

THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

June 2018



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 most months

PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR JUNE 2018

Sun 3 rd Jun	10.30am	Morning Service	Mr Adrian Tinning
	6.30pm	Evening Service with Holy Communion	Mrs Heather Brown
Sun 10 th Jun	10.30am	Church Anniversary Morning Service	Rev. John Ambrose PGCE (Ox)
	6.30pm	Church Anniversary Evening Service	Rev. Dr Jim Tarrant MA MTh
Sun 17 th Jun	10.30am	Morning Service with Holy Communion	Mr Keith Berry
Sun 24 th Jun	10.30am	Morning Service	Mr Wilf Tyler
Thu 28 th Jun	10.30am	Midweek Service	Malcolm Brown

SUNDAY MORNING DUTY ROTAS FOR JUN 2018

	ELDER	STEWARD	REFRESHMENTS
Sun 3 rd Jun	Malcolm Brown	Marion Fidell	Marion Fidell
Sun 10 th Jun	Jean Reeve	Ann Purkiss	Kay Watson
Sun 17 th Jun	Heather Brown [Holy Communion]	Malcolm Brown	Marion Fidell
Sun 24 th Jun	Malcolm Brown	Janet Wimbleton	Janet Wimbleton

FLOWER ROTA FOR JUNE 2018

Sun 3 rd Jun	Jean Reeve - in memory of her mother
Sun 10 th Jun	Marion Fidell - in memory of her husband Jeff
Sun 17 th Jun	Vera Knapton - in memory of Marjorie & Geoff Chase
Sun 24 th Jun	Marion Fidell - in memory of her father

ELDERS' MEETING	CHURCH MEETING
Wed 13 th Jun 7.30pm	No meeting in June

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.

When Love is the Way

There's power, power in love. If you don't believe me, think about a time when you first fell in love. The whole world seemed to centre around you and your beloved. Ultimately, the source of love is God himself: the source of all of our lives. There's an old medieval poem that says: 'Where true love is found, God himself is there.'

The New Testament says it this way: "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God, and those who love are born of God and know God. Those who do not love do not know God. Why? For God is love."

There's power in love. There's power in love to help and heal when nothing else can. There's power in love to lift up and liberate when nothing else will. There's power in love to show us the way to live.

Jesus of Nazareth on one occasion was asked by a lawyer to sum up the essence of the teachings of Moses, and he went back into the Hebrew scriptures, to Deuteronomy and Leviticus, and Jesus said: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself."

And then in Matthew's version, he added: "On these two, love of God and love of neighbour, hang all the law, all the prophets, everything that Moses wrote, everything in the holy prophets, everything in the scriptures, everything that God has been trying to tell the world ... love God, love your neighbours, and while you're at it, love yourself."

Someone once said that Jesus began the most revolutionary movement in human history. A movement grounded in the unconditional love of God for the world - and a movement mandating people to live that love, and in so doing to change not only their lives but the very life of the world itself.

I'm talking about power. Real power. Power to change the world. If you don't believe me, well, there were some old slaves in America's Antebellum South who explained the dynamic power of love and why it has the power to transform. They explained it this way. They sang a spiritual, even in the midst of their captivity. It's one that says, 'There is a balm in Gilead...., a

healing balm, something that can make things right. There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole, there is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.'

And one of the stanzas actually explains why. They said: 'If you cannot preach like Peter, and you cannot pray like Paul, you just tell the love of Jesus, how he died to save us all.'

He didn't die for anything he could get out of it. Jesus did not get an honorary doctorate for dying. He didn't... he wasn't getting anything out of it. He gave up his life; he sacrificed his life, for the good of others, for the good of the other, for the wellbeing of the world... for us.

That's what love is. Love is not selfish and self-centred. Love can be sacrificial, and in so doing, becomes redemptive. And that way of unselfish, sacrificial, redemptive love changes lives, and it can change this world. If you don't believe me, just stop and imagine. Think and imagine a world where love is the way.

Imagine our homes and families where love is the way. Imagine neighbourhoods and communities where love is the way. Imagine governments and nations where love is the way. Imagine business and commerce where this love is the way. Imagine this tired old world where love is the way. When love is the way – unselfish, sacrificial, redemptive.

When love is the way, then no child will go to bed hungry in this world ever again. When love is the way, we will let justice roll down like a mighty stream and righteousness like an ever-flowing brook. When love is the way, poverty will become history. When love is the way, the earth will be a sanctuary.

When love is the way, we will lay down our swords and shields, down by the riverside, to study war no more. When love is the way, there's plenty good room - plenty good room - for all of God's children. Because when love is the way, we actually treat each other, well... like we are actually family.

When love is the way, we know that God is the source of us all, and we are children of God. My brothers and sisters, that's a new heaven, a new earth, a new world, a new human family.

Bishop Michael Curry

An edited excerpt from Bishop Michael's address at the wedding of Prince Harry and Megan Markle.

From the Editor

Welcome to the June edition of the Hadleigh Messenger.

In lieu of a pastoral letter, I have chosen an excerpt from the very powerful address given by Bishop Michael Curry at the wedding of Prince Harry and Megan Markle. He created quite a stir but, given the message, I think he can be forgiven for going on a bit longer than planned!

This edition contains a third and final article by Wilf Tyler about the Billy Graham Crusades plus a related article by our Church Secretary, Royston Brackin, with his memories of the Crusades. I am grateful to Wilf and Royston for taking the time and trouble to write their articles.

The magazine also contains an introduction to 'Holy Habits', one of the resources for the URC's new focus on discipleship known as 'Walking the

Way: *Living the life of Jesus Today*', which was mentioned in the April edition.

This month we are celebrating the 114th anniversary of the founding of our church. There is information about the services and tea elsewhere.

For those who are not aware, we were originally founded in 1904 as Hadleigh Congregational Church but in 1972 we joined the newly-formed United Reformed Church (URC) along with many other churches from the Congregational Church in England and Wales together with the Presbyterian Church of England.

In 1981, the URC united with the Re-formed Association of Churches of Christ and, in 2001, with the Congregation Union of Scotland.

Malcolm Brown

Jesus Knows You're Here

A burglar broke into a house one night. He shone his flashlight around looking for valuables when a voice in the dark said, "Jesus knows you're here."

He nearly jumped out of his skin, clicked his flashlight off, and froze. When he heard nothing more, after a bit, he shook his head and continued. Just as he pulled the stereo out so he could disconnect the wires, clear as a bell he heard:

"Jesus is watching you."

Freaked out, he shined his light around frantically, looking for the source of the voice. Finally, in the corner of the room, his flashlight beam came to rest on a parrot.

"Did you say that?" he hissed at the parrot.

"Yep", the parrot confessed, and then squawked, "I'm just trying to warn you that he's watching you."

The burglar relaxed. "Warn me, huh? So who in the world are you?"

"Moses," replied the bird.

"Moses?" the burglar laughed. "What kind of people would name a bird Moses?"

"The kind of people that would name a Rottweiler Jesus," came the reply.

Bible Incomplete: Fill in the missing letters to complete the passage

Bu_ ye_ re_ _ ch_ se_ ge_ er_ ti_ n, a_ _ oy_ l_ p_ ie_ th_ od, _ ho_ y_ n_ ti_ n, a_ _ ec_ li_ r_ p_ op_ e; t_ at_ e_ s_ ou_ d_ s_ ew_ _ or_ h_ t_ e_ p_ ai_ es_ _ f_ h_ m_ w_ o_ h_ th_ _ al_ ed_ _ ou_ _ ut_ _ f_ d_ rk_ es_ _ in_ o_ h_ s_ m_ rv_ llo_ s_ l_ gh_ . (KJV)

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.

Wives' Fellowship Programme for June and July 2018

Date	Time	Meeting
Tue 12 th Jun	2.30pm	Members' Afternoon
Tue 10 th Jul	3.00pm	Afternoon Tea Party

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

Meeting fee £2.00 – first time free

Annual subscription – £3.00

Church 114th Anniversary

We celebrate the 114th Anniversary of the founding of our church on Sunday 10th June. The first service was held (in the Small Hall) on 20th January 1904 but we normally celebrate the anniversary later in the year when the weather is better.

The morning service will be led by Rev. John Ambrose and our evening service will be led by Rev. Jim Tarrant. John, the former minister at St Barnabas Church, has led worship at our church for a good number of years now. Jim, the former minister at Westcliff URC, has led our worship quite frequently since the retirement last year of Rev. Jack Roche. We are grateful to John and Jim for their support and it is good that they will be with us to help us celebrate.

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. Representatives from the other Hadleigh churches have been invited as have lay preachers and clergy who serve us so well during the year. I know that Jack is planning to come and there have already been several acceptances from the other churches.

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

Malcolm Brown



Bible Society news

At a recent meeting of the Castle Point Bible Society Committee, the Secretary/Treasurer, Mrs Janice Phillips, reported that £593 was raised during 2017 – a slight increase on the previous year.

Dates for your diary

Saturday 16th June – John and Janice Phillips will again host an open garden event at their home at 2 The Chimes, Benfleet, to raise funds for the Bible Society. The event will run from 11.00am to 3.00pm. Light refreshments including ploughman's lunches will be available.

Saturday 15th September – There will be a coffee morning in aid of the Bible Society at Benfleet Methodist Church from 10.00am to 12 noon.

Vera Knapton

Bible Society representative



"The glory of God's faithfulness is that no sin of ours has ever made Him unfaithful."

Charles Spurgeon

WHAT'S ON

A round-up of future events in the area

Sat 9 Jun 2018	Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church from 10.00 to 12 noon.
	ditto - Hadleigh & Daws Heath Councillors' Surgery in Hadleigh Old Fire Station from 10.00am to 12 noon.
	ditto - Beat and Beans Café at St James the Less Church from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Live music (Yardarm Folk Orchestra) with beverages and snacks. Come and go as you please. Free admission.
Wed 13 Jun 2018	Coffee Morning with home-made cakes at St Michael's Church Community Room, Daws Heath from 10.00am to 11.45am.
Sat 16 Jun 2018	Coffee Morning at Thundersley Methodist Church, Kennington Avenue, from 10.00am to 12 noon. Proceeds to Southend Hospital.
	Ditto - Hadleigh Gardening Association Summer Show at Hadleigh Methodist Church Hall from 2.00pm to 4.00pm. Admission £1.00.
	ditto - Chess at St James from 2.00pm to 4.30pm. Beginners welcome. For more information, phone Colin Melliush on 01702 555291
	ditto - Southend Symphony Orchestra Concert at the SA Hadleigh Temple. Starts at 7.30pm. Programme includes Tchaikovsky's Rococo Variations & Beethoven's Symphony No.3 (Eroica) Tickets £10.00. £1 discount for advance purchase - available from Benfleet Music, 2 Roseberry Walk, Benfleet - phone 01268 755005. For more info, phone 01268 755005.
Tue 19 Jun 2018	Charity Concert with Abbagirls Tribute Show at the SA Hadleigh Temple. Starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £5.00 - in advance from SA Temple reception or at the door. In aid of 'Help Harry' fundraising.
Thu 21 Jun 2018	Poetry Reading Group at Hadleigh Library from 2.30pm to 3.30pm. This month - John Clare. Meetings on 3 rd Thu of the month.
Fri 22 Jun 2018	Castle Crafters Meeting at Hadleigh Library from 1.00pm to 2.30pm (every Friday). If you enjoy having a chat and crafting, come along.
Sat 23 Jun 2018	Hadleigh Heritage Coffee Morning & Talk at St James the Less Church. Talk - 'Cunning Murrell' by Bob Delderfield. Coffee served from 10.30am. Talk starts at 11.00am. Free admission.
	ditto - Friends of Hadleigh Church Summer Concert at St James the Less Church with Chorus Sirenum & Southend Young Men's Chorus. Starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £10.00, including glass of wine with buffet.
Sat 30 Jun 2018	St James the Less Church Hadleigh Fair from 10.30am to 3.30pm. With live entertainment, games & competitions, plants, raffle, tombola, children's toys & books, local history, refreshments. Free admission.
Sat 14 Jul 2018	Hadleigh & Thundersley Community Archive Drop-in at Hadleigh Library from 10.30am to 12 noon. Bring along old photos and documents for scanning or chat about your memories of the area.
	ditto - Daws Heath Village Fayre at St Michael's Church Field from 12.30pm to 4.00pm. Entrance by donation.
	ditto - The Orpheus Singers In Concert with Hadleigh Temple Band at the SA Hadleigh Temple. Starts at 7.30pm.

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

News from Churches Together in Hadleigh

The Annual General Meeting of Churches Together in Hadleigh was held on at 7.30pm on Tuesday 15th May 2018 at the SA Temple cottages. This report covers news from the AGM and the ordinary meeting that followed.

Opening – The meeting was chaired by the Leader, Roger Kingston (Methodist Church). Roger welcomed everyone and then opened the meeting with a devotion based on verses from John 21 and a prayer.

Election of officers:

Leader – There were no nominations for the post of Leader. Fortunately, Roger said he would be willing to continue as Leader and was re-elected.

Deputy Leader – Rev. Ruth Lawrence (St James & St Barnabas) offered to fill the Deputy Leader post, which has been vacant for several years, and was duly elected.

Secretary – There were no offers to take on the role of Secretary so the post remained vacant with secretarial tasks covered by other people.

Treasurer – Paul Short, who has been the Treasurer since 1972, said that he would like to step down owing to his wife's poor health but that he would continue to be a representative for St Thomas More Church. Paul was thanked for all his work over the years. Maureen Maley (SA) kindly offered to take on the Treasurer role (with the assistance, if necessary, of Jacqui Nunn) and was elected.

Minutes Secretary – Maureen Lennard-Brown was willing to continue as the Minutes Secretary.

Treasurer's Report – Paul Short distributed copies of the accounts for the preceding year. The end of year bank balance is £173.36. In a verbal report, Paul explained that there had been only one item of expenditure, namely the Churches Together Christmas cards, which had cost £35. These were printed by the Methodist Church on their own printer, resulting in a lower charge than a commercial printer.

The Salvation Army had kindly printed posters and other material for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity free of charge. There was no expenditure on Lent Course material this year as it had been decided not to run a course (for the first time in many years).

The bank account is currently held with HSBC, who no longer have a branch in Hadleigh. It was agreed that Paul should look to transfer the account to Santander in Hadleigh prior to Maureen taking over as Treasurer. At that point, the signatories for cheques will be changed.

Leader's report – Roger gave a verbal report of the year's activities including the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Easter services. Capt. Steve Fripp (SA) was thanked in absentia for leading one of the Week of Prayer meetings despite only having just taken over as joint leader at the SA Temple. Ruth was congratulated on her Good Friday service, which was well received. The URC were thanked for providing refreshments after the Walk of Witness.

News from around the churches

St James the Less & St Barnabas – The two churches are taking part in the global prayer initiative 'Thy Kingdom Come' on separate days – 14th April (St Barnabas Church) and 16th April (St James the Less Church). All were invited.

Methodist Church – The defibrillator for community use, mentioned at the last meeting, has now been delivered and is awaiting installation on an outside wall. Capt. Marian Fripp (SA) proposed that £100 be contributed from Churches Together funds towards the purchase and maintenance. This was agreed.

St Michael's Church – Owing to snow, the Women's World Day of Prayer Service at St Michael's on Friday 2nd March was cancelled.

Prayer Meeting - A Churches Together prayer meeting was held at the Baptist church on 24th April. It was agreed to hold another prayer meeting on Tuesday 1st October starting at 2.00pm. [Venue confirmed after the meeting as St James the Less Church.]

Christian Aid Week (13th – 19th May) – I reported that the offertory for Christian Aid at the Good Friday service and surplus donations for Walk of Witness refreshments jointly amounted to over £200. [The actual amount was £254.96.]

Pentecost Praise – Roger reminded the meeting about the Pentecost Praise Café at the Methodist Church on Saturday 19th May.

Dates of future meetings – The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 16th October at the Baptist Church. The following meeting will be held on Tuesday 8th January 2019 at the URC.

Closing – The meeting closed at 9.00pm with a prayer by Jacqui Nunn.

Malcolm Brown

1966 Billy Graham Crusade – The Backroom Boys

This is the third and final article by Wilf Tyler written in response to the invitation in the March edition to contribute personal memories of the Billy Graham Crusades.

Shortly before the Earls Court Crusade began in 1966, each Christian denomination was asked to nominate two people to help backstage. The Crusaders Union, the largest non-denominational youth organisation, was also asked to nominate two people. Mike Penney (from Muswell Hill) and I were the two nominated by the General Committee. We all gathered, as arranged, on the first evening of the Crusade at Earls Court. We were taken to an office and our task explained to us. We then had time to stand on the arena steps and listen to the last five minutes of Billy Graham's sermon. That was the only time we were able to be in the Arena.

At the end of each Crusade meeting, an appeal was made for those who wanted to have Christ in their lives to come forward. Those who did so were paired with a counsellor and taken to the counselling room. After being counselled, the counsellor filled in a card about the enquirer and the result of the enquiry. The cards were taken to an office where they were checked and sorted. Some needed no further action. Those relating to enquirers who already had some church connection had the details referred to that church so that they could follow up the enquirer and draw them into the church.

Cards relating to enquirers who had no church connection were passed to the working party. Our task was to link the enquirer to a local church where he/she could be nurtured in their new Christian life and integrated into a live Christian fellowship. In our office we had details of all the churches in London and the south, from Bristol to the Wash, who had signed up as supporters and prayer partners of the Crusade.

Although most of the working party members were representatives of a particular denomination, our only concern was to link the enquirer with a lively church close to their home. We were truly all one in Christ Jesus. In addition to lists of churches, ministers and other contacts, we had a variety of maps and were all ready to help each other with any local knowledge.

As we got to know each other we found that I was the only regular member of the team with any knowledge of Essex geography. Without knowledge of the local area (for which we might not have a street map) it would, for example, be

too easy to link someone living in Olive Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea, to Eastwood Congregational Church when Hadleigh Congregational Church would be more convenient. So, as I had a greater knowledge of Essex geography and bus routes, all Essex enquirer cards were passed to me after the first week. Other members of our group became specialists in their own areas.

We were all concerned about missing the last train home and we were not always able to deal with all enquirer cards on the night. It became normal for us to go straight to Earls Court after work, taking sandwiches and starting as soon as possible on the backlog of cards from the previous day. When the meeting started we could hear singing and would join in by humming. Occasionally, we stopped work to join in the singing. Sometimes the backlog would take all evening and we wouldn't start on that evening's 'harvest'.

We would constantly ask each other for help. You might hear somebody ask, "Does anyone know Sevenoaks? London Road is a long road. Should I allocate an enquirer living at number 946 to the Baptist Church or to the Anglican Church?" Someone might respond with, "No, put them with the Elim Pentecostal Church in Acacia Drive. It's less than three minutes' walk away!" We all worked together to build up the church of God.

The final rally was not held at Earls Court but at Wembley. However, we were asked to be at Earls Court to deal with the backlog of cards. Cards from the Wembley rally were rushed to Earls Court by motorbike. We were asked to stay all night, if necessary, to finish the job as the Billy Graham Organisation had to vacate Earls Court by 9.00am on the Sunday. We actually finished shortly after 4.30am and Mike Penney and I slept in my camper-van in the car park.

We woke about 8.00am and went inside to use the toilets. The arena was half dismantled and the office where we had worked was no longer there. So off we went to Muswell Hill where Mike's wife had breakfast ready for us. Then, home to Leigh-on-Sea where I went to bed instead of the church morning service! Another Crusade had ended and thousands more had been led to Christ.

Wilf Tyler

Memories of the Billy Graham Crusades

My introduction to the first of the Billy Graham crusades in our country (in 1954) commenced with my noticing posters in London tube stations which only showed a man's head, nothing more. I was intrigued by this. After a short while these posters were replaced by others to which the name Billy Graham had been added. At that time I had no knowledge of who Billy Graham was, or why they were being posted in the tube stations, but it did certainly arouse my interest.

Then newspaper announcements about the London Crusade at the Haringay Arena began to appear. Much of the church community was very sceptical about American emotional evangelists, and our own church was not at all enthusiastic. However one local church, which may have been the Hadleigh Methodists, or perhaps the Baptists, organised a coach to go to Haringay and I, with Susan, joined the party. I had no idea what to expect and went with an open mind.

When we arrived and took our seats, I saw a large cube suspended from the roof structure bearing the words 'I am the way, the truth and the life' on each of the four vertical sides. There was a colossal choir who, once they started singing just before the meeting started, were clearly well rehearsed. They sang 'Blessed Assurance' – a new hymn to me – with such fervour and enthusiasm and with obvious joy, that they commanded full attention. As the singing rose to a crescendo, I felt that I was attending something really special.

As I recall, Cliff Barrows spoke first to welcome visitors. There was a solo by Beverley Shea, and then Cliff Barrows introduced Billy Graham. When he spoke I found him to be a very gripping and fluent speaker, not at all emotional as had been suggested he would be, but very forthright and direct, giving the biblical authority for all the statements he made. 'The Bible says' was an opening he very frequently made. He would quote a particular text and give the Bible reference, and speak the whole time without any apparent notes.

On the particular evening we went to Haringay, he made the strong argument that people should make a decision there and then to follow Christ. Even now as I write this I can hear him saying 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God'. He went on to say none of us knew how much time we had left on earth, then quoted statistics saying that within a very short time some of those present would have passed away; by the end of the year

x% would have done so and after a further passage of time (memory fails me as to the length of time) 25% would have passed away. Those riveting statements arrested attention – none of this was presented aggressively or hysterically, but more in a friendly, helpful and concerned manner.

When he had finished speaking he invited people to come to the front and give their lives to Christ. He would then speak a little more and make a further invitation. At every crusade meeting I went to, after an initial trickle the flow increased to a flood of people gathering on the floor of the venue. I remember him once mentioning that people said they could not understand why so many responded to these invitations. He then added that he could not understand this either. But people did respond and for many thousands it was a life-changing event.

However, as the crusades continued there were critics, and, sadly, more than a few were from the churches. Many said the conversions would not last and that converts would 'backslide'. This was no doubt true in some cases, but in many cases it certainly was not. One of the converts was the singer Cliff Richard. I know from my own family connections with a church that he attended, that his conversion has proved to be genuine and permanent. I had already made my own decision, but I certainly felt a strengthening of my faith through attending the crusades. All my life I have been grateful for the opportunity to do so and remember what uplifting experiences they were.

The Billy Graham organisation came to the UK at the invitation of churches, through the Evangelical Alliance. They would not embark on any crusade without such an invitation. Billy Graham sought to use his obvious gift to strengthen the local churches, not to build up any personal following. Our own Mrs Joyce Alabaster went forward to make a re-affirmation of faith, and did much in our church to help young girls by running a most successful Girls Brigade company for many years.

In later years I went to other crusades at the Earls Court exhibition centre and at Ipswich football stadium. Billy Graham's message was always different, gripping, entertaining and informative, but with the same appeal at the end for people to give their lives to Christ. This appeal always had the same result with hundreds responding.

Royston Brackin

An Introduction to Holy Habits

Holy Habits is a ten part initiative to nurture Christian discipleship. It explores Luke's model of church found in Acts 2:42 - 47, identifies ten habits and encourages the development of a way of life formed by them. The following introduction is an address given by Rev. Paul Whittle, Moderator of Eastern Synod, at the Synod Meeting in March.

'Walking the Way: living the life of Jesus today' is the latest strapline that the United Reformed Church is using, and it's a great strapline, a great concept. It's a call to discipleship, a call to missional discipleship. Of course, it is nothing new. The church has been doing discipleship for something around two thousand years. It is in our DNA. It is what we do. The first disciples encountered Jesus on a Galilean beach and responded positively to his invitation to go with him and be part of his team: *"Follow me and I will make you fish for people"*.

However, though it is nothing new, many of us are valuing the renewed emphasis on discipleship. We recognise that our discipleship has often been less than it should have been –and we can see the value of being encouraged to proactively re-engage as disciples.

In so many ways we are like Isaiah. We look around and we see so much that is amiss – and we fear that is all too much. We can hardly do anything, let alone enough. We are deeply concerned. Then, just like Isaiah, we feel God's touch and so, when we hear the call, we are able to say, as Isaiah did: *"Here am I; send me!"*

In the end, discipleship is not a big deal, though it is easy for us to evade it. It is easy for us to think it is too much. It is easy for us to think that we are not good enough. Strictly, we are not good enough – only, somehow, wonderfully, that does not matter to God. God wants what we can offer, and God never asks more of us than we can do. Both Isaiah and Simon Peter, as well as many others in the Bible, had to learn that lesson but, learning it, what a difference they made!

But what does it mean to be a disciple? What can we do to be intentional disciples? How can we be more effective? One of the suggestions around at the moment is to consider engaging in "holy habits", and to encourage others to take up holy habits. I really like that idea. I think you can do all sorts of things with it to make it work for you. A habit is something that you do on a regular basis. You make it part of your life. A holy habit is a habit that is connected to God. God is holy.

One of the great Biblical statements about us is that we are made in the image of God. It is there

in Genesis 1:27 – So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them. That is quite something and it lends a lot of credibility to the idea that we should develop holy habits. As God is holy, so we should do what we can to be holy.

There are innumerable ways in which we could approach this idea of holy habits. I don't think that it would be possible, or legitimate, to produce a single definitive list. The list that we are mainly working to within the URC at the moment is a list of ten, all of which can be found in Acts chapter 2. It is a good list.

They are actually all there in verses 42 to 47 of Acts chapter 2:

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common: they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

Ten holy habits are there in that passage – Biblical teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, prayer, giving, service, eating together, gladness and generosity, worship, and making more disciples. There is material available to help you explore these holy habits – the book by Andrew Roberts with the title *Holy Habits* and eleven booklets, an introduction, and one on each particular holy habit.

Of course, this is not the only possible approach. There are all sorts of ways in which we can think of, and describe, holy habits. I like, for example, the list that Sam Wells comes up with in his book *Incarnational Ministry*. He writes: "Discipleship is first of all one's relationship with God – a daily walk of grace, wonder, intimacy, sadness at failure, repentance, renewal, forgiveness, longing, gratitude, and companionship."

There are ten there too – a different approach, but covering a lot of the same ground though, in some instances, in a different way. I am sure that most of us are already doing, in some measure, most, if not all, of these things. We are not introducing new ways of discipleship. But what we are doing is encouraging people to be more intentional and to deliberately develop holy habits. I would also say that you will probably get overwhelmed if you try and focus on them all at once. Take one or two, and then move on. For example, if you use the ten from Acts 2, the introduction booklet actually suggests concentrating on each one for a period of a couple of months, so that it will take you a couple of years or so to take a good look at each one. But that is up to you.

Fairly recently, I read a book by Judy Hirst, entitled *Struggling to be Holy*. That's me. That sums it up. Struggling to be holy. And that is, very much, the first thing that I want to note – don't worry if it is a bit of a struggle. To be honest, being holy does not come naturally to most of us. I know I certainly struggle to be holy. But, as Judy Hirst reminds us – "God can live with the reality that we are still sinners even if we find it hard to do so!" And she adds – "If I could jettison the parts of me I found troublesome I would also lose parts of myself which I valued. We are complex realities and we need to learn to love what we are, both delightful and damaged, and put it all into the hands of the master potter to form into something unique and beautiful."

Holy habits are about transformation. They are about changing us. But, at one and the same time, I am still 'me' and I should not worry that I am somewhat messed up. Judy Hirst also says: "Our failure to believe enough in his love, to trust the mess of our real selves to him is a serious barrier to the joy of knowing him better." She stresses the importance of recognising the contribution of failure. We live in a success-orientated society, which makes that rather difficult, but it is an important point to grasp. If we try and make ourselves perfect, we will fail catastrophically. But if we look to God, and if we reach out for God's help, then things can be very different.

Judy Hirst puts it like this: God's "provision of forgiveness always potentially makes failure into

a gracious and enabling new way forward. To grow in holiness we need to escape from any notion that we can make ourselves perfect. If we fail and are confronted with our limitations, we can begin to see who we are and what we need and this makes it easier to come to God just as it was easier for Bartimaeus than for the successful young man. The place of failure is potentially the place of learning and it is there where we will discover some unexpected things about ourselves. Failure is God's chance to open us and to stretch us beyond our tiny hopes and expectations but often we simply get so bogged down that we can't see a way forward."

When we start talking about being holy, it can seem impossible. How can we be holy? Why aspire for something we can't manage? Isn't it better to ditch the idea of holy habits and reach for something more achievable? By conventional standards, those would all be appropriate questions – but that is not how we live. We look to God who transforms things, who sees things differently, and who wants us to be involved. Thus, the idea of holy habits is not only possible but it gives us a helpful way of responding to God as we can, and as we should.

I commend the idea of holy habits. There is no wish to be prescriptive as to how you approach them. Many have heard me suggest an alternative shorter list of five* – and you and I could all come up with other suggestions, all valid. In John chapter 1 a couple of John's disciples went to see what Jesus was up to. What we are told about that encounter is that they remained with him that day. That is what we need – to spend time with Jesus, with God, and then we'll develop the holy habits that are going to work for us.

Paul Whittle

Address to Synod Meeting, March 2018

*The shorter list of five – bless, eat, listen, learn, sent – is drawn from Michael Frost's book, *Surprise The World*.

Editor's note: I hope to feature material from the individual holy habits booklets in forthcoming editions of the magazine. If you can't wait to find out more and have Internet access, all the booklets can be downloaded from the Eastern Synod website at: <http://www.urc-eastern.org.uk/walking-the-way/982-holy-habits>.

"But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do." – *1 Peter 1:15*

Family News

Alex Gargrave

June Gargrave writes:

“Alex Gargrave, the grandson of Keith and I, has recently received his Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. He chose to have it sent to him by post rather than to go somewhere like Buckingham Palace to receive it from a member of the Royal family or senior member of the Awards Team.

Alex is now preparing to travel again to help out with the deprived children’s Holiday Camp in the backwoods of Ukraine – two train journeys’ distance from Kiev where he was last year. We pray that he makes it back safely! Fortunately he does speak Russian and we hope he knows enough to do this trip on his own this year.”

We send our congratulations to Alex and also pray that he has a safe but enjoyable trip to Ukraine.

God bless us

God bless us in our sleep with rest,
in our dreams with vision,
in our waking with a calm mind,
in our souls with the friendship of the Holy Spirit,
this day and every day.

Amen



From the Moderator's Blog

'Church of Scotland General Assembly'

I had the pleasure of going to the Church of Scotland (CoS) General Assembly this month. This has been an enriching experience for me for a whole host of reasons.

Just in case you are not aware, the CoS is a Presbyterian church ... and some might say The Presbyterian church; so, they are a very close neighbour of ours in both geographical and ecclesiological terms. Note that it is the Scottish Episcopal Church that is part of the Anglican Communion.

I was one of over 70 ecumenical and international visitors; joining more than 600 commissioners in their assembly Hall in the centre of old Edinburgh, between the Castle and Holyrood. The historic and beautiful location added to the special time I had.



The Twin Towers of the Assembly rooms in Edinburgh

The first thing that struck me was the involvement of the Queen in the Assembly. As the CoS is the 'national church' in Scotland the Queen (usually by appointing a Lord High Commissioner as her representative) takes part.

This year the assembly opened on Saturday, 19th May. The Queen gave her apologies for her absence as she had 'other' pressing engagements (I think Harry and Meghan had something to do with that!). The Queen appointed her cousin, the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry as her representative. The Queen's role is very different from the one she has with the Church of England, as the CoS remains fully independent of the state.

When she succeeded to the British throne, the Queen took an oath to preserve the Church of Scotland, which is guaranteed under the 1707 Act of Union of Scotland and England. Her role in the Assembly is one way she undertakes to preserve

the CoS. However, this offers some credence to Prince Charles' desire to change from Defender of Faith to Defender of Faiths. The Queen and the Judiciary were also well represented at the Assembly service held in St Giles' Cathedral, which this year was on Pentecost.



The Ecumenical and International guests

On the Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon the Assembly organise Heart and Soul celebrations in the Princes Street Gardens, which are free and open to all. The Saturday evening celebration consisted of two Christian rock bands. The Sunday afternoon celebration had more of a 'Greenbelt' feel to it, but without the falafels and the entrance fee.



Augustine United Church, Edinburgh

On Sunday, after the Assembly service, I rushed down the street to join the service at the local URC, Augustine United Church. This fantastic congregation, led by Rev. Fiona Bennet, gives a Christ-like welcome to all ... sorry I only managed to grab this photograph as I was leaving.

Blessings,

Alan Yates

Posted on 22nd May 2018

Computer Corner

URC Daily Devotions

Interesting website

For some months now, different members of the United Reformed Church have been producing a daily devotion. These were originally circulated by e-mail (which is how I read them) but there is now an archive of all the devotions on the URC website. Some of the names of the authors may familiar to you. Recent authors included Rev. Colin Hunt (husband of Beryl Hunt, our former Interim Moderator) and Rev. Trevor Jamison (former minister at Brentwood, Billericay & Ingatestone)

URL: <https://devotions.urc.org.uk>

Delia Smith's Cookery Course

Interesting videos

Cookery fans may be interested to see this classic BBC series from the 1970s featuring Delia Smith. In this, her first series, Delia's cooks basic, foolproof recipes that made her a household name. Available on iPlayer.

URL: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p05rml64>

Word Search Creator

Useful free software

I got a bit of a shock whilst producing this month's magazine when I discovered that the website I've been using to create the monthly word search puzzles was no longer accessible. I therefore used Google to find a possible alternative site or program and came up with the free program Word Search Creator. It has done the job so I thought I would mention it here. (One slight difference to the previous method of creation is that the letter grid can only be pasted into Microsoft Word as an image and not as text.)

Download from: <https://sourceforge.net/projects/wsc/>

Word Search – inspired by the recent Royal Wedding

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

AISLE
BOUQUET
BRIDE
BRIDESMAID
CAKE
CEREMONY
DRESS
FIANCEE
GROOM
HONEYMOON
RECEPTION
REGISTER
RING
SPEECH
TOAST
USHER
VEIL
VICAR

Words may appear in any direction including diagonally, back to front and upside down.

CHURCH DIARY FOR JUNE 2018

DAY	TIME	EVENT
Sunday 3 rd	10.30am 6.30pm	Morning Service – Mr Adrian Tinning Evening Service with Holy Communion – Mrs Heather Brown
Monday 4 th	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 5 th	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 7 th	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Sunday 10 th	10.30am 5.00pm 6.30pm	Anniversary Morning Service – Rev. John Ambrose Anniversary Tea Anniversary Evening Service – Rev. Jim Tarrant
Monday 11 th	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 12 th	9.30am - 11.00am 2.30pm	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots Wives' Fellowship – Members' Afternoon
Wednesday 13 th	7.30pm	ELDERS' MEETING
Thursday 14 th	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Sunday 17 th	10.30am	Morning Service with Holy Communion – Mrs Janet Berry
Monday 18 th	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 19 th	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 21 st	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning with bric-a-brac table for Christian Aid
Sunday 24 th	10.30am	Morning Service – Mr Wilf Tyler
Monday 25 th	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 26 th	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 28 th	10.30am - 12 noon	Midweek Service – Mr Malcolm Brown

June

Rise up, and do begin the day's adorning;
 The Summer dark is but the dawn of day.
 The last of sunset fades into the morning,
 The morning calls you from the dark away.
 The holy mist, the white mist of the morning,
 Was wreathing upward on my lonely way.
 The way was waiting for your own adorning
 That should complete the broad adorned day.

Rise up, and do begin the day's adorning;
 The little eastern clouds are dapple grey:
 There will be wind among the leaves to-day;
 It is the very promise of the morning.
 Lux Tua Via Mea: your light's my way -
 Then do rise up and make it perfect day.

Hilaire Belloc