

THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

November 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

Nine ways of living gently on the Earth

1. Stand up for the planet:

- Get to know your MP.
- Write letters, sign an online petition.
- Protest.

2. Get connected:

- Seek out like-minded people for mutual support and encouragement.
- Join and support community groups.
- Take part in one of Green Christian's many online meetings.

3. Practice gratitude and generosity:

- Take joy in simple pleasures rather than more possessions.

4. Be creative:

- Reinvent second-hand goods from charity shops.
- Improvise, make things.
- Try swishing – clothes swap!

5. Reconnect with the natural world:

- Get wet – dig the earth.
- Grow herbs on your window sill.
- Save and cherish water.
- Take an interest in wildflowers, bees, butterflies, fish, birds and rocks.
- Include the Earth in all Church liturgies.
- Plant trees for special occasions such as weddings and baptisms.

6. Use your LOAF!

- Support local shops.
- Try to buy British fruit and veg in season.
- Grow some of your own food.
- Eat less meat and dairy.
- Buy free-range eggs and meat and sustainably-caught fish (MSC).
- Suggest communal Church meals based on the LOAF principles:
 - Locally produced;
 - Organically grown;
 - Animal friendly;
 - Fairly traded..

7. Travel light:

- Walk, cycle, take the bus or train, if possible, and use local shops.
- Organise a lift share scheme for your Church.
- Don't fly: a transatlantic passenger blows their annual fair share of carbon in one go.

8. Explore this island:

- Get in touch with the seasons.
- Seek out local adventures.
- Enjoy the journey and limit your driving.

9. Go fossil-free and reduce your energy use:

- Change your electricity provider or campaign for your university, council or Church to disinvest.
- Insulate your home.
- Wear an extra layer, and turn the thermostat down one or two degrees.
- If buying new appliances then go for ones with an AAA efficiency rate.

PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR NOVEMBER 2022

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|--|----------------------------|
| Sun 6 th Nov | 10.30am | Morning Service | Mr Adrian Tinning |
| Sun 13 th Nov | 10.30am | Remembrance Sunday | Rev. Dr Jim Tarrant MA MTh |
| Sun 20 th Nov | 10.30am | Morning Service with Holy Communion | Rev. Andrew Birch |
| Sun 27 th Nov | 10.30am | Morning Service | Mrs Heather Brown |

FLOWER ROTA

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Sun 6 th Nov | |
| Sun 13 th Nov | |
| Sun 20 th Nov | |
| Sun 27 th Nov | |

ELDERS' MEETING

Thu 24th Nov 12.45pm

CHURCH MEETING

Moved to Thu 1 Dec 12.45pm

Induction of Rev. Andrew Birch

The induction service for our new minister, Rev. Andrew Birch, will take place on Saturday 12th November starting at 2.00pm. The Moderator of Eastern Synod, Rev. Lythan Nevard, will preside at the service and the sermon will be preached by Rev. Paul Ellis, Minister of Hutton & Shenfield Union Church and the Synod Pastoral Committee Convener. Paul is shortly to leave for pastures new in Leicestershire.

If you would like to attend the service, please add your name to the list on the foyer noticeboard or phone me on 01702 557678. To reduce the risk of the potential spread of COVID-19, the church will be ventilated and guests are asked to wear a face covering whilst singing. Refreshments will be served after the service.

Malcolm Brown

HADLEIGH URC OFFICERS

Interim Moderators:

Rev. Jim Tarrant/Rev. Celia Whitman

Hon. Secretary:

Mr Royston Brackin (01702 558862)

Acting Hon. Treasurer:

Mr Royston Brackin

Serving Elders:

Mr Royston Brackin

Mrs Heather Brown (01702 557678)

Mr Malcolm Brown (01702 557678)

Miss Jean Reeve (01702 554907)

Useful information

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

Website: www.hadleighessexurc.org.uk

An invitation

We invite you to join us for worship and fellowship at any of our services where a warm welcome awaits. If you are in need of help that the ministry of the church can supply then be assured of our interest and concern. If you are suffering from ill health, loneliness or bereavement and feel that we could help, or if you would like to ask for a prayer or personal visit then please let one of our church officers know. All such requests are treated in the strictest confidence.

The Promise of Suffering

Job lived about 4,000 years ago. When we read this book of the Bible, we feel grief, anguish and frustration. His story connects us to the universal struggle of pain and suffering across the world. Today's media headlines remind us of the fact that the world is in a mess. Violence, injustice war, and evil flourish in society; it's easy to criticise, but we're all sinners by birth and by nature. So too was Job. But the opening chapter tells us he was someone special: "He was blameless – a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil." (1:1) – of all the folk living at that time, he was the best of the best. Without blemish, blameless and of good character, there were no skeletons in his cupboard.

He was also blessed with 11,000 animals, many servants, land, and money, but they couldn't compare to the faithful trust he had for the Lord. He rose early and offered prayers and sacrifices for each member of his family in order to ensure their right standing before God. It was regular practice for him. Even God Himself says: "Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth." (1:8).

Then the Lord allows the devil to take everything away that Job found precious. To test him, but not to harm him physically. In one day he lost everything, his animals, servants, and all ten of his beloved children, the ones he prayed daily for had died. Then to add misery to his trouble, Job himself was covered with painful sores from head to toe. As he sat among the ashes his wife says to him: "Are you still trying to maintain your integrity? Curse God and die." But Job scolds her for her foolish talk remarkably replying: "Should we only accept good things from the hand of God and never anything bad?" (2:10). It's a rhetorical question. He's not asking for an answer – he's making a fundamental point that sometimes God sends trouble to His people.

The promise of suffering is explained in Paul's opening letter to the Thessalonians where he says: "You received the message of Good News with joy from the Holy Spirit in spite of the severe suffering it brought you. In this way, you imitated both us and the Lord." (1:6). Paul, himself, no stranger to affliction and hardship, commends the church at Thessalonica for being "imitators of Christ." Believers are not exempt; suffering is part and parcel of the Christian life.

The cross is a symbol of suffering and like Job in the midst of adversity we are to take it up confidently and joyfully.

Paul told his Roman congregation: "We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation." (Romans 5:3-4). Basically, in the long run suffering produces hope which does not disappoint us. As Elihu points out to Job in the text: "[God]...rescues those who suffer. For he gets their attention through adversity...to keep them from a life of evil." (36:15, 21).

Other than Jesus no man suffered more than Job. But it would come to an end, ultimately bringing glory to God, who Job is told, "...is setting your table with the best food." (36:16). Similarly, when we've passed through the deepest darkness in the valley, the Lord will also prepare a table in our sight (Ps.23). Instead of being godless and full of resentment, remain firm and steadfast for the Lord will lift us from our distress and place us on the rock of salvation. He will make our feet as sure footed as the deer and bring us safely over the mountains. (Hab.3:19).

Back in the 14th century, Julian of Norwich grappled with this question of suffering. She lived during the time of the Black Death that across Europe killed 25 million people. Where was God in all this plague and suffering? Why weren't prayers being answered? The same philosophical questions we ask (especially when we see the pain and agony across the world). In order to help answer the unanswerable question of suffering Julian prayed to get sick. In her book *Revelations of Divine Love* she writes (and I paraphrase): "*God sent me a bodily sickness in which I lay for three days and three nights, and on the third night I received all the rites of Holy Church, and did not expect to live until next day. I often thought that I was on the point of death...but the Lord showed me a spiritual sight of his familiar tender love. He is our clothing, who embraces and shelters us, surrounds us that he will never desert us.*"

Through her experience she discovers the same thing Job does – that sickness, trouble and strife can help the soul advance to God, can help us take little stepping-stones towards eternity: "*All shall be well for there is a force of love moving through the universe that holds us fast and will never let us go.*"

In suffering, whether it's happening to us, or to others makes us cry long cries heavenwards and ask those big questions. It's ok to ask them. We're involved in a great battle. As long as we have breath in our lungs expect suffering. Our wealth and mighty efforts can't keep us from distress. *Why is this happening to me? Why now?*

Yet, if we believe in God and His glory then we must trust not that He is the cause of our pain, but that there is a purpose for it. So the question becomes, "*Why is this happening for me... what is my suffering trying to tell me?*" Also, many in affliction, long for death. In Job 36:20 it's put poetically: "Don't long for the cover of darkness" – it's sinful to contemplate such desire. To wish for death, when you're not prepared to appear before God is madness. And when things seem unfair, don't worry for divine judgement and justice will be upheld. In evil days the wicked will be punished. Never set human wisdom against the wisdom of God. "And we know in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28).

We have so much more truth and so many more promises than Job ever had. But look what he acknowledges about God at the end of the book in chapter 42. Read these verses: Then Job replied to the Lord: "I know that you can do anything, and no one can stop you. You asked, 'Who is this that questions my wisdom with such ignorance?' It is I and I was talking about things I knew nothing about, things far too wonderful for me." (42:1-3).

We don't understand it, but everything has a divine purpose. Not one molecule is without design. We get good things from the hand of God as well as bad things. He allows this because He is interested in our holiness and in His glory before our happiness. Our wisdom can't reconcile this, but like Job, if we can accept this then we can begin to understand that God's grace, not our suffering, is the point.

Psalm 50, verse 15: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me." Have faith for the promise of suffering has great purpose to open our hearts to the miracle of saving grace. Knowing the answers to our cancer, dementia, broken relationships is less important than knowing the One who does. Call on me!

God doesn't want us to focus on the problem of suffering, but focus instead on the promise of suffering. Our life in this world is incredibly short, yet filled with tremendous opportunity for the Lord and our place in the world to come. His own suffering in Christ on the cross guarantees the elimination of evil, sin, misery and death. We can't allow these things to weaken our faith, but strengthen it.

So think and pray about our current struggles, how we can reframe them within the Word of God and consider how they might come with a promise.

Rev. Tim Mullings

Tettenhall Wood & St. Columba's URC,
Wolverhampton



From the Bible

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NIV)

From the Editor

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

I still haven't found the time to write an article about our trip to East Yorkshire at the end of August. However, I have managed to write a report on the latest Churches Together meeting that I mentioned in the last edition. The report did not take too long to write as I had already written the minutes of the meeting ☺.

In the October edition I also mentioned an imminent trip to Dartmouth for the funeral of the Heather's brother's wife, Carol Hannaford. Although a sad occasion, the service was a nice tribute and took place in the historic St Saviour's Church in the heart of Dartmouth. It has a wonderful organ which we listened to before the service started.

Our unexpected visit to Devon allowed Heather to catch up with some old friends and family members. We also attended the Sunday service at Flavel Church – the church where we were married. The church is a Pioneer/United Reformed Church partnership and is somewhat different to our church. It operates as a café church with coffee and cake offered as soon as you step through the door. It attracts a variety of people of different ages and backgrounds and is very child friendly. The church is also open for coffee on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for most of the day.

Christmas is looming but another important event takes place before then when we induct our new minister, Rev. Andrew Birch on 12th November. A full report will appear in the December edition.

Malcolm Brown



The Truth about Diets

An 85-year-old couple, having been married almost 60 years, die tragically in a car crash. They have been in good health the past ten years, mainly due to the wife's nearly neurotic interest in health food.

When they reached the pearly gates, St. Peter took them to their mansion, which was decked out with a beautiful kitchen and master bathroom suite, complete with Jacuzzi. As they "oohed and aahed" the old man asked St. Peter how much all this was going to cost.

"It's free," St. Peter replied, "Remember, this is Heaven."

Next they went out back to see the championship golf course that the home backed on to. They would have golfing privileges every day, and each week the course changed to a new one representing the greatest golf courses on Earth.

The old man asked, "What are the green fees?"

"This is Heaven," St. Peter replied. "You play for free."

Next they went to the clubhouse and saw the lavish buffet lunch with the cuisines of the world laid out.

"How much does it cost to eat?" asked the old man.

"Don't you understand yet?" St. Peter asked. "This is Heaven. It's free!"

"Well, where are the low-fat and low-cholesterol foods?" the old man asked timidly.

"That's the best part... you can eat as much as you like of whatever you like and never get fat and you never get sick. This is Heaven."

The old man looked at his wife and said, "You and your #@%&*! bran muffins. I could have been here ten years ago!"

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

A prayer for those whose lives have been affected by conflict

Let us pray for all who suffer as a result of conflict, and ask that God may give us peace:
for the service men and women who have died in the violence of war, each one
remembered by and known to God; may God give peace.

for those who love them in death as in life, offering the distress of our grief and the
sadness of our loss; may God give peace.

for all members of the armed forces who are in danger this day, remembering family,
friends and all who pray for their safe return; may God give peace.

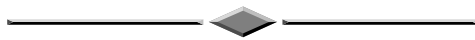
for civilian women, children and men whose lives are disfigured by war or terror, calling
to mind in penitence the anger and hatreds of humanity; may God give peace.

for peace-makers and peace-keepers, who seek to keep this world secure and free; may
God give peace.

for all who bear the burden and privilege of leadership, political, military and religious;
asking for gifts of wisdom and resolve in the search for reconciliation and peace; may
God give peace.

O God of truth and justice, we hold before you those whose memory we cherish, and
those whose names we will never know. Help us to lift our eyes above the torment of this
broken world, and grant us the grace to pray for those who wish us harm.

As we honour the past, may we put our faith in your future; for you are the source of life
and hope, now and for ever. *Amen.*



Peggy Hughes (1923 – 2022)

Peggy passed away on 6th October at the age of 99 after spending several months in a Brewster House care home in Heybridge. Her funeral took place at Basildon Crematorium on Wednesday 2nd November and was attended by several friends from the church.



Peggy was christened Margaret Edith but was known to family and friends as Peggy. She was born on 6th July 1923 in Kennington, London, and was the first child of Charles and Emmy Spencer. The family lived in one room with shared facilities and it became very crowded after Peggy's sister, Sylvia, and brother, Ray, were born. The Spencer family moved to Fortescue Road in Burnt Oak when Peggy was 11 years old. Peggy thought this was paradise compared to her former home, with a park opposite full of trees and a garden full of daisies. She attended Goldbeaters Secondary School.

Peggy left school at the age of 14 and went to work at Bamford's Spring Factory. During the war, Peggy's duties included night watch on the roof of the factory looking out for enemy aircraft. She used to cycle to work and one day, after falling off her bike, she was rescued by a young man named David Hughes. One thing led to another and, four years later, on 11th November 1944, they were married at the John Keble Church at Mill Hill in Edgware.

Peggy and David's first home was a flat in Harrow, where Bryan, their first son, was born in 1948. They then moved to a two-bedroom house at 13 Wise Lane, Mill Hill before moving to a 3-bedroom house at 35 Wise Lane, where second son, Alan, was born in 1954. This was to be the family home for over forty years. Family holidays were spent in Swanage, the Isle of Wight and, frequently, in Cornwall, where David's sister Bron lived. At home, Peggy loved her garden and enjoyed knitting and playing card and board games. She used to keep fit by going swimming every week with a friend.

It was in November 2000 that Peggy and David made the move to Sherwood Crescent in Hadleigh. They had got to know the area on visits to see Bryan and family, who then lived in Leigh-on-Sea. Peggy and David soon settled in, helped by good neighbours, including Norma and Alan Paul. Over the years, Peggy's extended family grew to include five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, with another on the way at the time of her death.

Peggy and David had been married for 61 years when David died in March 2006 at the age of 83. Peggy took this in her stride and continued to be active. She was a member of the Silver Service Club at the Salvation Army Hadleigh Temple and of the Wives' Fellowship here at Hadleigh United Reformed Church (URC). She also attended the URC coffee morning where she served the refreshments for several years with Norma and others.

Sometime after David's death, Peggy started attending the Sunday morning and midweek services at the church. Occasionally, when her sister Sylvia and brother-in-law Vic were visiting, they would come with Peggy and join the Sunday congregation. It was nice to see Sylvia and Vic again at the wake. Peggy appreciated the love and fellowship that the church provided and enjoyed the Wives' Fellowship meetings, and events such as the harvest supper and anniversary tea.



Norma and Peggy serving at the church coffee morning in Nov 2005



Peggy receiving 90th birthday flowers in 2013 from Kay Watson, leader of the Wives' Fellowship



Peggy at home on her 98th birthday in 2021

Sadly, with increasing age, Peggy's mobility declined and, from 2019, she became unable to venture out on a regular basis though for a year or so she was able to attend occasional Wives' Fellowship meetings. She also enjoyed occasional outings with family, particularly on her birthday. Old Leigh was a favourite destination, where she would enjoy a crab roll in the Peter Boat pub.

Peggy enjoyed reading the Hadleigh Messenger and I was able to chat to her when I delivered the magazine each month. I was always greeted with a warm smile. Peggy appreciated visitors and she remained cheerful despite her own situation and whatever sad events were taking in the world outside. With the help of carers she was able to live at home until near the end of her life.

A fall at home on 11th April resulted in Peggy being admitted to Southend Hospital. She returned home for a short time but another fall saw her return to hospital. When she was discharged in early June, Peggy was transferred to Brewster House care home in Heybridge for a period of assessment but, with increasing frailty, this became a permanent arrangement and she was unable to return to living at home.

We give thanks to God for Peggy's long life and all that she meant to her family and friends. A more cheerful person you could not wish to meet. May she rest in God's eternal peace, reunited with husband David. We send our condolences to Bryan and Alan and their families and pray that God will be with them as they come to terms with their sad loss of a much-loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Malcolm Brown



Churches Together in Hadleigh meeting

The latest meeting of Churches Together in Hadleigh took place on 10th October 2022 at the Baptist Church.

This was the first formal meeting since 20th January 2020. An informal gathering was held in our church garden on 6th July.

Opening – The meeting was chaired by the Leader, Rev. Ruth Cartwright, the Priest-in-Charge of St James the Less and St Barnabas churches. Ruth opened the meeting with a prayer.

Roger Kingston was present to represent the Methodist Church, Jane Brown hosted the meeting for the Baptist Church and I represented our church.

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Maureen Maley (SA) had to miss the meeting at short notice and I gave a report based on a phone call with Maureen.

The main news was that the Lloyds bank account has now been closed owing to the imposition of a £5 monthly administration fee. There is very little activity on the account so it is not considered worthwhile to retain it. Ruth advised that her husband, Stuart Mann, the Treasurer at St Barnabas Church, was willing to administer the Churches Together funds by ring fencing them in one of the St Barnabas bank accounts. This offer was gratefully accepted.

Christmas services – Ruth advised that the switching on of Hadleigh's Christmas lights will take place on Saturday 26th November. There was some discussion about producing a Christmas

leaflet to be handed out at that event. Roger had some doubts about its usefulness but Ruth and Jane thought it showed that the churches are still there for people and that they are united in their message.

It was agreed that a leaflet should be produced and Roger kindly agreed once again to produce it. Roger asked that churches send him a list of services with the services ranked in order of importance. He will then include as many as possible on the leaflet subject to space limitations. Roger will print 200 leaflets at a cost of 10p each.

Ruth advised that people will be invited into St James the Less Church for refreshments after the switching on of the lights, where the Yardarm Folk Orchestra will perform.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2023 – Next year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will run from Wednesday 18th to Wednesday 25th January. With only one member of the clergy present, it was not possible to plan the usual number of meetings. As a minimum, Ruth offered to host a united service at St James the Less Church on Sunday 22nd January 2023. A start time of 3.00pm was agreed.

Roger said that the Methodist Church could probably host a meeting on Thursday 19th January at 2.00pm. He will ask Rev. Pete Moorhouse or Rev. Zena Smith if they could lead it.

It was thought that a meeting on the final Wednesday of the Week of Prayer would be good if one of the other churches could host it.

Other future events

a) Lent Course (March/April 2023) - Owing to the lack of available clergy it was thought that it would be difficult to arrange a Churches Together Lent Course. If an individual church is planning to run a Lent Course then it would be good if they would consider the possibility of inviting people from other churches.

b) Good Friday (7th April 2023) - I thought it unlikely that the URC would wish to serve refreshments after a Walk of Witness to the church because of the crowded setting and ongoing concerns about COVID-19.

Roger said that the Methodist Church could host the united service as usual and serve refreshments. This offer was accepted. Roger said he would invite Rev. Zena Smith to lead the service but as she is in charge of three other churches this may not be possible.

c) Easter Day (9th April 2023) - Hope was expressed that the Sunrise Service at Hadleigh Castle, organised by the SA Temple, will take place as usual on Easter Day.

News from the churches

URC – I reported that the church is shortly to have a new minister, Rev. Andrew Birch. Andrew is minister of Kings Road URC and Hadleigh will have a 20% share of his time. He will be inducted on Saturday 12th November at 2.00pm. Andrew will lead the monthly Communion service but will also devote most Thursdays to Hadleigh.

I mentioned that we are having some difficulty in arranging lay preachers and have been very reliant on a couple of people, namely Adrian Tinning and Heather Brown.

Methodist Church – From 1st September, Rev. Zena Smith took over from Rev. Pete Moorhouse as minister of Hadleigh Methodist Church. Rev. Zena already had responsibility for Canvey,

Benfleet and Thundersley Methodist churches. She will lead the monthly Communion service, held on the fourth Sunday of the month. Roger said that lettings have bounced back after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Baptist Church – Jane reported that Rev. Paul Stow is retiring in November but will help out with the Christmas services. Work is ongoing to prepare a church profile. The church is blessed with two Elders who are able to preach and also has another trainee minister, Tom Pender, who has started a six-year, part-time course at Spurgeon's College. All activities are back to normal.

St James the Less Church & St Barnabas Church

– Rev. Ruth reported that the congregation at St James has not recovered to the pre-COVID level. Some people have died and some no longer come because of deterioration in their health or because they have got out of the habit. At St Barnabas Church, the congregation has more or less recovered.

The setting up of a Warm Hub has been agreed in principle for a Warm Hub, probably at St James the Less Church where the electricity is currently provided on a fixed contract, unaffected by recent price rises. Volunteers will be needed to run it.

SA Temple – I mentioned that Major Marian Fripp has reached retirement age but is staying on until July 2023 when her husband, Major Steve, will probably be moved to another corps.

Date of next meeting – The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th January at the Methodist Church, starting at 2.00pm.

Closing – Jane closed the meeting with a prayer. The meeting ended at 4.08pm.

Malcolm Brown

P.S. Christian Aid Week 2022 – I forgot to mention at the meeting that the amount raised for Christian Aid Week in 2022 was £516.41. This was down on the 2019 figure of £1,423 because there was no collection at this year's Good Friday service and some other fundraising events were not held.

The Wedding Cake

A couple was arranging their wedding and asked the bakery to inscribe the wedding cake with 1 John 4:18 which reads "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear."

The bakery evidently lost, smudged or otherwise misread the noted reference, and beautifully inscribed on the cake John 4:18 ... "For you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband."

For the Fallen

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

Laurence Binyon

21st September 1914



Robert Laurence Binyon was born in Lancaster in 1869, the son of a clergyman, and educated at St Paul's School and Trinity College, Oxford.

In 1893 Binyon started work in the British Museum's

Department of Printed Books, before transferring two years later to the Department of Prints and Drawings where he eventually became Keeper, and an authority on Oriental Art. His first volume of poetry, *Lyric Poetry* was published in 1894.

Binyon was too old to enlist for World War One but he served with the Red Cross, visiting the Front in 1916.

Binyon was in his mid-forties when he wrote *For the Fallen* in September 1914. It is the poem for which he will always be remembered as the four lines from the fourth stanza are read every year at Armistice services across Britain and the Commonwealth and feature as an inscription for thousands of memorials. There would be another four years of fighting and more than two million Allied soldiers killed before *For The Fallen* took on its full meaning and impact.

After the Armistice, Binyon returned to the British Museum. He wrote several books on art and was appointed Norton professor of poetry at Harvard in 1933 and was Byron Professor at the University of Athens in 1940. Binyon died in 1943.

URC News

October Lundie award winner named

A 24-year-old described as “helping to keep the church community together” has become the latest recipient of the Lundie Memorial Award.



Joshua Baldwin, 24, of the URC East Midlands Synod, was nominated by Spalding URC Elder, Julie Lunn, for utilising his skills in technology to create and share online worship during the pandemic.

Julia said, that with the help of his family, Joshua involved the Spalding congregation in providing online services by inviting members to record themselves and, through clever editing, Joshua would put them together and publish the digital content in place of the usual Sunday service.

Many of those in the congregation who had previously felt unable to contribute to services found themselves, with Joshua’s encouragement, able to provide videos and ideas; something which enriched the whole church family and community and was built upon once lockdown ended.

Joshua humbly said that his achievement was the result of a “joint effort”.

As part of his award, Joshua was given £100 which he hopes to use the money to benefit some youth initiatives already up and running at the church or subsidising fees for a day out for the church’s young people.

The Lundie Memorial Award celebrates the good work a child or young person is doing for their church and community.

Second series of URC podcast launched.

A second series of the URC’s podcast was launched on Thursday 6 October. The fortnightly podcast explores the denomination’s focus on Christian discipleship and mission through a variety of topics.

In this series, we explore:

- Activism with Rev. Kate Gray;
- Conversion therapy with Rev. Alex Care-Young, a Pioneer Minister based in Cambridge;
- Feminism with Philippa Osei, URC Youth Moderator Elect, and Victoria Turner, student in Global Christianity;
- Singleness with Single-Friendly Church, and
- War with Rev. Jacob Bali, a Special Category Pioneer Minister and military veteran.

Episodes will be published fortnightly on a Wednesday. The podcast is available on Anchor, Spotify and all major podcast platforms. The link to Anchor is <https://anchor.fm/theurcpodcast>.

Jubilee pilgrims complete trek across North Wales

Pilgrims have completed their trek across North Wales in honour of the United Reformed Church’s 50th anniversary.



In total, 94 people representing 12 different churches, and four furry friends, took part in the pilgrimage which ended at Penmaenmawr on 2 October having started at Wrexham on 23 July.

Every Saturday, pilgrims of all ages had travelled by foot, bus, train and car from one church to the next of the 12 churches taking part.

At the end of the journey, the group were welcomed at St Paul’s United Church in Penmaenmawr, a Methodist and URC local ecumenical partnership, with bowls of soup, cake, and mugs of tea followed by worship.

The walk took place across 11 weeks and included infants to people aged over 70 with the groups covering more than 90 kilometres in total. Some walkers included four generations of the same family.

Twyford church reopens after £200k revamp

A church closed for nearly a year has reopened its doors following a £200,000 facelift. Twyford United Reformed Church, in the Wessex Synod, closed in December 2021 for repair and modernisation. Its tiny congregation of 15 people raised the whopping sum over many years and thanks to their efforts the church reopened its doors on 9th October.

“We have been fundraising for more than 10 years,” said Brenda North, Acting Church Secretary. I often wondered if this would ever happen. The building was approaching being unusable because of the poor facilities. Thanks to the generosity of Twyford people and some major funders, we can once again proudly offer the building to our community.”



The Victorian chapel now boasts new toilet facilities, a kitchen, and two flexible spaces that can be used either together or separately for worship or community activities. As well as Sunday worship, the church hosts a mobile Post Office and has plans for more community activities.

Major contributors to the £200,000 refurbishment project included the Wessex Synod Trust, HS2, the FCC Communities Fund, Bucks Historic Churches, the Garfield Weston Foundation, and the Congregational and General Charitable Trust.

West Kirby member saves thousands with zero-carbon home

High energy prices are affecting people up and down the country, but not Colin Usher. Colin, Church Secretary for West Kirby United Reformed Church, and his wife Jenny are making huge savings having designed and built their own zero-energy, eco-friendly home. Since moving into their home nine years ago, the couple have saved a whopping £35,000 in energy bills.

“I had always wanted to build my own house,” explains Colin, an architect. “I had specialised in

low energy design at architecture college in the 1970s and have been building low energy homes since 1998. It was always my hope that we might find a suitable site to build on, to show that low energy buildings are not hard or expensive to build.”

In 2011, Jenny noticed a dilapidated, detached house for sale 250m from where they lived.



The couple bought the property, demolished it, and built a new zero-energy home. Since then the pair have made huge savings and because of Colin’s understanding of how to optimise the design, it did not cost any more than an economical bespoke house to build.

The main features of the house include:

- Lots of insulation – the building does not even touch the ground but floats on 20cm of insulation.
- Good orientation with large south facing windows protected from mid-summer sun by slight overhangs.
- An airtight shell with no draughts, so it has a ventilation system with heat recovery.
- Solar panels to generate electricity, which is not linked to a battery.
- An air source heat pump for hot water and to provide warmth for the underfloor heating (on the ground floor only).
- Thermal mass – it is a traditional type of building with blockwork walls and partitions which help to store the heat (or the coolness) and even out all the vagaries of the UK weather.

Colin is also part of West Kirby URC’s eco team which helped the church recently gain a silver Eco-Church award from A Rocha UK for its efforts in expressing care for God’s world in worship and teaching, eco-friendly buildings and land, engagement in community and global environmental campaigns, and for helping its congregation members become more eco-aware in their personal lifestyles.

How bumblebees can help us understand the evolution of human memories

Researching the way other animals' minds work can deepen our understanding of the human mind, especially when there are differences. For example, our new study has shown that bumblebees can forget basic information within minutes, though they can still make complicated decisions. But to understand how bees' memories differ from ours, let's first talk about ice cream.

The other week, I visited a new ice cream shop and the sight of two flavours made my belly rumble: pistachio and chocolate brownie. I've had both, but never side by side. It was a tough decision. To make this choice I had to access separate memories of the two flavours. Did I recall how rich the brownies had been? Or did I remember just that I liked pistachio more than the lemon flavour I had on that spring day earlier this year?

Whether it be two ice creams or two flowers, humans and bumblebees face similar decisions. Many people think of animals as creatures which run only on instinct. But my ice cream dilemma is an example of the decisions animals of all kinds make. My PhD project explores how bumblebees make decisions and if their tiny brains come up with similar solutions to problems as we do.



Bumblebee foraging from an artificial flower (Author)

Inner workings of the mind

Humans use a combination of memories to solve problems. Some memories for absolute information (say, how sweet an ice cream is), and others for comparative knowledge (such as whether it was better or worse than another option).

We aren't the only animals who do this. A study showed that starlings remember and use both absolute (how long it took to obtain a worm) and comparative insights (whether the waiting time was shorter or longer) when deciding between new combinations of food options. But our study showed this isn't the case for bumblebees.

I'm fascinated by how bumblebees can solve complex tasks, like cross-modal recognition (learning an object using only touch or vision and then discriminating between objects using other sensory information) and negative patterning (learning that two stimuli are rewarding but a combination of the two is not).

My colleagues and I designed a series of experiments to see what bees remembered about flowers. We trained bumblebees (*Bombus terrestris*) to forage from "flowers" in the lab. By flowers, I mean little coloured plastic chips propped up on vials, on which we placed droplets of sugar water.

In the first training session, bumblebees foraged on two different coloured flowers which offered nectar of two different sugar concentrations. They quickly learned the green flower was sweeter than the yellow flower.

They then went through a second training phase with two new flowers, orange and blue. It didn't take long for them to realise orange flowers were sweeter than blue flowers.

Finally, each bumblebee explored two flowers they hadn't experienced together, yellow and orange, and both without nectar. This time they had to rely on two separate memories. We watched which flower type the bees landed on the most to see which they thought was better.

After just a few minutes, the bees we studied lost all memory of absolute information. They couldn't remember anything about how sweet any of the flowers were. All they could remember is whether a flower had been better or worse.

Good things in small packages

Bees have minuscule brains with less than one million neurons, (similar in size and weight to a sesame seed) compared to our 1.3-kilogram brain with around 85 billion neurons. However, research shows tiny brained invertebrates and large brained animals aren't that different in their brain structure. It might sound like bees have poor memories. But the way their brains evolved to store information is simply different to ours.

Diet offers one explanation. Just like humans, starlings eat a varied diet with many types of foods including fruits, worms and seeds. But adult bumblebees, like all bees, live on sugar water (and a bit of pollen) from flowers.

Perhaps the early ancestors of humans and birds, long after breaking away from the evolutionary branch bumblebees followed around 500 million years ago, needed to retain memories for absolute information to compare the varied foods they ate. But to succeed in their nectar world, bumblebees don't need to remember anything more than which flower was sweeter.

In the wild, bumblebees tend to forage only a short distance from their nest and search for the sweetest flowers around. We know bees quickly learn where to find food, which flowers are rewarding, and how to extract nectar and pollen from them. They remember these things for the rest of their lives.

Bumblebees tend to find one good flower source and stick to it. Think about it: if you planned to only live off a diet of salted caramel ice cream you wouldn't need comparative memories of food.

Investigating these questions in other animal species may help us learn about how important food is for memory development. For example, we could gain valuable insight if we looked at

how the honey possum (a small cute mammal which drinks almost entirely nectar), and the paper wasp (a pollinating insect like bumblebees, but with a much more varied diet), remember options.



Honey possum (AuntMary/Shutterstock)

But for now, if you are ever in a predicament involving choices of ice cream flavours, my advice is: get both.

Yonghe Zhou

PhD Student in Animal Psychology, Queen Mary University of London

Published on The Conversation website on 18th October 2022 – see www.theconversation.com

Prayer Reflection

Remember and re-member

Remember the significant moments of your life and ponder your reaction to them, both at the time and now looking back. Did you feel that God was involved while you were experiencing the event? What is your view of that looking back? Realise that God watches over us with loving care. Ask him to show you how he has led you in the past and thank him for those he has sent to accompany you along the way. Recall their support and resolve to reconnect with those you've lost touch with so you can thank them too.

Reflect on the decisions you have made in your life. How did you reach them? Were they always the right ones or did you, like most of us, make mistakes which you regret. How did you put things right? Were you aware of God putting you back together again, re-memorizing you? For how much of your life have you been aware of God guiding you, both through your reading and thoughts and also through other people? How did he bring you back when you took a wrong turn? Thank him for the grace that saves us all.

Resolve to give the same patience, forgiveness and grace that you received, to those God sends you to help and support. Ask that their journey of faith is enhanced because of your support and pray for the wisdom you will need. Thank God for the privilege of serving in this way.

Prayer

Lord as we remember all that you have done for us, may we not forget those you have worked through to bring us closer to you. As we live day by day may what we say and do so reflect your love that those we meet learn more of you and grow in faith. Thank you Lord. *Amen.*

Beryl Hunt

Mission in bricks and mortar

The diocesan Bishop of Chelmsford, Rt Rev. Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, shares a reflection about her mission as lead Bishop for Housing in the Church of England.



I arrived in Britain in 1980 as a refugee aged 13, following the impact of the Islamic Revolution in my home country of Iran. Having left with no more than a suitcase each, my family were welcomed

here and for the first 18 months were offered housing in a theological college and then a vacant vicarage. That stability gave us the base from which we were able to start building new lives.

Forty years later I was asked by Archbishop Justin Welby to be the first Bishop for Housing, taking forward the recommendations of 'Coming Home', the report of his Commission on Housing, Church and Community.

This is a daunting challenge, and although I have no expertise in housing, I am passionate about social justice – not least because of my own formative experiences. Since 8 million people in England are living in overcrowded, unaffordable or unsuitable housing, there is a clear call for Christians across all denominations to work towards housing provision.

The Coming Home report spells out a distinct Christian vision for housing and community. The Bible tells a story of a journey from a God-provided home, of humanity then becoming 'homeless', moving out into a dangerous world, then of a long process of redemption which leads back home again – but to one that looks different from the first.

The report unpacked this trajectory and from it developed five core values to characterise all good housing. First, the story of Creation and humanity's role in stewarding the earth means that our housing must be sustainable; the built environment needs to be in harmony with the natural environment, and our housing should be high on quality while low on carbon.

The pervasive reality of sin means that God's good creation is susceptible to environmental and social disintegration. Homes aren't always places of protection, nor communities free from danger and exploitation. Physical housing can be poorly built, standards compromised, and repairs

neglected, which is why good housing will always put a high value on safety.

Thirdly, the incarnation reaffirms the goodness of the physical creation and the value of human communities having places and spaces where they belong. Good housing should therefore offer stability, where local people can afford to live and put down roots, so they and their families can thrive.

God's redeemed people – the Church – represent a new kind of humanity, no longer governed by old distinctions based on race or class. This translates into a commitment to housing that is welcoming and sociable, with hospitable spaces that can help people from different cultures, faiths and backgrounds find a place of connection, and build long-term relationships.

Finally, the vision of the new creation means that although we will never achieve perfection in housing in this age, we can still work towards the one to come, where all is healed and transformed, and God makes his home among us. Housing that reflects this means that architecture, design and technology all work together to create places of beauty that people delight to live in.

This reflection provides five simple values as the benchmark for the Church's engagement in the housing sector: good housing is sustainable, safe, stable, sociable and satisfying. The language is accessible for people of all faiths or none, yet there is great theological depth behind each of the five values.

In my role as Bishop for Housing, I want to invite you to be part of our journey. We're setting up a Church Housing Foundation to empower the church to engage with housing at all levels. We want to collaborate with any partners, groups, individuals, who share this vision and want to see God's kingdom expressed through bricks and mortar – delightful homes and thriving communities up and down the country.

Rt Rev Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani

Published on the Churches Together in England website on 10th October 2022.

Link:

Church Housing Foundation:
<https://www.churchhousingfoundation.org/>

Computer Corner

Out of Town / Old Country

Interesting videos

Readers of a certain age may remember Jack Hargreaves who presented a programme named Old Country about life in the country, including farming, fishing and rural practices. Old Country was first broadcast in 1959 and ran for 24 years. A similar programme named Out of Town ran for 3 years in the 1980s.

The producer of Out of Town, Dave Knowles, runs a YouTube channel which contains some complete episodes and excerpts from those programmes, which are a fascinating look back in time. The link below goes to the channel's playlists page from where you can click on the Out of Town/Old Country playlist.

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/c/DaveKnowlesFilmmaker/playlists>

Understand: The Economy

Interesting Podcast

This is a new, back-to-basics BBC podcast aimed at explaining different aspects of the economy. This podcast will cut through the jargon to ensure you finally understand all those terms and phrases you often hear on the news such as inflation, GDP, interest rates and bonds.

URL: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/brand/m001dwr7>

Westminster College – Church resources

Useful website

Westminster College, the URC training college, has some interesting and useful downloadable resources. Most are designed to help people involved in preparing worship.

URL: <https://www.westminster.cam.ac.uk/urc/church-resources>

Word Search – Bridges and viaducts

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| K | U | L | R | E | P | N | U | R | G | J | M | O | S | K | Z | L | U | K | B |
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- BARMOUTH
- BREYDON
- CLIFTON
- GLENFINNAN
- HUMBER
- INFINITY
- IRON
- LAMBETH
- LLANGOLLEN
- MILLENNIUM
- PACKHORSE
- PULTENEY
- QUEENSFERRY
- RIALTO
- RIBBLEHEAD
- SEVERN
- TINTAGEL
- TOWER
- TYNE
- WATERLOO

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WHAT'S ON

A round-up of future events in the area

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| Sat 12 Nov 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 Pete Dunhill and Mike Blant 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 2 nd Sat. |
| Mon 14 Nov 2022 | - Smart Minds - A friendly club for people with dementia and their carers/families. Art activities and socialising with tea and biscuits. At Hadleigh United Reformed Church from 1.00pm to 3.00pm every Monday. If interested, phone Sue Lesser on 07889 762172. |
| Tue 15 Nov 2022 | - Kettle's On Coffee Morning at St Barnabas Church, Church Road, Hadleigh, from 10.30am to 12.00 noon. Held every Tue. |
| Wed 16 Nov 2022 | - Coffee Morning at St Michael's Church, St Michael's Road, Daws Heath, from 10.00am to 11.45am. Held every Wed. |
| Thu 17 Nov 2022 | - Poetry Reading Group at Hadleigh Library from 2.30pm to 3.30pm - the poems of U.A. Fanthorpe. Every 3 rd Thu of month. All welcome. |
| Fri 18 Nov 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, 12.30pm to 2.30pm every Friday. Meet others who are passionate about craft and enjoy a chat. |
| ditto | - Christmas Fayre at St Peter's Church Hall, Church Road, Thundersley, Starts at 6.00pm. |
| Sat 19 Nov 2022 | - Thames Estuary Lacemakers Lace Day at Hadleigh Baptist Church from 10.00am to 3.30pm. For more info, phone Sheila on 01702 348863. |
| ditto | - Waterside Choir & The Fishermen's Chapel Gospel Choir In Concert at the Salvation Army Hadleigh Temple. Doors open 7.00pm for 7.30pm start. Tickets £6.00 at the door. |
| Sat 26 Nov 2022 | - Hadleigh & Thundersley Community Archive Drop-In At Hadleigh Library from 10.30am to 12 noon. Bring along old photos and documents for scanning or chat about your memories of the area. |
| ditto | - Christmas Fair at Hadleigh Methodist Church from 10.30am to 3.30pm. |
| ditto | - Christmas Market with Santa's Grotto at Hadleigh Old Fire Station (HOFS), High Street, Hadleigh. From 11.00am to 4.00pm. |
| ditto | - Switching-on of Hadleigh Christmas lights with carol singing. Starts at 4.00pm. Refreshments afterwards in St James the Less Church with music by The Yardarm Folk Orchestra. |
| ditto | - BASOP Christmas Concert at Hadleigh Methodist Church. Starts at 8.00pm. Tickets: Adult £8.00, Under 16s £4.00 - phone 01702 551786. |
| Sun 27 Nov 2022 | Allegro Choir - A Celebration Of Christmas at St Barnabas Church. Starts at 3.00pm. Tickets £10.00 (children free), includes refreshments - to book, phone 01268 751303. |

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