

# THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

February 2024



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

## PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR FEBRUARY 2024

Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10.30am	Morning Service	Mrs Heather Brown
Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10.30am	Morning Service	Mr John Amos
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10.30am	Morning Service with Holy Communion	Rev. Andrew Birch
Sun 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10.30am	Morning Service	Clive Lewis & Mike Mircic

## PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR MARCH 2024

Sun 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	10.30am	Morning Service	Mr John Simmons
Sun 10 <sup>th</sup> Mar	10.30am	Morning Service	Mrs Heather Brown
Sun 17 <sup>th</sup> Mar	10.30am	Morning Service with Holy Communion	Rev. Andrew Birch
Sun 24 <sup>th</sup> Mar	10.30am	Morning Service (Palm Sunday)	Mr John Amos
Sun 31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	10.30am	Morning Service (Easter Day)	Rev. Jack Roche

Note: We are currently worshipping in the Small Hall to save on heating expenditure but will return to worshipping in the church on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March (Easter Day).

### ELDERS' MEETING

Thu 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 12.45pm

### JOINT CHURCH & ELDERS' MEETING

Thu 14<sup>th</sup> Mar 12.45pm

Note: At the Church Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023, it was agreed that the bi-monthly Church Meetings could become joint Church and Elders' Meetings. The Elders' Meetings that are usually held a week or so before a Church Meeting will no longer be held. This change was suggested by the Minister, after consultation with Eastern Synod, and supported by the Elders, in view of the fact that there are only two church members attending the Church Meetings who are not also Elders. Any sensitive business that needs to be discussed solely by the Elders will be dealt with at the end of the joint meetings.

## FLOWERS

Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2024	June Gargrave - in memory of baby Noah & Keith's sister
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2024	June Gargrave - birthdays of sons Richard and Stephen



Note: If you would like to make a donation towards the cost of the church flowers on a particular Sunday, perhaps to celebrate a special event or remember a loved one, please speak to Jean Reeve. Jean's phone number is 01702 554907.

## From the Minister

Dear Friends,

When I was growing up in the late 60s, 70s and 80s there were sayings that were banded about which were so simple and so memorable that they had a lasting effect on me.

Do you remember 'Live simply so that others may simply live,' or 'If you were accused of being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you?'

Recently I heard a saying which was featured on a television advert for Kenco Coffee which was – 'We rise by lifting each other.'

Sometimes, it only takes a few words like these to hit home and to stay with us for the rest of our lives. Much the same can be said for memorable Bible verses, which then stay with us. It is as if they are written on our hearts.

The phrase 'God's word written on our hearts' appears in the Bible in several places. In Romans 2:14-16, it is written that 'you yourselves are our

letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all.'

In Proverbs 3:3 and 7:3, it is written, 'write them on the tablet of your heart.' The phrase refers to the idea that God's teachings and commandments are to be internalised or placed on our hearts and followed by each one of us.

Our Mission and Ministry simply means being who we are, wherever we are, and whoever we are with, at any time. Every contact made and every conversation had, will have the potential to share something of God with others.

The starting point is always to show grace, compassion, and kindness as we deal with each other within God's family.

'By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'  
(John 13:35)

With all good wishes and every blessing,

*Andrew*

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### Prayer Reflection: Growth – Humility and Service

**Remember** when, as a young child something got broken in the home. What was your reaction? For many young children it would be to run to a parent for them to fix it believing they can fix anything. For some, sadly, there would be distress and fear of punishment. Consider your response today when things start to go wrong or life falls apart. Do we run to our loving heavenly Father expecting him to fix things or do we fear it is a punishment for something. Though we don't always get what we want in the way that we want it, we can be assured of God's love, care and provision for us. Thank him for his loving care.

**Recognise** that the church is God's 'Repair Shop' and the tools he uses to mend the broken are his word found in the Bible, the prayers we make and the love he gives us for one another. As we trust in his expert hands, we grow stronger and better able to serve in the way God intended. Pray for the grace to come to God humbly accepting our need of him and his restoring and healing powers. Thank him that they are so freely given to us.

**Resolve** to be a help not a hindrance to those around us who may be struggling by being more open about our dependence upon God for the strength to do what we do. May we always give God the glory for what he has achieved in us.

#### **Prayer**

Thank you Lord for your loving care. May we be enabled to trust you in every circumstance of life and know your presence with us in all we do. Thank you Lord.  
*Amen*

*Beryl Hunt*

**From the Editor** Welcome to the February 2024 edition of the Hadleigh Messenger.

This edition is slimmer than normal because of an untimely computer problem – a failing hard drive. (Readers who have no interest in computers may wish to skip the next two paragraphs!)

I have two hard drives in my PC – one for the Windows operating system plus the programs that I use, and one for my data, i.e. all the files that I create (or download) such as documents and photos. A program that I use to monitor the health of my hard drives recently started to show errors with the drive so I decided to replace it before it failed completely. Fortunately, I had a spare hard drive that I'd removed from an external storage unit and replaced with a larger one.

The spare drive is an 'enterprise' drive designed for use in intensive operations and as a result comes with a five-year warranty, which is one of the reasons why I bought it in the first place. One of the downsides to enterprise drives is that they are noisier than ordinary drives so, believe it or not, I have resorted to placing the drive on two rubber erasers in a space above the DVD drive to isolate the drive from the metal of the PC case, which was amplifying the noise from the drive.

I mentioned in the last magazine that, at the Gift service on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent, we collected gifts for gift bags to be given to members and friends of the church fellowship who live on their own or who don't find it easy to get out. There are photos below of some of the people who received a gift bag below.

In case the March magazine is delayed (sadly, a not unlikely event), I have included the pulpit arrangements for March in this magazine. You will notice that our worship will be led by one or two new people in the coming weeks.

The preacher on 3<sup>rd</sup> March is John Simmons, who I know well as I worked with John in the IT department of the then HM Customs & Excise in Alexander House in Southend. (The building is now empty as HM Revenue & Customs, as the organisation became, has relocated all the staff.) John's home church is Westcliff Free Church, where Adrian Tinning also worships. I look forward to seeing John again.

Although it's far too late to wish you a happy New Year, I have included on another page a reflection that was intended to be read at the start of the New Year.

*Malcolm Brown*

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## Christmas gift bags

Here are three of the folk who received one of our Christmas gift bags. Thirteen gift bags were delivered in total. The other recipients were Royston and Susan Brackin, Vera Knapton, David Smallbone, John Rice, Norma Paul, Arthur Haywood, Marion Melliush, Mary Milne, Stan Williams and Adrian and Carole Tinning. Several thank you letters were received from recipients. Emily Simpson kindly delivered the gift bags to her Nan, Marion Melliush, and to Mary Milne, who both live in Catherine Miller House.



Jim Clubb



Jean Parnell



Colin Melliush

Thank you to everyone who donated gifts to include in the gift bags.

*Malcolm Brown*

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

## Find time to be “uncomfortable” this New Year

In this reflection, Vicky Longbone, Church Related Community Worker for Ashbourne Road Church and Mackworth URC's Derby Alive to Community (A2C) project, asks us to not get too comfortable this New Year:

For me, the last few years seem to have all rolled into one, it seems impossible that our first Covid lockdown was nearly 4 years ago. Lots of things have changed in this time, some for the good and some for the bad, but every single one of us has been affected in one way or another.

One example is the advance in technology. Zoom used to mean to rush or travel quickly. How many of us had even heard of the App before Covid? Meetings without travelling, keeping in touch with family and friends or worshipping together, love it or loathe it, many of us rely on it.

Another change I've noticed is how many of our churches have learnt more about their communities and how they are finding ways to offer community ministry.

How many churches opened foodbanks for a few months to get through Covid? How many of those are still going nearly 4 years later? How many of those are now busier than ever?

How many churches offered community lunches, cooked and delivered to those who couldn't get out, just for a few months? How many are still serving those meals, but more often in a building now?

When we opened our warm spaces last year, did we think we would be running them still? The cost-of-living crisis that has followed the pandemic means that so many things that our churches set up for a short period have found the need to continue to do them.

During this time how many people have we served that we would never have met before? How far out of our comfort zones have we had to move?

I pray that every single one of you have had to move out of your own comfort zones at some point in the last few years!

Meeting people who are not like us can be uncomfortable. Seeing the furniture move around because the community lunch has more people than the Sunday congregation can be uncomfortable. Doing things in different ways can be uncomfortable.

Cesar A Cruz, Dean of Secondary Schools Program at Harvard University, said: “Art should comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable.” I first heard this quote years ago, but when it was said to me, they replaced the word ‘art’ for ‘Faith’. Faith should comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable.

When we are comfortable, we become complacent, we continue to serve our own needs and not those of others. When we are disturbed, we can feel stressed or overwhelmed, but our faith should bring us comfort. Our faith should allow us to experience and share both.

So many people continue to live disadvantaged lives due to the cost-of-living crisis, and so many of them are “not like us”. Many of our churches welcome the stranger, but do we really welcome the strange as well? When we build relationships with those who are “not like us” not only are they no longer a stranger but they probably aren't that strange after all...

I pray that 2024 brings you comfort and joy, but don't forget to find time for the things that are uncomfortable too.

*Vicky Longbone*

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## Christmas Celebration



On Christmas Eve, instead of the usual morning service, we held a carol service at 4.00pm that was billed as a Christmas Celebration. It was led by our Minister and we were joined by several friends from other churches. Afterwards, we all enjoyed tea/coffee and cakes (instead of the usual biscuits).

*Malcolm Brown*

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## Family News

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### Geoff Whitman

Sadly, Geoff, the husband of Rev. Celia Whitman, passed away in Southend Hospital on 29<sup>th</sup> January. Geoff faithfully supported Celia whenever she preached at Hadleigh.

Geoff's funeral will take place at 2.20pm at Southend Crematorium on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March with a service of thanksgiving at The Cornerstone URC at 3.00pm.

*We send our sincere condolences to Celia and pray that God will be close in the days and weeks ahead as she comes to terms with the loss of Geoff.*

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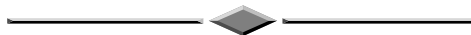
## Worshipping in the Small Hall

At the joint Church and Elders' Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> January, it was decided to move the Sunday morning services into the Small Hall for the rest of January, all of February and most of March. We will move back into the church for the Easter Day service. It is easier to heat the Small Hall in the colder winter months and, hopefully, people will feel more comfortable. As a result there will also be a saving of around £15 per week in electricity costs.



This photo was taken at the Communion Service on 21<sup>st</sup> January, when, sadly, we said goodbye to Judy Chilvers, who has moved to Southend. Judy enjoyed her time with us and we will miss her.

*Malcolm Brown*



## Nicola's ordination

Back in June 2023, I received an e-mail via the church e-mail address from Nicola Pinnock, whom some people might remember under her maiden name, Nicola Bates. Nicola mentioned that she is the daughter of Rev. Gordon and Wendy Bates. For those who aren't aware, Gordon and Wendy worshipped at our church when it was Hadleigh Congregational Church, before Gordon went into the ministry, and much later on he became an Associate Minister at our church when Rev. Bryan Imbush was our Minister.

Nicola explained that she lives on the Isle of Wight where she is (or was at the time) a Reader in the Church of England at St Catherine's Church, Ventnor and that she had been training for ordination as a Deacon. Before she could be ordained, the Diocese of Portsmouth required evidence of her baptism, which took place at our church in 1961 and was conducted by Rev. Alan Paterson from Thundersley Congregational Church. Neither Nicola nor her parents had been able to find her original baptismal certificate so she was hoping that we could provide evidence from our baptismal register.

There was some doubt to begin with as to whether the church had a baptismal register that would include Nicola's baptism but, eventually, the register was found in the church safe. Copies of the relevant pages from the register and a letter from our current Minister, Rev. Andrew, were duly sent to the diocese. Having made the connection with Nicola, and in view of her parents' connection with the church, I asked her if I might mention her ordination in the magazine and she was happy for me to do so, hence this article, the publication of which has been very much delayed by magazine production issues.

Nicola's ordination actually took place on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 in Portsmouth Cathedral and was conducted by Bishop Jonathan, Bishop of Portsmouth. Seven deacons were ordained on the day. A report of the ordination can be found on the Diocese of Portsmouth's website at:

<https://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/news/2023/10/02/michaelmas-cohort-ordained-cathedral> where there is a link to a gallery of photos on the diocese's Facebook page.

Afterwards, Nicola e-mailed to say that all had gone well on the day and that it was a joyful occasion made extra special by the presence of her mum and dad.



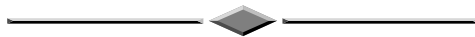
Nicola with Bishop Jonathan



Nicola with mum and dad, Gordon and Wendy

We send very belated congratulations to Nicola on her elevation to Deacon and pray that God will bless her in this new role.

*Malcolm Brown*



“God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments.”

*St John Henry Newman (1801-1890) – from The Mission of My Life*

# URC News

## URC Assembly Executive Meeting

The latest meeting of the United Reformed Church (URC) Assembly Executive took place from 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> February at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick, and was opened by Rev. Dr Tessa Henry Robinson, Moderator of the URC General Assembly 2023-2024 (on the right in the photo).



## Wilsden church wins challenge to Barclays Bank

A Wilsden church which experienced financial issues after Barclays closed its bank account has won its challenge and had it reopened.

In November last year, Wilsden Trinity Church, a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) between the United Reformed (URC) and Methodist Churches in Bradford, wrote an open letter challenging the bank after its account of around 20 years had been closed and a complaint had gone unanswered.

With the help of the URC Communications Team, the letter was distributed to media contacts in the area, resulting in the interest of a BBC news reporter and the story was published in The Telegraph & Argus, a daily newspaper for Bradford.

“It is undoubtedly the case that Barclays only reopened the account because of the media interest following the Communications’ press release,” said Roger Morris, Wilsden Trinity Church Treasurer.”

Many of the church’s bills were paid by Direct Debit and many of its members paid money into its account through standing order. Wilsden Trinity Church also banked weekly collections and paid bills and sent money through its account, but these were all unable to be processed when it was closed.

Members of the Wilsden Trinity Church meeting felt the church’s reputation and relationship with

those who supplied services and were paid by Direct Debit were damaged as a result.

Mr Morris added: “Barclays, following my complaint, has admitted some mistakes and given us some compensation.”

In a letter sent by the bank to Mr Morris on 18 January, Barclays admitted that most of the information requested by Barclays had been submitted and a customer service agent had provided conflicting information which “could’ve been clearer”. The letter went on to say: “As an extension of our apologies for the poor service you received at times, we’ve credited a total of £500 to the church’s account.”

Mr Rogers continued: “The three months when we had no account was difficult but the incredible help from both the URC and Methodist Church made a huge difference.”

Mr Rogers says, however, the bank has not accepted that closing the account was wrong and is considering proceeding with a complaint to the Financial Ombudsman.

## Christ Church Stocksbridge in Yorkshire Synod gains recognition in the Children and Youth Friendly Church Scheme

Christ Church Stocksbridge in Yorkshire Synod has gained recognition in the Children and Youth Friendly Church Scheme.



Megan Tillbrook, Yorkshire Synod’s Children’s and Young People’s Development Practitioner, supported the church through the scheme’s process.

Megan said: “It was evident during the service, due to the huge amounts of toys that were donated, that Stocksbridge is a church that seeks to serve the local community and it involves the children and young people in that mission too.”

The church has also involved children in tree-planting and land reclamation, litter picks,



planting and growing plants, and sourced funding for a paid worker for the toddler group.

Christ Church Stockbridge has also sourced and provided around 15 new and used laptops for children at the high school living in low-income households, and built a thriving junior church, raising attendance from a couple of attendees to a regular number of 10-12 children aged 0-13.

### **Sun's energy powers up Sunday services at Woking URC**

A Woking church has achieved its dream of powering their entire building using electricity generated by the sun following the installation of 134 solar roof panels and eight large storage batteries.

The cutting-edge technology will allow Woking United Reformed Church in Wessex Synod to produce and store five months' worth of its annual electricity needs, saving several tons of CO2 emissions every year.

Led by Woking's "Green Team", the work began in 2023 following a doubling of the cost of electricity. The Wessex Trust agreed to make a grant of 50% towards the cost of environmental projects and encouraged the team to extend the scope of the project to include batteries.

After studying several options and considering the requirements of the town planning department, the panels were installed on the east and west facing roofs, with the work completed in September 2023. The electricity generated from the array is estimated at 40.7 MWh/year.



Local Surrey County Councillor, Will Forster also enabled the church to install the batteries by providing 50% of the cost from his community fund allocation.

It will not be until mid-2024 that the full benefits of the entire system will be known. So far, despite a very dull December, the panels have produced 9% more electricity than projected, as illustrated in the chart (below). The total electricity produced between commissioning in mid-September and the end of 2023 was 6.4MWh, saving three tons of CO2.

The eight batteries, which were installed in early January 2024, have a capacity of 46.4 kWh. This means that for about five months each year the Church should be able to produce and store enough electricity to cover 100% of its requirements.

### **An enthusiastic and dedicated fundraiser, aged 12, has won December's Lundie Memorial Award.**



Evie Lawrenson who attends Elswick URC in North Western Synod was nominated by Heather Twig, the church's leader. Describing Evie as "enthusiastic", Heather said: "It has been a joy for church members to see her faith grow and deepen over time."

Evie commits a lot of her time to raising money for charity with the Elswick congregation recently supporting her in one of her ventures by buying some items from her stall at the Autumn fair. Evie raised £150 in the process which was donated to the British Heart Foundation.

Together with her nan, who was living with ovarian cancer at the time, Evie helped to put on a successful bingo evening at the church, which raised a whopping £1400 for Cancer Research UK.

Evie also raised £600 after completing a five-mile night walk down Blackpool promenade which will be donated to Trinity Hospice which helped support her nan and family when her nan's cancer had advanced.

When asked what advice she would give another young person considering being involved in the life of the church, Evie said: "Just try and go for it. I don't regret it, I was unsure to start with, but people were very loving and supportive."

Each recipient of the Lundie Memorial Award receives £100. Evie hopes to use the money within Elswick junior church to allow them to buy arts and craft supplies and to help fund special events.

## Truth, lies and the thinking Christian – from Reform Feb 2024

Truth-telling is a commodity that is in very short supply nowadays. Everywhere, it seems, people make claims that have little basis in reality. It has become OK to twist facts to suit one's own perspective. Indeed, facts are negotiable and can be just what you wish them to be. Apparently, we are living in a 'post-truth' society where anything is up for grabs, where things are so just because we say that they are. If a version of events is purported enough times on social media then it becomes real. It's what's happened. It must be true. In George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* we read of the Ministry of Truth whose function was exactly the opposite of its name, a regime which cynically laundered facts to create a version of reality determined by the state. Sound familiar?

It is easy for us to despair about all this. Things feel as if they have never been so bad. It seems that the lack of commitment to truth-telling is endemic in our modern world. Political life appears to be corrupted by a lack of integrity. Populist leaders fuel dissent and division through incendiary, unsupported claims. All asylum seekers are casually labelled 'illegal immigrants', as commonly reported in some parts of the media and reflected in last year's *Illegal Immigration Act*. The rule of law can be ignored if it gets in the way, as illustrated by some MPs who propose to renege on the UK's obligations under human rights law. The expert is vilified and the contributions 'Christ exhorts us to correct falsehoods, contest distortions and to speak truth to power' of science cast into doubt, as experienced in some vitriolic internet responses to science advice during lockdown. And in all of this, the needs of the vulnerable, of the marginalised in society, appear to be overlooked.

Well, it may be that the times we are living in are not as unique and distinctive as we think. For instance, the atmosphere in the time of the eighth-century prophets, the likes of Amos, Hosea and Micah, was just as febrile and full of dissent. They also inveighed against the privileged, the ruling elite, who had tunnel vision about what was really going on. The powerful blithely carried on performing all the traditional sacrificial rituals while ignoring the reality of the dire needs of those who were suffering. They 'hate a man who brings a wrongdoer to court,' as Amos said, 'and abominate the one who speaks nothing less than the truth'. The prophet's

message was uncompromising: they were not just uncaring but were courting catastrophe. Amos taught that the nexus of obligation that human beings, made in God's image, have towards each other is the very glue that holds society together, and you ignored this at your peril.

So a proper regard for the truth is important and its absence has consequences. It poses a serious danger in undermining trust in our democratic institutions and contributes to social malaise. But what's to be done? Well, it may be that solutions lie not within governments but at the individual level, and this has significant implications for us as Christians. Part of the problem is that, as individual members of society, we are reluctant to engage with ideas, to critically examine narratives with which we are being fed.

This is explored in a new book I have edited with my colleague Chris Brown, Professor of Education at University of Southampton. In it, leading writers, thinkers and activists from a wide range of disciplines, have reflected upon *The Ideas-Informed Society: Why we need it and how to make it happen*. It includes a contribution from the Revd Helen Cameron, Moderator of the Free Churches Group. She looks at forming truth-telling communities within faith groups and the crucial importance of bearing witness to 'what is', particularly in relation to abuse and safeguarding concerns in the Church. In another contribution to the book, Tim Slack and the Revd Fiona Thomas show how using the technique of Appreciative Inquiry can help communities to thrive through enabling ideas, questioning and creativity to flow.

Elsewhere, in his blog post 'Four Reasons Why Christians Should Use Their Minds', Tim Chester argues why being a searcher after knowledge and engaging with ideas should be seen as fundamental to the Christian outlook. He cites the great evangelist and theologian John Stott's criticism of how, as Christians, we often do not use our minds and intellect sufficiently.

Stott pulls no punches as he bewails 'the misery and menace of mindless Christianity', reminding us that God created humanity with a capacity to think and that salvation is applied through words addressed to minds. Stott powerfully expresses his fear that what Paul said in Romans about non-Christian Jews of his day is true of contemporary Christians: 'They have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge'.

By contrast, Ephesians says, God calls upon us to be 'renewed in knowledge, according to the image of the creator'. Thinking Christians and ideas-informed disciples have a mandate to uphold truth-telling and indeed to make things difficult for those who deal in lies.

Chester quotes Harry Blamires, who said in *The Christian Mind* that a Christian thinker 'challenges current prejudices', 'disturbs the complacent', 'obstructs the busy pragmatists', 'questions the foundations of all about him', and 'is a nuisance.'

In a so-called post-truth era we have a clear role to play as Christians. We are called upon to challenge the lazy thinking and hate-filled rhetoric of demagogues. Christ exhorts us to correct falsehoods, contest the distortions in social media, stand up to those who abuse and misrepresent the vulnerable, and to speak truth to power.

*Graham Handscomb*

Professor of Education, University College London

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## Churches Together in Hadleigh Lent Course

This year's Lent course commences on 21<sup>st</sup> February and comprises five sessions. It is based on the York Course 'The Gift of Christ', which was written by Olivia Amartey. Olivia is an executive director for the Elim Pentecostal Church and an associate pastor of Crosspoint Church, a church plant based in north Birmingham,

The course draws on the skills that Olivia Amartey learnt as a senior leader in the NHS. This was God's training ground for her. Despite facing numerous crises, Olivia found herself developing flexibility, wisdom and the grace to maintain a sense of fun amid the topsy-turviness of life. Now she invites us to embrace the adventure we are all on with Christ.

Olivia Amartey is joined in discussing the themes of The Gift of Christ by scriptwriter Paul Kerensa, and author and spiritual director Amy Boucher Pye.

The course is being hosted by our church on Wednesday evenings from 21<sup>st</sup> February to 20<sup>th</sup> March. The dates, leaders and subjects for the five sessions are as follows:

Date	Leader	Subject
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup> Feb	Tom Pender	The generosity of God
Wed 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Rev. Ruth Cartwright	Discovering our gift and responding
Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Sheena Slater	Being with Jesus and becoming fruitful
Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Captain Mark Cozens	When things go wrong, and ways of staying on track
Wed 20 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Rev. Andrew Birch	It's all good – how God changes everything

The sessions start at 7.30pm with refreshments served from 7.15pm. All are welcome to attend.

*Malcolm Brown*

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## Advance notice of Holy Week events

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Thu 28 Mar (Maundy Thursday) 12.30pm – Start of new monthly church bible study with Holy Communion, led by our Minister, Rev. Andrew Birch.

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Fri 29 Mar (Good Friday) 10.30am – United Service at Hadleigh Methodist Church led by Tom Pender, Student Minister at Hadleigh Baptist Church, followed by Walk of Witness

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Sun 31 Mar (Easter Day) 6.15am – Sunrise Service at Hadleigh Castle led by Captain Mark Cozens from the Salvation Army Hadleigh Temple

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## New mains water pipework

In the summer of 2023, we received a leaflet from Essex & Suffolk Water with an offer to replace the lead mains water pipe at the church with plastic pipe. The company had a budget to carry out a number of jobs at schools and churches for free because of the potential harm to children from lead in the water supply.

The layout of the existing pipework was inspected in August 2023 by a surveyor from Lowman's, based in Leigh, who were sub-contracted to carry out the work. There was a slight hiccup after he had gone when it was realised that the manse water supply is a branch off the church supply but it was agreed that the replacement of the manse lead pipework could also be done for free.

It had been hoped that the works would be carried out before Christmas but Christmas came and went. Heather then received a phone call from Lowman's on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January asking if it would be possible to carry out the works on the church water supply on the coming Saturday (13<sup>th</sup> January) and the works on the manse water supply on the following Saturday (20<sup>th</sup> January). Although this was very short notice, after some quick consultations, Heather, as Church Secretary, gave the go-ahead to Lowman's.

On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January, Heather arrived at the church early to ensure that Lowman's workers had access to the church but it turned out that they initially concentrated on the external pipework running from the roadside under the church lawn.



**Lowman's vans outside church**

The new plastic pipe was laid by first digging holes and then sending a ground boring 'mole' from one hole to the next to provide a bore through which the plastic pipe could be fed. (The old lead pipework was left in situ and capped.) We had been slightly worried about how many holes would be dug, particularly where the pipe had to be installed under concrete paths, but, in the end relatively few holes were dug. There was a

problem when the mole became stuck under the lawn and had to be dug out but the use of the mole avoided the need to dig trenches.



**Using the mole under the church lawn**

When the new mains pipe reached the end of the lawn, two branches were created. One branch went under the concrete path alongside the church annexe and around to the vestry toilet. The other branch went under the path alongside Riffhams and around to the men's toilets.



**One of the holes for the branch to the vestry toilet**

New stop cocks were installed near the edge of the lawn to independently control each branch. A plumber then fitted new copper pipework that passed through the walls of the vestry toilet and the men's toilet and connected with the internal pipework, with new internal stopcocks to turn the water off at each location.

A similar exercise was carried out on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January when the manse lead pipework was replaced. There were not quite as many vans and workers present but it still took all day.

Heather thought that the work by Lowman's was done very efficiently. She did not have a lot to do but felt she should be on hand in case anything cropped up. She was there on both days until Lowman's staff left at about 4.30pm.

Thank you, Heather, for liaising with Essex & Suffolk Water and Lowman's to have this work carried out. It is nice to know that we will be drinking 'lead-free' refreshments from now on!

*Malcolm Brown*

## Computer Corner

### CrystalDiskInfo

**Useful  
free  
software**

I was very recently alerted to the impending failure of one of the hard disk drives in my PC by CrystalDiskInfo, a program that I've recommended in the past. The program displays 'SMART' information about the health of a drive in the form of a list of attributes with various values. The most important attributes are 'Reallocated sector count', 'Current pending sector count' and 'Uncorrectable sector count', which, ideally, should all have a zero value in the Raw Values column. I recommend downloading the portable version (Windows installation not required) from the PortableApps website but the program can also be downloaded from the Microsoft app store.

URL: [https://portableapps.com/apps/utilities/crystaldiskinfo\\_portable](https://portableapps.com/apps/utilities/crystaldiskinfo_portable)

URL: <https://apps.microsoft.com/detail/XP8K4RGX25G3GM>

### Best Windows keyboard shortcuts

**Useful  
keyboard  
shortcuts**

I sometimes feature useful Windows shortcuts in this column but this month I'm providing a link to a whole page full in an article on the Lifewire website.

URL: <https://www.lifewire.com/best-windows-keyboard-shortcuts-6503973>

### St Peter on the Wall – Landscape and Heritage on the Essex Coast

**Interesting  
download**

This is a superb 412-page book about St Peter on the Wall, otherwise know as St Peter's Chapel at Bradwell. The book was published last year and the contributors and publisher have released the electronic (pdf) version under a Creative Commons licence so it can be downloaded for free.

URL: <https://www.uclpress.co.uk/collections/history/products/211163>

## Word Search – Words associated with Elections

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

ABSENTEE  
BALLOT  
BELLWETHER  
BOOTH  
CAMPAIGN  
CANVASS  
COUNT  
CROSS  
ELECTION  
HUSTINGS  
LANDSLIDE  
LOBBY  
MAJORITY  
PARTY  
POLL  
POSTAL  
PROXY  
RIGGED  
SECRET  
VOTE

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

- 
- Mon 26 Feb 2024 - The Art Ministry - Cosy Crafts Session from 11.00am to 1.00pm at 1 Church Road (in Riffhams Hut, next to church). Spend a couple of hours doing art and craft activities and keeping warm. For adults of any age or ability. Sessions are free. Hot drink and materials provided. Sessions also on Tuesdays 11.00am to 1.00pm & Thursdays 2.00pm to 4.00pm. To book, call 07582 025163 / email [contact@theartministry.org.uk](mailto:contact@theartministry.org.uk).
- 
- ditto - Smart Minds - A friendly club for people with dementia & their carers. Art activities and socialising with tea & biscuits. At Hadleigh URC from 1.00pm to 3.00pm every Mon. Phone Sue on 07889 762172.
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- ditto - Afternoon Chat & Tea at Hadleigh Library from 2.30pm to 4.30pm.
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- Tue 27 Feb 2024 - Kettle's On Coffee Morning at St Barnabas Church, Hadleigh, from 10.30am to 12.00 noon. Held every Tue.
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- ditto - Knit & Natter group at Hadleigh Library 1.00pm to 3.00pm. Every Tue.
- 
- Wed 28 Feb 2024 - Coffee Morning at St Michael's Church, St Michael's Road, Daws Heath, from 10.00am to 11.45am. Held every Wed.
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- Thu 29 Feb 2024 - Coffee Morning at the church from 10.30am to 12 noon. Free refills.
- 
- Fri 1 Mar 2024 - Craft & Knitting Club at Hadleigh Library from 12.30pm to 2.30pm. Held every Fri.
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- ditto - Benfleet Art & Crafts Club from 2.00pm to 3.30pm at Hadleigh Methodist Church. Held every Friday. Phone 01702 554358 for info.
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- ditto - World Day of Prayer Service at St Michael's Church at 2.00pm using material produced by ecumenical group of Christian Palestinian women in response to Ephesians 4:1-7. Refreshments afterwards.
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- Sat 2 Mar - Southend Symphony Orchestra concert at SA Hadleigh Temple starting at 7.30pm. Tickets £15.00, concessions £12.00.
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- Sun 3 Mar 2024 - Sunday Social at Hadleigh Methodist Church with board games, quizzes, conversation plus tea, coffee, sandwiches and cake. From 12 noon to 2.00pm. Cost: £2.50. Held on first Sunday of every month.
- 
- Sat 9 Mar 2024 - Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church from 10.00am to 12 noon with drinks, cakes and bric-a-brac stall. Held 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat of month.
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- ditto - Craft Fayre at SA Hadleigh Temple - 10.00am to 3.00pm. Free entry.
- 
- ditto - Beat and Beans Café at St James the Less Church from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Free live music from Monday Folk with coffee, tea and snacks.
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- ditto - Coffee Morning & Book Sale at St Peter's Church Thundersley from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Held 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat of every month.
- 
- ditto - Hadleigh & Thundersley Community Archive slideshow at St Michael's Church, Daws Heath starting at 2.00pm. Admission £3.00 at the door.
- 
- Sat 23 Mar 2023 - Hadleigh Heritage illustrated talk 'Rayleigh's Rich and Varied History' by Mike Davies at St James the Less Church. Starts at 11.00am with refreshments served from 10.30am. Admission: £3.00 at the door.
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- Sat 30 Mar 2024 - Hadleigh & Thundersley Community Archive Drop-in at Hadleigh Library from 10.30am to 12 noon.
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More events listed on the HELIX website at <http://www.hadleighessex.info>