

THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

June 2017



The Magazine of the
United Reformed Church, Hadleigh, Essex

SUNDAY SERVICES

at 10.30am (every Sunday) & 6.30pm (1st Sunday)
with Holy Communion on 1st Sunday evening
and on 3rd Sunday morning of each month

Monthly Midweek Service

at 10.30am on 4th Thursday of each month

PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR JUNE 2017

Sun 4 th Jun	10.30am	Morning Service	Mrs Gillian Thomson
	6.30pm	Evening Service	Mr Jim Clubb
Sun 11 th Jun	10.30am	Morning Service	Rev. Dr. Jim Tarrant
Sun 18 th Jun	10.30am	Church Anniversary Morning Service [HC]	Mr John Amos
	18.30am	Church Anniversary Evening Service	Rev. Jack Roche MA
Thu 22 nd Jun	10.30am	Midweek Service	Mr Jim Clubb
Sun 25 th Jun	10.30am	Morning Service	Rev. John Ambrose

SUNDAY MORNING DUTY ROTAS FOR JUNE 2017

	ELDER	STEWARD	REFRESHMENTS
Sun 4 th Jun	Heather Brown	Marion Fidell	Marion Fidell
Sun 11 th Jun	Jean Reeve	Ann Purkiss	Kay Watson
Sun 18 th Jun	Malcolm Brown [Holy Communion]	Janet Wimbleton	Janet Wimbleton
Sun 25 th Jun	Heather Brown	Malcolm Brown	Jean Reeve

FLOWER ROTA FOR JUNE 2017

Sun 4 th Jun	Pamela George - in memory of Colin (wedding anniversary)
Sun 11 th Jun	Vera Knapton - in memory of Marjorie & Geoff Chase
Sun 18 th Jun	Marion Fidell - in memory of Jeff (birthday)
Sun 25 th Jun	Vera Knapton - in memory of husband Phil

ELDERS' MEETING

Wed 14th June 7.30pm

CHURCH MEETING

May Church Meeting
postponed until 1st June 12.15pm

HADLEIGH URC OFFICERS

Minister:

Vacancy

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: 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 our Minister or any of the other church officers know. All such requests are treated in the strictest confidence.

How high is our doorstep?

This pastoral letter was written for the April 1984 edition of the magazine by Rev. Peter Brewer, during his first period as Minister from September 1983 to September 1988. (He had previously served as Lay Pastor in the early 1960s).

Dear Friends,

When as a lad of twelve, I moved with my family to Lowestoft into the heart of the Suffolk countryside, I was exposed for the first time to the culture shock of the Suffolk dialect. On almost the first day my sister and I were joyfully picking cowslips in a nearby meadow when a local lad informed us that we would “wholly get wrong”. It did not need much imagination to interpret this to mean that we were trespassing and were running the risk of a sound telling off!

Another phrase that remains in my memory is associated with calling on neighbours. “Don’t stand there on the throshle; come right in together”, they would say.

The throshle (threshold) seems to be quite an important feature of a Suffolk home. It marks the boundary between the outside world of strangers and the intimate life of the home. The East Anglian, and I think, particularly, the Suffolk man or woman, is suspicious of strangers. He is slow to admit you into the intimacies of home or even village life and when he lets you cross his threshold you are really one of the family – rather like being “far ben” in a Scottish home.

It is easy to cross the threshold when the welcome is open and friendly and it is good to feel that once people have entered our church they really do feel that we are glad to see them and want to come again to experience the warmth of the fellowship. We seem to have developed a way of making folk feel that we are glad to see them for their own sakes and not just as ‘pew fodder’!

One thing that we do not realise is how difficult it is for someone who is not in the habit of going to church to cross the threshold and enter. They may not have much idea of what goes on inside or they may harbour misconceptions about what sort of

people we really are, or about what sort of people we would be likely to welcome.

Sometimes it is the building that puts them off. Well, we are planning to do something that might make it more inviting. Sometimes it is shyness that keeps them away, not knowing what might be expected of them once they are inside. Maybe all they need is the invitation. Some just have the gift of ‘making friends and influencing people’, and we have been so glad that there are those who have persuaded their friends to come with them, making the doorstep so low that they have been able to cross it together. This is something that we must all learn to do.

One of the biggest obstacles for many people is the fact that the Christians they have met may have not been particularly attractive people. Perhaps they were ‘holier than thou’, or condemning, or hypocritical, or guilty of some selfish thoughtlessness or lack of manners. Of course, none of us is perfect. I am reminded of the Church that is said to have put up a poster reading, “There are people who say this church is full of hypocrites. That’s not true – there’s room for plenty more!” Yet what a high threshold such experience can create. One almost impossible to step over.

Of course Jesus makes a difference to us when we let him into our lives. But it must be a difference that shows itself, not by setting us apart from our fellows but by drawing us closer in fellowship and understanding and love. This is the difference which will make it easy for folk to cross our “throshle”. “Vive la difference!” as you might say.

God bless you all.

Peter Brewer



From the Bible

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was ill and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

Matthew 25:35-36

From the Editor

Welcome to the June 2017 edition of the Hadleigh Messenger.

After the May magazine was printed, I was immediately thrust into Christian Aid Week. For a number of reasons, I have decided to call it a day as regards the house-to-house collection. I am sad to be giving up because there are still a good number of 'cheerful givers' out there, whom I shall miss. Next year, I will try to make up for the loss of income by organising a fundraising event or two.

This year, Heather and I held a Book & Bric-a-brac sale at the Thursday morning coffee morning during Christian Aid week and raised about £60. We held the sale on the church lawn in the hope of attracting passing trade but it was surprisingly quiet. I am grateful to Mavis Hawker who kindly came to support the sale by having a table to sell her knitted items for Christian Aid.

This month, I have delved into the past for a pastoral letter written by Rev. Peter Brewer, who celebrates his 96th birthday on 29th June. Peter is still working for the Lord at Battlesbridge and we pray that He will grant him health and strength.

As we celebrate Pentecost, I have included an article on the Holy Spirit from an American magazine entitled *Reflections*, past editions of which may be found at <https://reflections-dwtx.org/print-online>.

There is a quite a bit of URC news in this edition. In May, the URC Eastern Synod Moderator, Rev. Paul Whittle, attended the Elders Meeting to

discuss future ministry of the church. Paul hopes to be able to find an Interim Moderator for us in the next few weeks but pointed out that the role of an Interim Moderator can vary greatly depending on the person's situation. In the 'worst' case, it may mean that we simply have someone to phone for guidance but, hopefully, whoever volunteers will be able to take part in the life of the church perhaps by chairing some of our meetings and/or preaching occasionally. Please pray that someone will be willing to fulfil this short-term role in the near future. In the longer term, we will come under the wing of one of the other ministers in the area.

Regarding more mundane matters, I am glad to report that I have a working smartphone again – a second-hand one purchased on eBay for £50 instead of a new one at about £140. I rarely use my phone for texting, surfing the Internet or taking photos. The best thing about it is that I can carry around the telephone numbers and addresses for virtually everyone I know. Given my increasing difficulty in recalling names of people, this is very handy!

On 7th and 8th June, the third and final Hadleigh Dig organised by Cambridge University archaeologists will take place. AGES AHA is again involved and one team, including myself, will be digging another pit on our church lawn. We look forward to finding more Roman pottery but the real prize would be a piece of Saxon pottery. Fingers crossed!

Malcolm Brown

The Senior Driver

A man was working in his garden when he was startled by an old car that came crashing through his hedge, landing up on his front lawn. He rushed to help the elderly lady driver out of the car and sat her down on a garden chair.

The man then said, "I hope you don't mind me saying but you appear quite elderly to be driving."

"Well, yes I am" she replied proudly. "I'll be 97 next month and I'm so old now that I don't need a driving licence anymore."

He asked "How do you know that?"

"Well, the last time I went to my doctor, he examined me and asked me if I had a driving licence. I told him 'yes' and handed it to him. He took a pair of scissors out of the drawer, cut the licence into small pieces and threw them in the waste paper bin saying 'You won't need that anymore'. So I thanked him and left!"

Answers to last month's riddles: 1. Nothing. 2. A river. 3. The letter 'e'.

Wives' Fellowship Programme for June & July 2017

Date	Time	Meeting
Tue 6 th June	2.30pm	Illustrated Talk on 'Water Aid' by Mrs Julie Leggett
Tue 4 th July	3.00pm to 5.00pm	Afternoon Tea Please note the later than usual start and finish times.

Meetings are held in the Small Hall with refreshments served at the end.

Entrance £2.00 – first time free

Small coins collected for Rayleigh, Rochford & Castle Point
Talking Newspapers for the Blind

Church 113th Anniversary

We celebrate the 113th Anniversary of the founding of our church on Sunday 18th June. The first service was held on 20th January 1904 but we have tended to celebrate the anniversary at a warmer time of the year! The morning service, which will include Holy Communion, will be led by our good friend, John Amos, and our evening service will be led by our former Minister, Rev. Jack Roche. The evening service will be preceded by the Anniversary Tea, which will take place in the Small Hall, commencing at 5.00pm.

If you would like to come to the Anniversary Tea, please ensure that your name is added to the list posted on the noticeboard in the foyer. Hopefully, we will be joined by some representatives of the other Hadleigh churches and by some of the lay preachers and clergy who serve us so well during the year.

We look forward to an enjoyable time of fellowship and thanksgiving as we celebrate God's faithfulness to our small church here in Hadleigh.

Malcolm Brown



Bible Society invitation

Readers are invited to visit the garden of John and Janice Phillips at 2 The Chimes, Benfleet, on Saturday 24th June between 11.00am and 3.00pm. John and Janice are opening their well-planted garden to raise funds for the Bible Society and for Thundersley Congregational Church. Light refreshments will be available and there will be a bring and buy stall.

Vera Knapton

Bible Society representative



Seen in an Essex church

*So might I toiling morn till eve
Some purpose in my life fulfil
And, ere I pass, some work achieve
To live and move when I am still*

*I ask not with that work combined
My name shall down the ages move
But that my toil some end shall find
That man may bless and God approve*

Submitted by Jean Hodges

WHAT'S ON

A round-up of future events in the area

Sat 3 Jun to Sat 10 Jun 2017 - Plant Swap at Hadleigh Library from 11.00am to 5.00pm each day (except Sunday & Wednesday). Bring along plants and seedlings to swap. Amateur gardeners only. No money will change hands.

Wed 7 Jun & Thu 8 Jun 2017 - Hadleigh Dig based at the church where members of AGES AHA will be digging a test pit in the front lawn. Local schoolchildren will be digging test pits in gardens around Hadleigh as part of Cambridge University's Independent Learning Archaeology Field School programme. Finds from day 1 will be on display in the church hall on Thursday 8 June from 10.00am until 2.00pm. Refreshments will be available until 12 noon.

Sat 10 Jun 2017 - Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, from 10.00am to 12 noon.

ditto - Coffee Morning Extra with cake & other stalls at Thundersley Methodist Church, Kennington Avenue. From 10.00am to 12 noon.

ditto - Local Councillors Surgery at Hadleigh Old Fire Station from 10.00am to 12 noon. Ask questions of elected Hadleigh and Daws Heath councillors.

ditto - Plant Sale & Coffee Morning at St Barnabas Church Hall, Church Road, Hadleigh, from 10.30am to 12 noon.

ditto - Cat Homing Show at Hadleigh Methodist Church Hall from 10.30am to 1.00pm. Cats looking for a new home, microchipped and vaccinated.

ditto - Southend Symphony Orchestra Concert at the SA Hadleigh Temple. Starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £9.00. More info on 01268 755005.

Tue 13 Jun 2017 - Coffee Morning & Book Sale at St Peter's Church Hall, Thundersley from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Home-made cakes, sausage rolls etc. Unlimited tea and coffee.

Wed 14 Jun 2017 - Coffee Morning at St Michael's Church Community Room, St Michael's Road, Daws Heath from 10.00am to 11.45am. (Every Wednesday.)

Thu 15 Jun 2017 - Poetry Reading Group Meeting on John Masefield at Hadleigh Library from 2.30pm to 3.30pm. All welcome.

Sat 17 Jun 2017 - Hadleigh Heritage Centre Coffee Morning at St James the Less Church from 10.30am to 12 noon. With the theme of 'Education'. Free event.

ditto - Hadleigh Gardening Association Summer Show at Hadleigh Methodist Church Hall. Viewing from 2.00pm to 4.00pm followed by the sale of donated exhibits and a raffle. Admission £1.00. Refreshments available.

ditto - 'Chanteuses' in Concert with guests Taya Horsford (voice) and Kairen Ward (flute) at Thundersley Methodist Church, Kennington Avenue. Starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £8.00 (conc. £6.00). To book, phone Anne on 01268 755291 or Pauline on 01702 548931, or pay at the door.

Sat 24 Jun 2017 - St James The Less Church Hadleigh Fair from 10.30am to 3.30pm. With plants, books, jewellery, tombola, games, Competitions, live entertainment, local history groups. Refreshments served.

Sat 8 Jul 2017 - 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.

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

URC Youth Assembly Round-up

The 2017 URC Youth Assembly took place at Whitemoor Lakes, Alrewas, Staffordshire, from 27th to 29th February. The following report was sent to all churches for information and was written by attendees.

The theme of the Youth Assembly 2017 was *Feasts and Festivals* and we started how we meant to go on, gathering in Synod groups and setting the party atmosphere (with the aid of whistles and party blowers...) Youth Assembly relished the challenge and kicked off the weekend in style!



Our Keynote speaker, Jenny Mills, explored the theme over the course of the weekend as we travelled through some of our favourite festivals and times of feasting in the Church calendar. We were challenged to reflect on some of the favourite hymns and songs which we enjoy at times of celebration. Do we ever stop to think about the words we're singing?

Youth Assembly is all about worship and there were times over the weekend when we were able to meet together to sing, listen to the Word, pray and praise God as one big family. Worship was led by our very own URC Youth Executive chaplain, Tim Lowe, and we were given time to reflect and time to celebrate. We even had the chance to play kazoos!

Issue-based workshops provide an opportunity to explore the theme from a variety of viewpoints. Workshops ranged from James Bond, reintroducing church into communities, the refugee crisis, food security, a walk of remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum and learning about festivals around the world to exploring Jesus' food consumption, ensuring there was definitely something for everyone.

Creative workshops offer a time for Assembly to get involved in the theme of the weekend in a more practical way. This year, Assembly had the choice of art, drama, festival masks and costume making, creative writing, non-cook cooking and looking at how music is used in various styles of worship.

The late night programme was available for those who were able to stay awake and this year activities included a well-attended Karaoke

session, midnight fives, board games, discussions, Taizé and more!

After a jam-packed Saturday, we were thrilled to invite one of our Youth Assembly favourites, the 'Sporrandipity' Ceilidh Band, back to provide the Saturday night entertainment. Having learnt on previous occasions how important it is to wear shoes when dancing, we returned to the sports hall in our best party gear and ceilidh-ed the night away.

Late night communion was conducted by Tim Lowe and Jenny Mills, and was once again a highlight of the weekend. We were able to discuss the meaning and importance of communion before sharing the sacrament with those around us.

Business sessions allow Youth Assembly to make an impact and help shape the life and work of the United Reformed Church through discussions, resolutions and action.

One of the resolutions focussed on the future of the Church and the place we have as young people in actively discerning God's will in our local communities, as well as in wider Church and society. As part of this, the Rev. John Proctor, General Secretary of the United Reformed Church, set the scene on the history of the URC and where we're heading.

Other resolutions include encouraging appropriate space for children's and/or youth events at synod meetings, accepting the 'Commitment To God's Creation' document and a continuing commitment to social justice issues following the news that the Christian Aid Collective/Commitment for Life internship will not run for the foreseeable future.

During these sessions, we even heard from the UK's only United Nations Youth Assembly delegate, Alison Greaves, who also happens to be from the URC's North West Synod, who reminded us that we have a part to play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN by 2030.

Dan Morell, from Edgeley Community Church in Stockport, was elected as Moderator for Youth Assembly 2018. This will take place from 19th to 21st January 2018 at Whitemoor Lakes Activity and Conference Centre.

Eastern Synod Meeting report

The latest Eastern Synod meeting took place on Saturday 18th March 2017 at Water lane URC, Bishop's Stortford. This report is based on the minutes of the meeting and covers selected items...

Opening – The Synod Moderator, Rev. Paul Whittle, constituted the meeting and led the opening worship. Rev. Roy Fowler, minister of the host church, read Romans 1:16-17 and the Moderator then gave a reflection.

Ministerial Movements and Welcome to New Members – A welcome and greeting was given to those coming into ministry in the Synod. At the March 2016 Synod it had been agreed that we nominate Rev. Nigel Uden as a Moderator-Elect of the General Assembly and the Moderator was delighted to report that he was subsequently elected. Those at Synod for the first time were welcomed including Jeanette Stevens from Wickford and Hetty Sabayinda from Westcliff.

Minutes of last meeting – The Minutes of the Synod meeting held on 8th October 2016 were approved and signed by the Moderator.

In matters arising it was noted that, on page 6 of the minutes, with reference to pulpit supply expense guidance, firstly that it had been agreed by Resources Committee that Lay Preachers and Retired Ministers were to be treated identically and secondly that the gift to be offered was up to £40 in each case.

Pioneer Ministry ~ Rev. Tim Yau – The Moderator noted that it was more than five years since Tim had been welcomed into the Synod and that this is his last Synod as a member of staff, as he leaves to take up a position in the Diocese of Norwich. Tim shared his reflections on his time spent over the last few years.

Walking the Way – With a renewed emphasis on discipleship in the denomination, Church House had provided a presentation on Walking the Way. This was voiced by Revd Mark Meatcher and Christine MacLeod. Synod was encouraged to look at the video on United Reformed Church website and it was noted that there are resources coming.

TLS Update — Liz Bird, the Advocate for Lay Preachers, indicated that, sadly, the pool of Lay Preachers is dwindling, as some are no longer active and there are not many new people coming forward for training. Liz said how urgent it is for congregations to identify people who have the gift to lead God's worship and to encourage them.

Talk – Rev. Dr David Cornick (General Secretary of Churches Together in England), gave a talk on *Living with unforeseen consequences: Luther's 95 theses and ecumenism*.

The Moderator welcomed David 500 years after the reformation and introduced him as not only the General Secretary of Churches Together in England, but also as a former General Secretary of the URC, a former Principal of Westminster College and, as someone ordained in 1979, in the same year as the current Moderator. The script of David's talk will shortly be available on the Synod website: under Eastern Synod Meetings.

Afternoon session – The Moderator welcomed everyone back after an enjoyable lunch.

Update from the Children's and Youth Synod – Nicola Grieves and the children and youth updated us on their activities from that morning. They had been reflecting on Feasts and Festivals and had a picnic basket whilst thinking about two stories; that of the Manna and Quails and Jesus taking bread in his hands and giving thanks for it. The children read out a small passage about this and explained they would be back at the end of the Synod Meeting to show us further what they had discovered throughout the day.

The opportunity was taken to welcome Margaret Smith as the new Synod Children's and Youth Work Advocate and Aaron Wood as the Synod Youth Representative.

The Big Day Out at Warwick Castle – A video was played to promote this national event, to be held on Saturday 20th May 2017. It continues the theme of Feasts and Festivals and attendance was recommended

Report from Youth Assembly – Aaron Wood presented a slideshow of the proceedings at this event, held at Whitemoor Lakes at the end of February. It showed what it means to be a community together. Workshops, worship, music and other activities explored the theme of Feasts and Festivals.

Youth Assembly is for ages 14-25 years and is to be promoted as it gives the opportunity to learn and share and is fun too. Aaron noted that the numbers attending from Eastern Synod were a little lower than hoped.

Deployment Update – The Moderator explained that the number of stipends funded through the Ministry and Mission Fund has reduced by 36% from 2000 to 2015, and in the same period the number of URC members has reduced by 40%. The number of congregations has reduced by 17%.

The denomination will be able to pay Ministers for the period 2015–2024 based on current predictions. Eastern Synod has a target number of Ministers and it is for the Synod to decide how to deploy these.

The Moderator explained what deployment will look like for each Area Partnership in the years immediately ahead and said that it will be a challenge to meet the targets. At present, there is over-deployment within the Synod.

Future Synods – The next Synod will be at Castle Hill, Ipswich on 14th October, 2017. Next year's Synods will be at St. John's Ipswich on 17th March 2018 and at Witham on 13th October 2018.

Synod Staffing – Jane Langford-Horder, the Moderator's PA, will be full-time again from the beginning of June. After nearly 15 years of service, Andrew Perkins, Finance & Trust Officer, left mid-March to move to France to join his wife at their retreat house. Andrew will continue for a time as an external consultant and, meanwhile, a replacement is being sought.

Synod Big Day Out, Feasts and Festivals – This event takes place on 10th June, 2017 at Suffolk Showground. It is a day for the family, for everyone to come together, including those who take part in activities at the Church, for example Messy Church etc.

Pastoral Committee Report – A new framework for local unity in Mission has been circulated for member church consultation. This document is available on the Churches Together in England website.

Rev. Peter Ball stated there is much gratitude for Lay Preachers and great value is placed on their ministries. The Pastoral Committee were pleased to announce the accreditation of Janette Stevens who was congratulated and presented with her Certificate.

Lay Presidency at the Sacraments (Annual Authorisation) – Synod accepted a revised list of persons authorised to preside at the Sacraments for the year March 2017 – March 2018.

Synod Property Policy – The meeting adopted the Property Policy following a second period of consultation.

The Moderator's Address – The Moderator said that God speaks to us in many and varied ways and in the Synod Meeting we respond in various ways. This includes reflection on what messages God may be giving to us as we listen to presentations, join in worship, hear and respond to committee reports, engage with Children's Synod and mingle together.

In biblical reflection, he chose the story of Belshazzar's Feast in the book of Daniel. He also referred to the book *Dare to be a Daniel* by Tony Benn and the song *Dare to be a Daniel* with its chorus of: "Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone, Dare to have a purpose firm, Dare to make it known." In his book, Tony Benn stated how much these words, passed on by his father, had sustained him, especially through difficult times.

Clearly, at Belshazzar's Feast there was much celebration with Belshazzar calling for the silver and gold cups to be used. The Moderator asked if we, as a people, celebrate enough. We have much to celebrate, but of course we need to keep things in proportion. Daniel was committed to God's path. Nebuchadnezzar turned to God; Belshazzar did not. As a hand appeared and began to write on the wall, it caused terror. It made those gathered think about values.

The Moderator asked if we are engaged to challenge things which need to be challenged. We need to engage too with change and be positive. We need to move church life from maintenance to mission – a great undertaking, but exciting and allowing great scope for great things to be done.

Closing – Closing worship was led by the Children's and Youth Synod. The children acted out a scene from Exodus about Manna and Quails. They also told the story of the Five Loaves and Two Fishes in which Jesus, looking up to heaven, gave thanks and broke the loaves, giving them to the disciples, who gave this to the people. The children broke the bread and passed it around the congregation to eat.

The worship ended with a prayer and the singing of *The Lord's My Shepherd*.

The Moderator thanked Water Lane URC and particularly Rev. Roy Fowler, for all their efforts and their hospitality.

The meeting closed at 3.55pm.

Family News

Fret not, Faint not, Fear not

Someone has said that the three keys to real peace are Fret not, Faint not, Fear not (Isaiah 46:3-4). I remember my father leading me into the deep end of the swimming pool and telling me, “I will not let you go”. He also taught me to swim by telling me to sit on the bottom to prove buoyancy. But he remained close by!

Fret not – because God loves us (1 John 4:16).

Faint not – because God holds us (Psalm 139:9-10).

Fear not – because God keeps us (Psalm 121:5). We are His treasured possession (Malachi 3:17).

As we rest in the love of Christ and recognise that God holds our hand, we too shall be at peace and unafraid. The three keys to real peace can keep us from the confines of worry and discouragement, and lead us into the full joy and liberty of the children of God.

Ron Mallinson



Please remember those in need of prayer...

The Holy Spirit by Rev. Dr. John Lewis

Life-Giving Power from God

In the Gospel of John, the Spirit comes to the disciples of Jesus in a very private way. As the risen Christ appears to his disciples inside a locked room, he “breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’” (John 20:22). The same Greek verb translated as “breathed” also appears in Genesis 2:7, where God formed the earthling from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the earthling became a living being. Jesus breathes on his disciples the breath of life, the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel of John the Spirit represents Christ’s ongoing presence in and with the community of believers.

So, too, Paul describes the Spirit as the life-giving power of God: “...the Spirit gives life” (2 Corinthians 3:6). “The first man, Adam, became a living being; the last Adam [Jesus Christ] became a life-giving spirit” (1 Corinthians 15:45; see also 1 Peter 3:18).

The Gospels also acknowledge the Spirit as the presence of the life-giving power of God. In the birth narratives, Mary is found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit that comes upon her (Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:34-35). So, too, the Spirit descends on Jesus at his baptism (Mark 1:9-11; Matthew 3:16-17; Luke 3:22), empowering and inaugurating his life-giving ministry. The Spirit then “drives” (Mark 1:12) or “leads” (Matthew 4:1; Luke 4:1) Jesus out into the wilderness, where he is tested by Satan and found to be faithful.

The Spirit is Mysterious

The early Christians understood very clearly that the Spirit is mysterious and unpredictable in the ways it works in people’s lives:

Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit . . . Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The wind [Greek: *pneuma*] blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit [Greek: *pneuma*]” (John 3:5-8).

John offers a wordplay on the Greek word *pneuma* to emphasize that the Spirit moves and works like the wind that blows through our lives every day. Countless Christians through the ages have caught that wind or Spirit. It’s much like jumping on board a speeding train passing through your station, not knowing where it arrived from, and

having no clue as to where it will take you, trusting only that an encounter with God’s kingdom awaits.

God’s Teacher and Agent of Revelation

In the letters of Paul, the Spirit serves as God’s divine agent of revelation to the Christian community:

“Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God,” for “these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit” (1 Corinthians 2:10-12). “To each person is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7).

In the Gospel of John, after Jesus ascends to heaven, God sends the Spirit to teach the community everything and remind them of all the things Jesus said to them (John 14:26). So, too, Jesus cautions them that the Spirit will not just confirm past traditions:

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come” (John 16:12-13).

Over time the Spirit has taught, guided, and challenged many Christian communities to perceive what God is now doing in their lives: sometimes confirming their old and valued traditions, and at other times leading the community in the direction of new ones.

Not All “Spirits” Come from God

Paul and John both remind us that not every “spiritual experience” constitutes an encounter with God. As we saw above in 1 Corinthians 2:10-12, Paul distinguishes the “spirit of the world” from the Spirit sent from God. The same is true for John, as he instructs his community: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but prove the spirits through testing, to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

In any given moment, it will be crucial for a Christian community to try to discern whether a powerful spirit moving among them truly represents something of God, or reflects the influence of a spirit of the world. The work of spiritual discernment in a community is not scientific; it requires the exercise of patience and humility.

Hopeworx Re-use Centre

A few months ago, at a meeting of the Wives' Fellowship, we enjoyed an illustrated talk about the Hopeworx Re-use Centre, which is situated in a large warehouse on the Brook Road Industrial Estate, close to Rayleigh Weir.



Hopeworx is a Christian-based, non-profit making social enterprise and a registered charity (number 1151572). The enterprise seeks to provide affordable second-hand furniture, appliances and other household items.

The charity works with various agencies to help those who are struggling with day-to-day living. As a social enterprise, 100% of the funds raised are reinvested into the organisation to pay core running and operational costs. Any surplus is used to support an emergency food pack operation that works through referral agencies.

The charity provides employment and volunteering opportunities to help people who have been marginalised through ill-health, long-term unemployment or life experience, thus helping them to rebuild their self esteem, to gain

self-confidence and to find fulfilment in life. The Hopeworx project provides a caring, professional and supportive service without prejudice or discrimination in the belief that all people should be respected and treated equally regardless of race, culture, age, disability, religion, gender or lifestyle.

The warehouse at 33 Brook Road is open from 9.30am to 4.00pm from Monday to Friday and from 9.30am to 12.30pm on Saturday.

Donations of furniture, appliances and household items can be collected free of charge.

Upholstered furniture must comply with fire safety regulations and be in good, clean condition to meet Trading Standards' requirements. Phone 01268 743232 to discuss any donations that you wish to make.

Recently, three of us decided to take a look at the goods on offer and were agreeably surprised at what we found. On arrival, we received a very warm welcome from the lady volunteer at the reception desk and were then left to wander around the many objects for sale – all at very modest prices.

Whilst there, I bought a small, folding occasional table for £5.00. My friends bought a standard lamp and a kitchen stool respectively. All three of us are pleased with our purchases and can recommend a visit to this 'Aladdin's Cave' of furniture, appliances, cutlery, crockery, pictures, linen and much more.

Vera Knapton

Editor's note: Vera's article about Hopeworx is very timely. At the Church Meeting on 1st June, it was decided that future donations of food and other items brought to the church on the 1st Sunday of each month should be given to Hopeworx instead of the Homeless Action Resource Project (HARP). The main reason for the change is that Colin Melluish is no longer able to deliver the donations to HARP in Southend on our behalf. We are very grateful to Colin for taking our donations to HARP over a period of years, originally to the Day Centre in a former Baptist church in Valkyrie Road, Westcliff, and, since early 2014, to the Bradbury Centre in York Road, Southend.

Readers may be interested to know that Hopeworx was started as a community outreach project by the Christian Growth Centre, a church in Rayleigh, to seek the needs of its community and to find ways to alleviate those needs. Initially, the project concentrated on crisis food packs but after connecting with various organisations, it was discovered that there was a need for furniture and electrical appliances. This need was initially met by using garages but it was realised that more space was needed for this to be of any benefit to the community.



The move into furniture and electrical appliances led to an association with the Lighthouse Furniture Project based in Hutton, Brentwood. As a result, the Hopeworx Re-Use Centre at Brook Road was officially opened on 22nd June 2012 by the Rt Hon. Mark Francois, MP (see photo). The opening was attended by local councillors and other organisations within the Rayleigh area. On 28th April 2014 Hopeworx became an independent organisation.

Hadleigh Fair

White's Directory for 1863 recorded that Hadleigh 'has a fair for pleasure and pedlery on the 24th of June'. The nearest thing to the fair nowadays is the summer fair organised by St James the Less Church, which this year will be held on Saturday 24th June. The following is an account of Hadleigh Fair taken from Chapter 4 (A Day of Feasting) of *Cunning Murrell*, an historical novel by Arthur Morrison, published in 1900.

It was the way of Hadleigh Fair to begin betimes on Midsummer Day morning, so that it had pushed Hadleigh village almost out of sight before breakfast was generally in progress. It was not great among fairs, perhaps, but neither was Hadleigh great among villages.

The Fat Lady came there, and the Living Skeleton, and, one fair in three, the Fire-eater of Madagascar, when free from engagements before all the Crowned Heads. There had been two Mermaids within living recollection, though the last, as a sight, was considered unworthy the penny admission; but the really great exhibitions that graced Rayleigh Fair a month earlier – Wombwell's, Clarke's, Johnson and Lee's – these rarely or never took stand at Hadleigh. So that there was all the more money left to buy gingernuts, bull's-eyes, ribbons, and – more important than all – Gooseberry Pies.

And if the Fat Lady, and the Living Skeleton, and the rest of the prodigies were not enough, the sight-seer would find peep-shows everywhere – half a dozen of them at least. And as to every other sort of stand, booth, stall, shanty, or wigwam, they made Hadleigh village a town for the day, whereof the chief population was contributed by Leigh, Prittlewell, Eastwood, Rochford, Bemfleet, Canvey, Hockley, and a score more parishes.

Little was spent in the serious matters of cattle, horses, and farm produce at Hadleigh Fair, and the dealings – beside those in Gooseberry Pie – were mainly in ballads, spicenuts, penny toys, gown pieces, garters, peppermint stick, china and watches sold by Dutch auction, and gingerbread bought outright or knocked down by the expert with a stick.

The visitors from a distance bought their gooseberry pies at the booths and stalls, except such as had friends living in Hadleigh, with home-made pies of their own. The home-made pies were in general esteemed superior, because of a greater substance in the crust and a more liberal disposition of fruit. Those at the stalls, though handsome, plump, high, delicate, round, and full to look at, had a disappointing way of collapsing "aw to crumbles" at the first bite of a healthy jaw, revealing in the remains the hidden

chamber of air that had given the pie its goodly seeming; a hidden chamber filled and widened, it was commonly reported, by a puff of the bellows under the paste before baking.

Moreover, to put no more than four gooseberries in a penny pie was justly regarded as an act of rapine. The home-made pie, on the other hand, offered something for the teeth to get to work on. Made in the biggest pie-dish available, it was roofed over with a noble arch of crust, solid and enduring, more often than not made of bread-dough an inch thick; and its complete filling of gooseberries left no room for air. It was a piece of politeness to exchange wedges of this pie among friends, or even, for them that aspired to a gentility beyond that of their neighbours, to exchange little separate pies made for the purpose: with the accompanying message: "Please, mother say will you accept of a bit o' gooseberry poie?"

The person thus addressed was commonly as well assured of the coming of the pie as of the coming of fair-day, and might even have witnessed its hazardous transport through crowds of merry-makers the length of the village. But it was good form, nevertheless, to affect ineffable surprise and delight at the present, and to make the return in kind (if, indeed, the present were not itself a return compliment) with expressions of depreciation of her own handicraft. "I am that ashamed arltogether ... if your mother will axcuse ..." and so forth.

And so the gooseberry pie circulated with the proper compliments, the gingerbread was knocked down, ballads were bought and rolled up, the girls and women "argle-bargled" for gown pieces and garters, and all things went very merrily together. At the Castle Inn and the Crown the thirst induced by spicenuts and peppermint and the general circumstances was quelled in many pots of "thruppenny"; but again those with friends in the village had the advantage; for in half-a-dozen of the better keeping-rooms at least the man of the house would shut the door with a wink, and elicit from some obscure retreat a bottle; a bottle charged with cognac or hollands of a strength and quality that were a sufficient certificate of origin to the man of experience.

CHURCH DIARY FOR JUNE 2017

DAY	TIME	EVENT
Thursday 1 st	10.30am - 12 noon 12.15pm	Coffee Morning CHURCH MEETING (postponed from 18 th May)
Saturday 3 rd	Cancelled	Men's Breakfast Meeting
Sunday 4 th	10.30am 6.30pm	Pentecost Morning Service - Mrs Gillian Thomson Pentecost Evening Service - Mr Jim Clubb
Monday 5 th	8.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 6 th	9.30am - 11.00am 2.30pm	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots Wives' Fellowship - 'Water Aid' by Mrs Julie Leggett
Thursday 8 th	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Sunday 11 th	10.30am	Morning Service - Rev. Dr. Jim Tarrant
Monday 12 th	8.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 13 th	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Wednesday 14 th	7.30pm	ELDERS' MEETING
Thursday 15 th	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning with bric-a-brac stall for Christian Aid
Sunday 18 th	10.30am 5.00pm 6.30pm	Anniversary AM Service with Holy Comm - Mr John Amos Anniversary Tea Anniversary PM Service - Rev. Jack Roche
Monday 19 th	8.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 20 th	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 22 nd	10.30am	Monthly Midweek Service - Mr Jim Clubb
Sunday 25 th	10.30am	Morning Service - Rev. John Ambrose
Monday 26 th	8.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 27 th	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 29 th	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning

A Poem for Pentecost

Unless the eye catch fire,
 The God will not be seen.
 Unless the ear catch fire
 The God will not be heard.
 Unless the tongue catch fire
 The God will not be named.
 Unless the heart catch fire,
 The God will not be loved.
 Unless the mind catch fire,
 The God will not be known.

William Blake (1757-1827) from *Pentecost*