifer’s hair grew very long and so she decided to donate again. These before and after photos show how much was cut off – 20” to be precise. Quite a difference, I think you’ll agree.”



A Prayer for Lent

Heavenly Father,

May we remember the gift of salvation in this season.

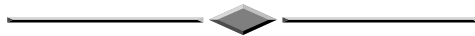
May these weeks leading up to the tragedy of Good Friday and the glory of Easter Sunday remind us of who you are, how you love us, and who you have created us to be as your followers.

May we walk through this season intentionally, removing distractions that take our gaze away from your glory. May we quiet the noise that hinders our adoration of you and puts our attention on lesser things. May we simplify where we have been stressed, may we surrender what has been burdensome, may we repent of what has been sinful.

May we see your goodness and your glory in new ways throughout this season of Lent. May we know the depths of your love for us more fully. May we feel the pain you endured for our sake and may we rejoice that you conquered all evil when you rose to life again.

Amen

Adapted from a prayer on crosswalk.com



Jean Constance Hodges (1918 – 2022)

Jean Hodges, the oldest reader of the Hadleigh Messenger, died on 28th January at Bradbury Home in Southend at the age of 103. Her funeral took place on 25th February at Bramerton Road Community Church (Hockley URC) and was led by Rev. Gillian Thompson. Jean was laid to rest afterwards in Hall Road Cemetery, Rochford.

I first met Jean in 2004 at our Centenary Flower Festival & Historical Display and I have learned more about her over the years whilst visiting her at her home in Hockley and then in Bradbury Home.



Jean was born on 22nd September 1918, just a few weeks before the end of WW1, in the front bedroom of 2 Lawn Villas in Hadleigh, now 21 The Avenue. Her parents were Len and Jane Barber. Nurse Baker, the midwife for Hadleigh, was present at the birth but it was a difficult delivery so she had to send for Dr Grant, who lived at 'The Chestnuts', the large red-brick house, now divided into flats, that overlooks Victoria House roundabout.

On 12th January 1920, Jean was joined by a sister, Gwen, who was later to become Gwen Bentley.

Jean's father, Len, was the son of Arthur and Mary Barber, who had moved to Hadleigh when Arthur took a job managing the greenhouses at the Salvation Army Colony. Arthur and Mary lived at Brookfield, 76 Beech Road, which is still standing, and had five children including Len and Ernest. (Ernest was known as Jack and became the father of Derek, Jack, Mary and Joyce Barber whose names may be familiar to some readers.)

Len became a farm accountant and married Jane Cullum. Jane was from Norfolk but moved to Hadleigh to teach at the Colony School and became one of the original teachers at Hadleigh School in Church Road in 1910. The family were Salvationists and worshipped at The Citadel on the Salvation Army Colony down Castle Lane.

Jean attended Hadleigh School in the time of Mr Harold Tutt, who was often written about in the Hadleigh Messenger by the late Marjorie Chase. In 1929, at the age of 11, she obtained a scholarship to attend St Bernard's High School, a girls' school run by Roman Catholic nuns in Milton Road, Westcliff-on-Sea. She left school at the age of 16 and started work in London at the Salvation Army Assurance Society in Queen Victoria Street, commuting from Leigh-on-Sea station.

In 1935, Jean's father, Len, had an accident on a motorbike and broke his leg in three places. He was off work for three years. As a result he decided to worship at St James the Less Church as it was much nearer to home and he eventually became a Church Warden there. After his death at the age of 94 in 1983, the family donated a wooden font cover to the church in his memory.

After the outbreak of WWII in September 1939, the staff of the Salvation Army Assurance Society were evacuated to Caversham, a suburb of Reading, where Jean lived in lodgings. Around September 1941, Jean started training to become a Salvation Army officer at Denmark Hill in Camberwell, London. After completing nine months of training, she was posted to New Southgate as a probationary Lieutenant, overseen by an Adjutant, staying there for about 9 months. She also served at Hertford, King's Cross and Pentonville. After promotion to Captain, Jean was appointed to Newington Green as the sole leader and stayed there for two or three years before moving to a small corps at Childs Hill near Hendon.

In 1948, owing to ill-health, Jean went back to the family home at 2 Lawn Villas, during which time she began worshipping at Hadleigh Congregational Church. After six months' convalescence, she decided to resign as a Salvation Army officer and found a job working for the Ministry of Pensions at London Hill in Rayleigh where she was to meet her future husband.

In 1955, Jean and her parents moved to Brookside, where her father had grown up. Not long after, on 11th February 1956, Jean married Ben Hodges at Hadleigh Congregational Church. The wedding was conducted by the Minister, Rev. William Peacock. The wedding reception was held in the Small Hall, at a time when the hall was also being used as Hadleigh Library. The couple bought a bungalow in St Peter's Road, Hockley with three acres of ground, where they grew vegetables and kept rabbits and white fantail pigeons. In September 1959, Jean and Ben were blessed with a son, named John, who was to be their only child.

Jean and Ben were dog-lovers and this meant that the family did not have as many holidays away as other families. Jean would sometimes spend a week away with John, either at Diss visiting relatives or at the seaside at places like Clacton, but Ben would only join them occasionally for a day.

Jean's husband, Ben, retired from the Ministry of Pensions & National Insurance in 1977 and in 1986 the couple moved to a bungalow in Bramerton Road, Hockley. In 1989, Jean was diagnosed with cancer but was treated successfully.

In 1993, having worshipped at Hockley & Hawkwell Methodist Church for many years, Jean began worshipping at Hockley United Reformed Church (now known as Bramerton Road Community Church) as it was easier for her to walk to.

Jean's husband, Ben, died in 1997 at the age of 85. She continued to live in Bramerton Road on her own for another twenty years, with the assistance of carers in later years. However, in October 2017, Jean moved to Bradbury Home in Southend, a Salvation Army care home. She reached her 100th birthday in 2018 and a party was held in the care home. She was thrilled to receive a card from the Queen.

Sadly, the Coronavirus pandemic prevented my seeing Jean in the last couple of years. I missed visiting her because she was always interesting to talk to and had a collection of poems and prayers that she was always willing for me to use in the magazine. She also had a very good memory and could recall shops in Hadleigh in the 1930s. I was fortunate to be able to see her one more time on her 103rd birthday when I met her in Priory Park, where John was able to take her. It was hard to hold a conversation at a distance with Jean because she was very hard of hearing but she was still alert and enjoyed looking at the flowers and plants, one of her great passions. Her other great passion was knitting and she would knit squares to make into blankets.

Jean passed away peacefully in Bradbury Home in the early hours of 28th January.

We send our sincere condolences to Jean's son, John. We give thanks to God for Jean's long life and for her deep Christian faith which led her to become a Salvation Army officer and to help others on their Christian journey. Now, promoted to glory, may she rest in peace.

Malcolm Brown

Photographic memories of Jean



Jean feeding chickens at 2 Lawn Villas



Jean in Salvation Army days



Jean & Ben's wedding in 1956 with sister Gwen and father Len on the right



Jean with Ben and son John & father Len



Jean with sister Gwen c.2012



Jean on her 100th birthday in Sep 2018

URC News

Community church celebrates fifth anniversary

West Thamesmead Community Church celebrated its fifth anniversary on 20 February. Largely funded by the URC, when the Revs. Sally and Andrew Willett were called there, the ecumenical church plant in southeast London began with nothing. No team, people, or building.



On the day, the vibrant congregation, with more than half under 18, gave thanks to God and celebrated with joy-filled worship. They feasted on chicken, Jollof rice and anniversary cake, all made by members of the congregation.

Lonely pensioner praises URC for joyful welcome

A lonely pensioner has praised Elmwood Avenue



United Reformed Church (URC), in Mersey Synod, for its joyful and friendly welcome. After 70 years of marriage, Ron Pulling, aged 90, found himself separated from

his wife, Elsie, when she had to be admitted into their local care home due to the progression of Parkinson's disease. This devastating separation occurred within six weeks of the couple moving to Warrington to be with their daughter.

Ron was confirmed at the age of 39, and while living in Farnham Common was an active member of his local Church of England (C of E) congregation. Now living in Warrington, he decided to resume his life as an active churchgoer.

Ron said, "My only means of transport is my trusty scooter and to get to the nearest C of E Church would be impossible. Nobody seemed to know of a nearer church, so I set to, exploring. Happily, I stumbled upon Elmwood Avenue Church URC and turned up there one Sunday morning and walked in. I was simply astounded

at the joyful and friendly welcome I received. I have become a regular worshiper at Elmwood URC. Here, you have a truly living church, with reverent but enjoyable participation by all."

Lundie memorial Award winners

A talented teenager and a generous four-year-old have become the latest recipients of the United Reformed Church (URC) Lundie Memorial Award. Rhona Tealby-Watson, 14, of Abbey Road URC in the denomination's Eastern Synod became the first winner of 2022 for using her digital skills for the benefit of others.



Rhona supported online worship in her local pastorate by mixing and editing recordings of singers and organ music to create effective hymns and songs to play as part of the weekly Zoom service.

The teenager also used her time to assist in junior church, create flower arrangements, and create PowerPoint slides with the order of worship and to share hymn words with congregations during services. All this at a time when Rhona was busy preparing for her GCSEs and caring for a vulnerable family member despite having health concerns of her own.

Four-year-old Eveline Robinson of Mersey Synod was delighted to receive her award from



Steven Mitchell, the synod's Children's and Youth Development Officer at a special service in December.

Eveline was nominated because she voluntarily started to hand out hymn books and orders

of service for the weekly worship and collecting these up again as people leave.

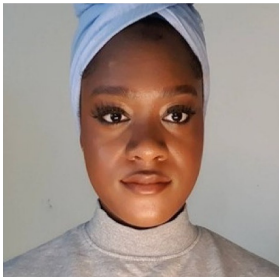
Having been welcomed into the church as a toddler, she now greets others as they arrive at the church and has also been keen to take the lead in demonstrating an intergenerational activity for a special service.

Eveline spent her £100 award on resources to stock the children's corner in the sanctuary of her church, Trinity URC Wigan.

Each month, a medal, certificate and a financial gift of £100 will be awarded to a young person to be spent on the benefit of children and/or young people in the church, synod or local community, however the award winner chooses.

If you would like to make a nomination, see <https://urc.org.uk/your-church/lundie-memorial-awards/>.

URC Youth Assembly makes history with BAME Moderator-Elect



URC Youth Assembly has made history by electing the first BAME Moderator-Elect. Philippa Osei, formally the Thames North Synod representative, will serve as Moderator-Elect 2022-

2023 before stepping up to the role of Moderator

of the Youth Assembly 2023-2024, following the tenure of the current Youth Moderator, Jo Harris.

“I am humbled and privileged to have been appointed to the office of Moderator-Elect, but much lies ahead which, by God’s grace, will be achieved,” shared Philippa.

“I was approached by a few people to consider doing the role, but initially I was hesitant. Upon careful reflection and prayer, I felt called to put myself forward as I felt I could offer a new perspective and make some positive changes.”

She continued: “It is my sincere wish that I can leave the door wide open for more BAME executive members and future Moderators by creating an even more inclusive Assembly and environment for youth in the Church.”

Philippa was elected at Youth Assembly held in January at Whitemoor Lakes in Staffordshire.

Alternative sources of raw material for clothing fabric

I recently went into Sainsbury’s to get myself another pair of jeans. I always buy my jeans from there and have been very pleased with them. This time, I didn’t think much of the stock on the racks and was about to leave when my son saw a cupboard above the racks and, on opening the little door, found it was full of very smart jeans. I didn’t need to try them on as all the necessary details were on a stitched-in label. When I tried them on at home they were really comfortable, and much softer than usual. For £15 – the usual price – I was very pleased with them and so I proceeded to cut off the four labels attached to the jeans. It was only then that I noticed one label that stated “Made from recycled plastic bottles”. That was quite a surprise but I was delighted nevertheless. Let’s hope they last!

One Sunday, shortly afterwards, I was reading my usual paper that I buy on a Saturday and noticed that the Prince of Wales had also been thinking of alternative uses for items in his grounds at Highgrove. He had been advised that the willow rods which he grows for various purposes, including basket making, also had another one. There was a picture in the paper of an elegant evening dress made from willow rods after they had been chipped, pulped, and eventually spun into yarn and woven. It looked very good. Let’s hope that such dresses will last too!

I wonder if anyone has other examples of materials being (re)used in unlikely ways.

June Gargrave

Dates for your diary

Rayleigh Trinity Fair – Sunday 12th June 2022

Leigh-on-Sea Folk Festival – 23 June to 26 June 2022

Essex Cultural Diversity Project Finale – Sunday 3rd July 2022 at Hadleigh Park

Daws Heath Village Fayre – Saturday 9th July 2022

Hadleigh Community Summer Fayre – Sunday 4th September 2022 at John Burrows Park

The Lands of the Rus

To justify his designs on Ukraine, Russian president Vladimir Putin has repeatedly referred to what Russians call the Kievan Rus. He sees this Orthodox medieval state which centred around the contemporary Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, as the common point of origin for both Ukrainians and Russians. To his mind, this means the Ukrainian people are Russian. And he believes his mission is to restore the unity of the Russian lands, as a precondition for Russia being a great power.

Ukrainians, meanwhile, refer to the same place as the Kyivan Rus and the cradle of their own nation. These are not Russian lands but the “lands of the Rus”. The word “Rus” derives from the old east Slavic word Русь (which reads as “Rous” when you convert from Cyrillic into Roman letters). The word refers to the land of a people called Rus: the common ancestors of today’s Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians.

Throughout history, there have been Russian rulers who have believed in their mission to “gather the Russian lands”, the land of the Rus. Others have simply used the idea to justify Russia’s hegemonic ambitions.

The Kyivan Rus

The Principality of Kyiv was founded on the location of contemporary Kyiv in the ninth century by Viking warrior-traders from Scandinavia (also called Varangians or Rus) who mixed with the local east Slavic population. In 988, Grand Prince Volodymyr of Kyiv adopted Christianity from Byzantium, not Rome, and the Rus – now a term also applied to the land – became part of the Orthodox Christian world.

Putin refers to this event as a “civilisational choice” which shaped the future of Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians. It created what he calls a “common spiritual space”, an Orthodox Russian space distinct from the Latin, Roman Catholic world. By contrast, the neighbouring peoples – the Poles and the Lithuanians – took their Christianity from Rome.

With the arrival of Mongol troops in the mid-13th century, the land of the Kyivan Rus was broken up. The western and south-western parts, which constitute most of the territory of today’s Ukraine and Belarus, was divided between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland. Meanwhile the northern and north-eastern parts

was cut off from developments in Europe for 200 years.

Gatherers of the land

The first historical mention of Moscow is in a chronicle from 1147. Later, Prince Ivan I of Moscow (ca. 1288-1340), known as Kalita (the moneybag), was the tax collector for Sultan Ozbeg, the khan of the Golden Horde. Ozbeg awarded Ivan the title of grand prince, as rulers of Kyiv were traditionally known. And Ivan and his successors subsequently used this title to claim all the lands of the Rus including those under Lithuanian and Polish rule as their patrimony.

Ivan III (1440-1505), his son Vasily III (1478-1533) and his grandson Ivan IV, known as Ivan the Terrible (1530-1584) were the most successful gatherers of the land of the Rus in its initial phase, annexing the lands of rival Rus princes in the north and north east.

After the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman army in 1453, Moscow’s religious leaders argued that a transfer of the Byzantine empire had taken place: Moscow was now the third Rome and the capital of Christendom. From that point, Ivan III not only called himself grand prince but also tsar, deriving from “Caesar”, the title used by the Roman and later Byzantine emperors.

The Moscow tsars styled themselves as the protectors of the Orthodox faith. They justified interventions in the domestic affairs of neighbouring countries by the pretext that they were protecting Orthodox believers. Similarly, the Russian government today justifies invading Ukraine by claiming the need to protect the millions of Russian speakers living there.

The grand duke of Lithuania was the tsar’s main rival and he also claimed to be the ruler of the entire Rus. From the 14th century, Poland and Lithuania began to unite; the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was eventually established in 1569.

A formidable opponent, by the mid-17th century, Poland-Lithuania was at war with most of its neighbours. And internally, the commonwealth fought off rebellion too. The Ukrainian Cossacks, led by Hetman (military leader and ruler) Bohdan Khmelnytsky attempted to secede, in part because of the discrimination they faced as Orthodox Christians under a Catholic ruler.

After some setbacks, Khmelnytsky asked for the support of the Orthodox Moscow tsar, Alexis. In 1654 the Cossacks and emissaries of Alexis signed the treaty of Pereyaslav, thereby submitting Ukraine to Russian rule within the context of their fight against the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth.

Historians differ on what purpose this pact ultimately served. From the perspective of the then Cossack leaders, as well as Ukrainian historians today, this was a temporary alliance, directed against Poland-Lithuania. For the tsar, meanwhile, and for generations of Russian historians that have followed, it was the acknowledgement of Moscow's suzerainty for all eternity.

Russia and Poland were then at war until 1667, when the two parties signed the truce of Andrusovo. This agreement saw Moscow receive Ukraine west of the River Dnipro/Dnieper as well as the eastern part of today's Belarus. In the 18th century, Poland-Lithuania was forced into the Russian sphere of influence and in 1772, was partitioned between Prussia, Austria and Russia.

The historic imperative to gather the land of the Rus was not the primary goal of this expansionism on the part of Moscow. Rather, it was the ideological justification given by its rulers for first consolidating and expanding the Moscow state in the Russian north and then for imperial advances into Ukraine and Belarus.

During Soviet times, the incorporation of most of Ukraine into the Soviet Union under Lenin was not driven by the idea of gathering the land of the Rus but by the desire to make Ukraine a socialist state. The concept is however implicitly contained in Stalin's justification for invading eastern Poland in 1939. Soviet propaganda claimed that this was not only a social, but also a "national liberation" of Belarusian and Ukrainian "brothers and sisters".

Putin also speaks of Ukrainian "brothers and sisters". But he is waging war against them now that they have made it abundantly clear they have no wish to be "gathered" again.

Christoph Mick

Professor of Modern European History, University of Warwick



Prayer Reflection - Sacrifice

Consider the sacrifices, small and large, strangers make for our convenience. Long distance lorry drivers lose time with their families. Shift and night workers lose opportunities to socialise. Those working in unpleasant or dangerous jobs, like dustmen or sewer workers, are often not given the respect and esteem they deserve. Pray for their well-being and ask God to give you the right attitude and perspective whoever you are dealing with. Thank him for the dignity and respect we receive from him. May we give to God the honour due to him.

Contemplate the sacrifice Jesus made just by becoming human. Recognise the separation from the rest of the godhead, the limitations the human form placed on him and the contradictory emotions we all suffer. All would have been unfamiliar to Jesus. Just living our life was a sacrifice before the rejection, misunderstanding, opposition, torture and death he ultimately suffered for our sake. Stand in awe of such love for you and worship. Thank God that because of all this we can approach the throne of grace. Rejoice in the forgiveness we have received.

Confess how easily we forget the sacrifices of others and especially of Jesus and take for granted what is achieved through them – food in the shops, rubbish taken away and, above all, redemption for our souls. Ask for the desire to grow in grace and maturity so that we move closer to God and do more of his will for us. Thank him for the gift of his Son and our salvation through him.

Prayer

Forgive us Lord. We take so much for granted as though they were our due and not a gift from you. Grant us the grace to appreciate all that is done for us and especially to understand more fully the sacrifice made in Jesus to enable our forgiveness. Thank you Lord. *Amen.*

Beryl Hunt

The Broken World

Dear Friends,

The world is a dangerous place. In thinking back over the last few weeks, I imagine that is an almost inevitable conclusion. The destructive power of the earth itself is brought inevitably to our attention as we remember the hazardous force of the earthquake in Tonga. We, from our relatively secure home in England, can hardly comprehend the number of people who died and those who lost their homes and the suffering and pain involved. Yet we feel so weak and helpless in the face of such devastation.

What can our faith say into such a situation? We have to face the consequences of the claim made in the very first sentence of Genesis “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”. Furthermore, the last verse of this chapter says “God saw all that He had made and it was very good”. So then the bible teaches that God created our world and it came up to His standards as a good job. We must also remember that the only standard that God is willing to call good is perfection. It’s not good if it isn’t perfect.

It may seem quite difficult to bring these two experiences together and accept the truth of both. It is quite clear from all our experiences of God that to say that God is good is an understatement. Yet he created an environment for us which is both dangerous and destructive and called it good. If our experience of God is to be worth having, then it has to be able to stand up to these questions and give answers that are both true to the God who was revealed in Jesus and do not deny our experience of the world.

The first approach may be taken by the evolutionists who take God out of the creational equation and call the whole thing one colossal accident. Once a creative mind is removed from the equation then the problem disappears, but I am afraid that so does God. A God of the gaps gets smaller with every new discovery, whereas, as we learn more about what He has done, as we learn more of His power and authority, our understanding of God should grow and with Him our concept of His Majesty. If he really is God and not just a figment of our imaginations used to explain the things we do not understand, then he has to be there at the beginning, otherwise he too is a created being.

The alternative position is to deny our experience of the world. We could simply say these things just do not happen but down this road lies a kind of madness. Alternatively, we may say that the people who suffered through the events, for some reason deserved all they experienced. Here we have an Old Testament theology of divine retribution and God wreaking havoc on people who ignored His existence or violated His righteousness. Then we have to ask what it was that these particular people had done which was so much worse than anyone else in the world. If it justified this retribution then it should be obvious, if the rest of the world is to learn from the example that has been made of these people. After all, at least Sodom and Gomorrah were known for the excesses for which they were punished.

God says that the world He created was good and that He was pleased with the work that He had done. If we believe in the God of the Bible, then in some way he must be responsible for the world we experience daily. This must be true because He makes this claim Himself and comes himself to rescue and restore His creation to Himself. The one factor that we are reluctant to take into account is the effect that man’s decision to violate God’s law actually had on the creation itself. As Romans 8:20-21 says: “For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.”

The result of man’s disobedience affected not only himself but the whole of creation, destroying God’s perfect creation and throwing the whole thing off course. We therefore live in a world in which the forces of evil are at work determined to undermine the perfection that God placed in our world and to destroy the way in which the world speaks of its loving creator. The devil hiding behind our reluctance to accept his power or even his existence encourages us to either blame God or better still to deny Him.

In this situation, we, as the church, first need to acknowledge the source of the problem and then work together so that the redeemer of the world may be known.

Yours in Him,

Adrian

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

Computer Corner

University of Sussex Guide to Punctuation

**Interesting
podcast**

The introduction states that this guide "is written for people who find punctuation difficult. If you're not too sure where commas ought to go, if you're puzzled by colons and semicolons, if hyphens and apostrophes are something of a mystery to you, then this document is for you."

URL: <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/informatics/punctuation/toc>

How to Find Your Lost Android Phone

**Useful
article**

I came across this article after recently losing my mobile phone on a train. (Fortunately, I did get it back.) Android has a feature called Find My Device that is pre-installed on devices that use Google Play Store and is tied to the Google account used to set up your Android phone. Find My Device shows Wi-Fi information and battery percentage but, more importantly, it shows where the device is on a map. It can simply ring your phone – even if it's on silent – to help you find it if you think it's nearby. Lastly, it can remotely lock your phone or erase all of your data.

URL: <https://www.howtogeek.com/166057/how-to-find-your-lost-android-phone-even-if-you-never-set-up-a-tracking-app/>

100 Open Source programs for Audio and Video

**Useful
free
software**

Not one program but a whole list compiled by University College London. These are Open source (free) applications that make it easy to create, listen to and view digital audio and video content. I have not heard of many of them but I do use Audacity, CDex, Handbrake and Media Player Classic Home Cinema and VLC Media Player.

URL: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/slade/know/3396>

Word Search – Cities in Ukraine

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

CHERKASY
CHERNIHIV
DNIPRO
DONETSK
IRPIN
KHARKIV
KHERSON
KYIV
LUHANSK
LUTSK
LVIV
MAKIIVKA
MARIUPOL
MELITOPOL
ODESSA
SEVASTAPOL
SUMY
VINNYTSIA
YALTA
ZHYTOMYR

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

Wed 16 Mar 2022 - Coffee Morning at St Michael's Church, Daws Heath, from 10.30am to 11.45am. Held every Wed.

Thu 17 Mar 2022 - Poetry Reading Group looking this month at the poems of Roger McGough at Hadleigh Library from 2.30pm to 3.30pm. Every third Thursday of the month. All welcome.

Fri 18 Mar 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 Mar 2022 - Choose Local Event at Hadleigh Old Fire Station from 10.00am to 4.00pm. With exhibition of children's artwork, display of old images of Hadleigh and heritage book stall by Hadleigh & Thundersley Community Archive, community groups including Hadleigh Community Group and AGES Archaeological & Historical Association, artists' cards and prints, introduction to new Hadleigh heritage walks, live music, pop-up café.

Fri 25 Mar 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 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.

ditto - Abba Tribute Evening with Abbagirls at the SA Hadleigh Temple. Starts at 7.00pm. Tickets £10, concessions £5 - includes light refreshments.

Sat 2 Apr 2022 - Great British Spring Clean at John Burrows Recreation Ground from 10.30am to 12 noon. Organised by Castle Point Clean Up Crew with an activity for children and a chance to win a prize.

Jumble Sale at St Michael's Church, Daws Heath, starting at 1.00pm. Admission 50p. Refreshments available.

Sun 3 Apr 2022 - Southend Harmony Singers present 'Songs From The Shows' at Benfleet Methodist Church at 3.00pm. Tickets £8.00 - phone 07769 510002.

Tue 5 Apr 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 6 Apr 2022 - Coffee Morning at St Michael's Church, Daws Heath, from 10.30am to 11.45am. Held every Wednesday.

Sat 9 Apr 2022 - Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church from 10.00am to 12 noon with drinks, cakes and bric-a-brac stall. Every 2nd Sat.

ditto - Beat & Beans Café at St James the Less Church from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Live music with coffee, tea and snacks. Free admission.

ditto - Coffee Morning & Book Sale at St Peter's Church Thundersley from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Every 2nd Sat.

Fri 15 Apr 2022 - Churches Together Good Friday Service at St Michael's Church, Daws Heath. Starts at 10.30am. Refreshments incl. hot-cross buns afterwards.

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