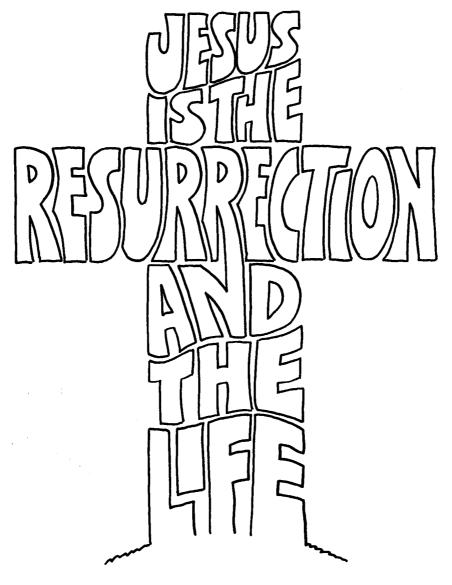
THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

March 2024



Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" – John 11:25-26 (NKJV)

The Magazine of the United Reformed Church, Hadleigh, Essex

PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR MARCH 2024

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

PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR APRIL 2024

Sun 7 th Apr	10.30am	Morning Service	Heather Brown
Sun 14 th Apr	10.30am	Morning Service	Rev. Dr Jim Tarrant MA MTh
Sun 21st Apr	10.30am	Morning Service with Holy Communion	Rev. Andrew Birch
Sun 28 th Apr	10.30am	Morning Service	Mr John Amos

JOINT CHURCH & ELDERS' MEETING

Thu 14th Mar 12.45pm

Note: At the Church Meeting on 23rd November 2023, it was agreed that the bi-monthly Church Meetings could become joint Church and Elders' Meetings. Any sensitive business that needs to be discussed solely by the Elders will be dealt with at the end of the joint meetings.

ELDEF	RS' MEETING	
	TBA	_

BIBLE STUDY

Thu 28th Mar 12.30pm

FLOWERS

Sun 3 rd Mar	Jean Reeve - in memory of mother's birthday
Sun 10 th Mar	Jean Reeve - for Mother's Day
Sun 24 th Mar	Doreen Churchill - in memory of husband Raymond
Sun 31st Mar	Rev. John Ambrose for Valerie's birthday (25 th)



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.

Prayer Reflection: Growth - Fasts and Feasts

Fix your eyes on Jesus as he and we move towards Holy Week, Gethsemane and Calvary. Examine his response to various situations and observe his compassion, care, patience and forgiveness for the people. He healed them. He fed them. He taught them and he proclaimed God's love for them. Then he showed the extent of that love by dying on the cross. Thank Jesus for his sacrifice for us and praise God for his unending love and power as shown in the Resurrection.

Fast from criticism and complaining. Find the potential for good in people and situations and work towards it. Look for things to be grateful for and thank those responsible, whether that be God, those around you or both. Resolve to bring light not darkness into every situation you are involved in. Thank God for the ability to shine.

Feast on praise and gratitude. Acknowledge every word, gesture or act of help and kindness given you, whether it be from family, neighbour, supermarket checkout worker or someone totally unexpected. Rejoice in what you have received and resolve to pass on the joy to those you can help. Praise God for his wonderful provision for us not just with material things but also by surrounding us with good people to provide support and help. Pray for grace to view the world as God does and wonder at the possibilities that offers..

Prayer

Lord, forgive our tendency always to see the worst in people and situations. Grant us the grace to see with your eyes so that we might develop a love for others more like your love. Thank you Lord. Thank you for loving us. *Amen*



From the Bible

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: "He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him." Now I have told you.'

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. 'Greetings,' he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'...

... Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

From the Editor

Welcome to the March 2024 edition of the Hadleigh Messenger. Owing to time

limitations, this edition is slimmer in size and is being published later than I would like.

At the time of writing, the Churches Together in Hadleigh Lent Course, which was hosted at our church, has finished. There were around twelve to fourteen people at most sessions though there were only eight people at one session. Thank you to Heather Brown, Doreen Churchill and Kay Watson for serving refreshments and washing up on different occasions.

For the Lent Course we used a York Course entitled *The Gift of Christ*. This was in video format for the first time. Instead of there being definite breaks in each session for questions, the session leaders had to decide when to pause the video but all seemed to cope well. Our thanks are owed to Tom Pender, Rev. Ruth Cartwright, Sheena Slater, Capt. Mark Cozens, and Andrew, our minister.

The new arrangement whereby the Church Meetings have become joint Church and Elders' Meetings seems to be working satisfactorily. At the latest meeting on 14th March, a quote was accepted from our usual electrician, Andrew Potter, to replace the light fittings in the foyer, Small Hall, kitchen and toilets. The new fittings will use LED tubes so will be more efficient. A second quote was also accepted for Andrew to install new emergency lighting.

The joint meeting also decided that we should celebrate the church anniversary this year with a tea rather than a lunch, which is what we have done for the last two years after the pandemic. So, make a note in your diaries that the 120th Anniversary Tea will be held on Sunday 16th June at 3.00pm. The tea will be followed by a service at around 4.30pm.

Finally, I have written elsewhere about our new bible study. Do come along if you're able.

Malcolm Brown



One Solitary Life

Here is a young man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He worked in a carpenter's shop until he was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He did none of those things we usually associate with greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

While he was still a young man, the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to the cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth, and that was his coat. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed tomb through the pity of a friend. Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race, and the leader of the column of progress.

All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as that one solitary life.



But from this earth, this grave, this dust, My God shall raise me up, I trust – Walter Raleigh "All I want to know is Christ and the power flowing from His Resurrection!" – St. Francis of Assisi "We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song." – Pope John Paul II

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						
	TICW 3					
Loving God, as we celebrate Easter, re May the resurrection of Jesus inspire	us to live with conviction, share your					
love with others, and walk in the light faithful disciples, reflecting your glory	y in all we do. Amen.					
From Cros	swalk.com					

Please remember those associated with our fellowship in need of prayer...

Saved!

"Saved!" Thank God. What a cost lies behind anyone being able to use that word of themselves. Paul tells us in Galatians, that as Jesus hung on the cross He was one cursed for us. What does that mean? Well instead of benediction, words of blessing from God, it means Jesus, the Beloved Son who brought God the Father such delight, coming under the opposite.

One way of putting the awful reality of that, is thinking of the opposite of Aaron's blessing with which he was told to bless the people of God, being placed on Jesus. That is what R.C. Sproul suggests we think though in order to help us understand what our salvation meant for God, how it tore the heart of Father, Son and Spirit as their united desire to save people like you and me

was fulfilled and accomplished. In effect that would mean something roughly like this is being pronounced at the cross:

"The LORD curse you, and treat you as lost to Him. The LORD turn His face from you, and pour deserved judgement upon you. The LORD turn his back upon you and give you torment of body, soul and spirit."

Yet, how lightly and easily we sin. How lightly we use that now maligned and mocked word, "Saved!" and scoff at the idea of being washed in the blood of the Lamb.

The hymn 'O teach me what It meaneth' by Lucy Ann Bennett meant a lot to me in my early years as a teenager saved by the grace of God.

O teach me what it meaneth:
That Cross uplifted high,
With One, the Man of Sorrows,
Condemned to bleed and die.
O teach me what it cost Thee
To make a sinner whole;
And teach me, Saviour, teach me
The value of a soul.

O teach me what it meaneth:
That sacred crimson tide,
The blood and water flowing
From Thine own wounded side.
Teach me that if none other
Had sinned, but I alone,
Yet still, Thy blood, O Jesus,
Thine only, must atone.

O teach me what it meaneth,
Thy love beyond compare,
The love that reacheth deeper
Than depths of self-despair!
Yea, teach me, till there gloweth
In this cold heart of mine
Some feeble, pale reflection
Of that pure love of Thine.

O teach me what it meaneth,
For I am full of sin;
And grace alone can reach me,
And love alone can win.
O teach me, for I need Thee,
I have no hope beside,
The chief of all the sinners
For whom the Saviour died.

O infinite Redeemer,
I bring no other plea;
Because Thou dost invite me
I cast myself on Thee.
Because Thou dost accept me
I love and I adore;
Because Thy love constraineth,
I'll praise Thee evermore

God bless.

Kenny

From a blog post dated 15th July 2019 by an unidentified Scottish minister posting as 'revkennyblog'.

Editor's note: Lucy A. Bennett was born on 8th January 1850 in Green Farm, Falfield, Gloucestershire. She was a staunch Methodist and a poet. She began to write poems, hymns and prose at an early age. As a young woman, she attended Keswick Conventions where she met and corresponded with prominent Christian leaders, including Christina Rosseti and C. H. Spurgeon. She was active at Mount Pleasant Chapel where she arranged for ministers, led a Bible Class for women, and visited and helped the poor and needy. She helped to found All Nations College, Upper Norwood and Mount Hermon College, Streatham Common. She died on 10th March 1927. There is a lovely rendition of the hymn by the choir Lyrica Sacra on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JahihU3dXis.

Bible Study - Thursday 28th March

For the first time since February 2020, we will be holding a bible study at the church. Before the Coronavirus pandemic, the bible study was led by Adrian Tinning. Our minister, Rev. Andrew Birch, has now offered to lead a bible study and this will take place on the fourth Thursday of each month, apart from months when Andrew is on holiday. As before, we will hold the bible study sessions after the coffee morning, starting around 12.30pm, with a packed lunch beforehand.

The first session will be held on Thursday 28th March, which is Maundy Thursday. As this is part of Holy Week, the bible study will finish on this occasion with Holy Communion. The theme of the first eight sessions will be 'Living the Sayings of Jesus'. If you are able, do join us.

Malcolm Brown

Easter events

Fri 29th March (Good Friday) - United Service followed by Walk of Witness

The traditional Good Friday United Service will be held at Hadleigh Methodist Church starting at 10.30am. The service will be led by Tom Pender, the Student Minister at Hadleigh Baptist Church.

After the service, there will be a silent Walk of Witness along London Road and back to the Methodist Church where refreshments, including hot cross buns, will be served.

Sun 31st March (Easter Day) - Sunrise Service

The traditional Easter Day Sunrise Service will take place at Hadleigh Castle starting at 6.15am and will be led by Capt. Mark Cozens from the Salvation Army Hadleigh Temple. Members of the Temple Band will provide music for the singing.

Malcolm Brown

URC News

Small Norfolk church gains national praise

Diss United Reformed Church in Norfolk has been 'highly commended at the National Churches Awards for its work with volunteers.

The congregation has five members, so Ruth Bridges decided to nominate the church's band of 25 helpers who run community groups, including a weekly welcome café, a monthly dementia café, and music therapy groups for people living with dementia and those with complex needs. Volunteers also run a monthly dementia-friendly church service and a monthly group for babies and pre-school children with additional needs.



'Our committed volunteers are crucial in our successes with supporting our local community,' said Ruth. 'The volunteers were delighted to be Highly Commended – they could see that it wasn't just us saying thank you to them, but that complete strangers hearing about them were equally as impressed!'

Caring for creation

Inspired by Christian Aid's 'Letter for Creation' project, members of Abington Avenue URC, Northampton recently organised a successful Festival of Creation.



Members of the congregation and local community portrayed the beauty of creation as well as the huge environmental challenges the world faces. Exhibits included brightly coloured flowers made from plastic bottles discarded on the

streets, a coat crafted from plastic and foil packaging and displays showing the impact of the climate emergency on the world's poorest countries.

Visitors to the well attended exhibition included local councillors and Christian Aid's area engagement officer. The day ended with an

informal fundraising concert for Christian Aid, with contributions from a local choir and instrumentalists.

Government gives thousands back to Bury churches

Greenmount United Reformed Church in Bury has received thousands of pounds from the government. The church is one of six buildings in the town to benefit from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, which allows buildings of all religions to claim VAT on conservation work. Greenmount URC received more than £27,000, a share of the £42m the government returned to religious institutions in 2023. Since 2010, a total of £346m has been claimed.

The church dates back to 1867 and boasts a louvered belfry and spire 10ft high. 'It costs a lot to maintain the building. In 1867, the total cost of the build was only £3,856 but there's been some inflation in costs since then,' said Neil Carter, Church Secretary.

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Arts and Heritage, said: 'I am glad to see the difference it has made to visitors, worshippers, and the people who look after them for the benefit of future generations.'

Eco awards

Shrewsbury United Reformed Church has gained a Silver A Rocha UK Eco Award. Mike Streetly, co-ordinator of the church's eco group said. "We're really pleased with this latest award which reflects the hard work that members of the church have put in to reducing our environmental impact over the last 20 years since we were first recognised as an eco congregation."



Credit: Shropshire Star.

"While it's great to receive this award, we can't rest on our laurels. We will be holding a series of public events in the third week in April to coincide with Earth Day (22 April) under the heading

'Guardians of Creation'. These will explore ways in which we can all help to protect and enhance our environment locally and globally."

St Andrew's with Castle Gate URC in Nottingham has also gained a Silver Eco-Church Award from A Rocha UK. The fast-acting church achieved a Bronze in December 2022 and 14 months later achieved Silver after working on the 'lifestyle' component of the award. The church now plans to work on the 'Buildings' and 'Land' sections of the awards scheme to be able to submit for Gold award.

First repair café in Halifax

South Halifax Churches Together, including the URC's Heath Church Halifax, held its first repair cafe recently.



The room was buzzing, with many more coming for the coffee and amazing donated cakes, as well as to see what was going on.

More than 30 items were brought to the fixers, with over half being fixed on the spot, other things taken away for fixing, and advice given on others.

There are currently 2,980 repair cafés internationally and an estimated 53,640 items are fixed every month. Learn more about Repair Café's online at https://www.repaircafe.org/en/.

St Andrew's URC Children & Youth Friendly Award

St Andrews URC in Chesterfield has a gained a Children and Youth Friendly Award.



Over the past couple of years, the church has reestablished links with its local primary school, Highfield Hall, and there has been much positive engagement which the church and school are keen to continue. For example, last Easter the school's reception class visited the church. The children explored what Easter means for Christians and how it's celebrated. The event also included a puppet play. At Christmas, Advent boxes were sent out to families in need, and parents and carers, with their children, were invited to a festive Christmas pudding making event.

Lancaster Road URC long service awards

Congratulations to Peter Williams, Kate Moody and Valerie Windsor, three longstanding members of Lancaster Road in Enfield were recently presented with 'Loyal and Devoted' service certificates.



Peter celebrates 72 years of service, Kate 63 years and Valerie 65 years.

Voter Registrations Champions Scheme

The URC has become an ambassador of the Voter Registrations Champions Scheme. This means encouraging all our church members to make sure they are registered to vote and have valid ID, needed to vote in the forthcoming general election.

The Joint Public Issues Team, of which the URC is a member, has produced an election briefing, which can be read at https://jpit.uk/elections.

Rev. David Marshall-Jones OBE, 1939-2024

On 1 March, the URC learned about the death of Rev. David Marshall-Jones OBE, a former

National Scout Chaplain.



David joined the Scouts as a youngster, before stepping into leadership in 1959. He remained involved at company and county level for decades. He was honoured by the Scouts with the Silver Acorn

in 1989, and the Silver Wolf in 2005 – the Scout's highest award. David also received an OBE in 1996. In 2000, he took up the role of URC National Scout Chaplain and carried out the role until he retired in 2021.

Assembly Executive round-up

As mentioned in last month's URC News section, the United Reformed Church Assembly Executive – the executive body of the URC General Assembly – met at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, from 9th to 11th February. This is a brief summary of outcomes from the gathering as reported in the March 2024 edition of Digest, which contains news from the URC.

Church Life Review

The deadline for nominations to Church Life Review task groups has been extended until 4 March. The three groups are to look at finance-sharing among synods and General Assembly; relieving churches of their administrative burden; developing lay ministry. The Executive heard that there was widespread support for the idea of the groups to help overstretched local churches, but there had not been enough nominations. This ironically reflects the problem of overstretching that the groups are meant to address. To make nominations or find out more, email recruitment@urc.org.uk.

Investigations Team

The Executive agreed to start using HR professionals in place of volunteers from the Church in investigating disciplinary complaints against ministers. This is expected to speed up the fact-finding part of a process that has been proving burdensome to ministers, complainants and churches.

New pioneering posts

The Executive agreed to create a pioneering post in each synod 'to intentionally grow new Christian communities'. The Special Category Ministry scheme will be phased out.

Deficit reduction

The URC Treasurer, Alan Yates, gave an update about the work done to tackle the Church's budget deficit. In November, Assembly Executive agreed to eliminate the deficit over the next five-to—seven years. Alan said this can be accomplished 'if receipts are kept at 2023 actuals and, at the same time, reductions in expenditure by Assembly Committees and Church House of between 5% and 3% each year are achieved.'

• Resources Committee

A new Resources Committee will consolidate the work of five existing committees: Finance, Church House Management, Human Resources Advisory Group, Remuneration and Communications.

Youth ministry

The Executive agreed to seek funding for the establishment of a new formal, commissioned ministry for children's, youth and family work.

Modern slavery

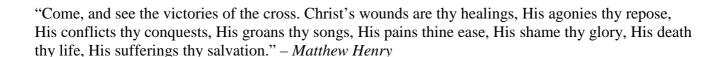
The Executive adopted a statement on Modern Slavery. Synods, local churches and Church House are now encouraged to develop policies which support the statement and to deliver its expectations.

Assembly-mandated matters

A new streamlined process was agreed to deal with ministers who refuse to engage in Assembly-mandated matters such as pastoral supervision and training in safeguarding, safer sacred space and anti-racism.

Competency process

The Executive replaced the capability process for ministers with a new competency process to assist those who fall short of the expected standards.



Computer Corner

Zim Desktop Wiki

Useful free software

Zim is a graphical text editor used to maintain a collection of wiki pages. (I have just started to experiment with this software as a way of holding notes about Hadleigh people, businesses, organisations and events.) Each page can contain links to other pages, simple formatting and images. Pages are stored in a folder structure, like in an outliner, and can have attachments. All data is stored in plain text files with wiki formatting. Various plugins provide additional functionality, like a task list manager, an equation editor, a tray icon, and support for version control. Versions are available for Linux, Windows and macOS.

URL: https://zim-wiki.org/downloads.html

Restoration Update: Meet the new Notre Dame

Interesting video

This documentary-style video brings to light the monumental efforts behind the Notre Dame Cathedral restoration. Witness the journey from the ashes of the 2019 disaster to the anticipated reopening of the cathedral in 2024.

URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pexmccGZSwY

Money Saving Expert.com

Useful website

MoneySavingExpert.com was founded by consumer champion Martin Lewis in February 2003. The site's ethical stance and consumer revenge approach have made it the UK's most popular money website. About 9.1 million people receive MSE's Money Tips email every week (including the Editor!).

URL: https://www.moneysavingexpert.com

Word Search - Egg-related

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BOILED

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 25 Mar 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. Free session. Hot drink and materials provided. To book, call 07582 025163.
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.
ditto -	Afternoon Chat & Tea at Hadleigh Library from 2.30pm to 4.30pm.
Tue 26 Mar 2024 -	Castle Point Community Policing Team - Let's Talk. Officers from the community policing team will be on hand to talk about local policing at Hadleigh Library from 10.00am to 11.00am.
ditto -	Kettle's On Coffee Morning at St Barnabas Church, Hadleigh, from 10.30am to 12.00 noon. Held every Tue.
ditto -	Knit & Natter group at Hadleigh Library 1.00pm to 3.00pm. Every Tue.
Wed 27 Mar 2024 -	Coffee Morning at St Michael's Church, St Michael's Road, Daws Heath, from 10.00am to 11.45am. Held every Wed.
ditto -	Lunchtime Concert at Southend Civic Centre with Eliza Nagle (Violin) from 12.15pm to 1.00pm. Free admission with retiring collection.
Thu 28 Mar 2024 -	Coffee Morning at the church from 10.30am to 12 noon. Free refills.
Fri 29 Mar 2024 -	Good Friday United Service at Hadleigh Methodist Church at 10.30am.
Sat 30 Mar 2024 -	Hadleigh & Thundersley Community Archive Drop-in at Hadleigh Library from 10.30am to 12 noon.
Sun 31 Mar 2024 -	Easter Day Sunrise Service at Hadleigh Castle at 6.15am.
Fri 5 Apr 2024 -	Craft & Knitting Club at Hadleigh Library from 12.30pm to 2.30pm. Held every Fri.
ditto -	Benfleet Art & Crafts Club from 2.00pm to 3.30pm at Hadleigh Methodist Church. Held every Friday. Phone 01702 554358 for info.
Sat 6 Apr 2024 -	People's Independent Party (PIP) Councillors' Street Stall outside Iceland store from 10.00am to 12 noon.
ditto -	Leigh Horticultural Society Spring Show at Leigh Road Baptist Church, Leigh-on-Sea from 2.00pm to 4.00pm. Non-members £1.00. All welcome.
Sun 7 Apr 2024 -	Sunday Social at Hadleigh Methodist Church from 12 noon to 2.00pm with board games, quizzes, conversation plus tea, coffee, sandwiches and cake. Cost £2.50.
Sat 13 Apr 2024 -	Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church from 10.00am to 12 noon with drinks, cakes and bric-a-brac stall. Held 2 nd Sat of month.
ditto -	Beat and Beans Café at St James the Less Church from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Free live music by The Umbrella Factory, coffee, tea & snacks.
ditto -	Coffee Morning & Book Sale at St Peter's Church Thundersley from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Held 2 nd Sat of every month.
Fri 19 Apr 2024 -	The Beacon Shed Craft & Open Day at Thundersley Congregational Church from 10.00am to 3.00pm. Crafts for sale, refreshments.