



March 2022

Minister: Rev. Joe Adams

THOUGHTS FROM THE VESTRY

It was in March two years ago that the lockdown began ushering in a long unsettled period, which most people found difficult to cope with in one way or another. Thankfully the mass vaccination programme has gradually helped us get back to a more normal way of life.

The decision was made to open up Wimpole Road Methodist Church for Sunday worship in April last year and we've come a long way from how things were then – short services, no heating, no singing, no chatting.

Each month sees new ways in which our church is slowly getting back to normal and I want to share with you some words from the 'Song of Songs':

*'See! The winter is past;
the rains are over and gone.
Flowers appear on the earth;
the season of singing has come,
the cooing of doves is heard in our land'.*

Recent weeks have seen the choir gradually come to life, resulting in a magnificent and powerful performance of 'Christ Triumphant' as their first introtit. It well deserved the applause it was given. Perhaps their next step is to start wearing their robes!

Another recent development is that we have refreshments served after Sunday worship, giving an opportunity for a good chat – something people have really missed!

We have slowly seen people returning to worship and also some new people attending. However there are still those who have not yet returned and we long for them to do so. Please come!

Some really good news is that our minister, Rev. Joe Adams, is back with us, albeit on reduced duties, after an extended period of sick leave. We have missed him (and Dave) and look forward to his ministry during Lent and Easter. After that he is required to take a Sabbatical until July.

As Lent is about to begin, please do take advantage of the Lent courses to deepen your faith in the approach to Easter.

With every blessing in Christ,

Joan Gomer

A PRAYER FOR LENT TAKEN FROM 'STAGES ON THE WAY'

Lord Jesus Christ, you called your disciples to go forward with you on the way to the Cross.

Since you first walked that road countless millions have followed you.

In all that we do as your disciples, save us from false familiarity with your journey.

May we never presume to step into your shoes, but make us small enough to fit our own, and to walk in love and wonder behind you. Amen

DONATIONS NEEDED FOR UKRAINIANS WHO HAVE REACHED POLAND

The donations hub is set up and running ...
Abbey Fields Medical Centre, Ypres Road, Colchester CO2 7UW

Below is a list of items needed:

Good winter coats; Thermal Socks; Canned or dried food; Pet food; Baby food, wipes, nappies; Sanitary products; Sealed medical and first aid supplies. No bags of clothes please

Alternatively you can buy from the Amazon wish list which will deliver straight to the hub. Thank you everyone

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/3GIXRC8G8HG2R...>

THURSDAY CIRCLE

We began February by watching a drama documentary 'The People's Preacher', about the life of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the famous Victorian Baptist Minister. Interestingly some of those attending were not aware of Spurgeon or his connection with Colchester, of his conversion at the Artillery Street Chapel or even its location.

For others the mention of the Chapel raised memories – Edward Pentney's parents met at a bazaar there in the 1940's, where the cost of entry was 1/6d. How many people today will be able to say they met their 'intended' at a church bazaar?

Beryl Partridge recalled that the Chapel was shut down until a group of Fingringhoe Singers, that she belonged to, opened it up to use for rehearsals.

The next week was our Annual General Meeting, when we looked back at what we have achieved and look forward to the way ahead. We had some vacancies to fill and thank you to those who agreed to help.

17th February was a poetry afternoon, when we read a selection of well known poetry and listened to monologues. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

We ended February with a very informative talk and presentation by Peter Jones on Colchester Trams, about which he has written a book. It was lovely to see pictures of trams showing Colchester as it used to be. I particularly loved the story about a dog called 'Spot', which often travelled on his own on the tram to get a bone from Oliver Parker's!

Coming up:

- 10 March - John McCabe will give a PowerPoint presentation on Colchester Churches.
- 17 March – Please support our Quiz Afternoon to raise money for East Anglian Children's Hospice.
- 24 March – In a change to the advertised programme, Carol Jacobs will talk about the Greenland Grove Animal Sanctuary at St. Osyth.
- 31 March – talk by Roy Waters on 'Growing Up in the Dutch Quarter in the 1940's and 50's.'
- 7 April – 'The Hoolies', a large group from Wivenhoe, will come for an afternoon of Sea Shanties. They are really good so don't miss this. It will be held in the church.

Our meetings at 2.30 p.m. on Thursdays are open to all – male or female, young or old, churchgoers or non-attendeers. Come and join us!

Joan Gomer - Secretary

‘MAKE LUNCH’ & COFFEE MORNING UPDATE

A big thank you to Colchester Borough Council for supporting our ‘Make Lunch’ initiative with a grant of £1000. Our application for this grant was one of 19 chosen by the Borough and will enable us to continue to support local families in this way for the near future.

During the summer holidays we were able to return to inviting families for a home cooked meal, with all the necessary Covid safety precautions, once a week. There was also the opportunity for them to make use of the community pantry - should they wish to do so.

Our last venture was February 16th and followed those of the summer, October half term and Christmas. The pantry is open every Wednesday during the Coffee Morning and is made use of each week. It’s lovely to have regular visitors who enjoy the hospitality and friendliness of the Coffee Morning too. If anyone would like to contribute to this, any in-date non-perishables can be left in the school room and would be much appreciated. Thank you.

Our Wednesday gatherings have a friendly and informal atmosphere, even when the temperature has not been quite so inviting! Open between 9.30 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. everyone is welcome for refreshments and fellowship. Come along, we’ll be very pleased to see you.

It is obvious how much being able to meet together means and as such, Sunday mornings without the opportunity to linger, relax and chat after worship was greatly missed. This has now been resurrected with the Stewards setting up in the kitchen and parlour, but anyone who can help by washing up a few cups, pouring some tea, or clearing away afterwards - this will be greatly appreciated. Please speak to anyone from the Stewards Team if you would like to know a bit more about how this might work, or if you would like to help every now and then.

Thank you for your support and prayers as we share the love of Jesus together through our hospitality.

Christine Firmin

BABY AND TODDLER GROUP

Dear Friends

Here at Wimpole Road Methodist Church we hold a long and successful history of our service to youth work in the local area. In particular we should justifiably be proud of the work undertaken by the good friends past and present who have kept the Baby and Toddler Group running. At this point we say a prayer and give heartfelt thanks for all those who have served the group and are no longer with us.

During the pandemic pausing the group was absolutely the correct thing to do to ensure the safety of our helpers and visitors. However now is the time to consider where we want to go as a Church moving forward.

I am aware that we are all getting older and feeling the effects of this ageing process, certainly I have far more aches and pains than when I started running the group 16 or so years ago. Therefore I am seeking your opinions as to what we should do next. It would be a great shame to have to close the group given our history and reputation but support is vital to be able to keep it going in whatever form we choose to take.

Previously we had the reputation of being the best group around for our warm welcome, brilliant layouts and extras such as singing time, craft tables and parties. It may be that you feel we can achieve this again or that maybe we need to downscale it to make it more manageable for those wishing to help. Andrew and I are willing to continue to run the group and do as much as we can but for family reasons cannot commit to being there every week.

Even if you have not previously been involved with Baby and Toddler Group please can I ask you to pray and consider the following:

- Do you feel that, as a Church, we should still be providing this sort of service and outreach or is there another way we can help local parents?
- Do you think, given enough volunteers, we can continue as before or that we should downscale it to something like a coffee morning for the parents with some activities for the children?
- Do you think Monday afternoon is still the best time to be open, or possibly changing to a Monday morning would be better so people could still have the afternoon to themselves? *We would need to be mindful of working around school runs if we do think about scheduling changes.*

- Do you feel willing to help in some way and would you need allowances made to be able to offer that help? As in the past if you can chat, smile at the parents and make them feel welcome and valued then you would be our greatest asset. It's not all about lifting toys and serving refreshments. The biggest thing we do is show families that Wimpole Road Methodist Church welcomes them and is here for them.

Given that Covid is still with us do you have concerns about risks associated with this and what safety precautions do you think we could undertake for everyone's reassurance and protection.

Please let me know how you feel by email to as.topple@virgin.net, or telephone (01206) 794020.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Sarah and Andrew Topple

GIFT AID SECRETARY - VACANCY

I have resigned as Gift Aid Secretary, having done this small job for over 15 years and believe I have recovered at least £75,000 over that time period.

Now being fully aware of old age creeping on and unable to drive at night to get to meetings etc. I feel that I must step aside.

For several reasons - one unfortunately being loss of members the job is nowhere near as complex as it was and I would be very happy to talk through the procedure with whoever takes this on. I'm sure that all will agree that it's essential for claims to be made.

This appointment should be a priority. Many people will be capable and although one needs 'an ear to the ground' throughout the year a more major effort is only required once a year. I will be more than happy to talk things through with a volunteer.

Martin Broom

MARCH THOUGHT

"With the coming of spring I am calm again" - Gustav Mahler

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) provides free debt help and local community groups across the UK.

Our free services, run with local churches, provide practical and emotional support and show people that there is always hope.

Our local CAP is looking for new befrienders; someone with a passion for people, with great relationship-building skills, an open and completely non-judgmental nature, together with a heart and resilience to serve.

The CAP team will equip and empower you to undertake the role in a way which best fits you and your church community.

We would also love to have you on board as part of the prayer team, client event team or client blessing team.

If you want to know more, please e-mail Rebecca Taylor who would love to chat with you about how you could be a blessing to those trapped by debt. rebeccataylor@capuk.org

I have recently taken up a new job with Christians Against Poverty (CAP) We have a number of volunteer opportunities and some key roles that are in need of filling at the moment. I understand from my centre manager that we receive a number of referrals from the New Town/ Old Heath area of Colchester, so Wimpole Road is perfectly situated for blessing the residents of the local area through the work of CAP.

Our Mission

UK poverty is real, with millions locked in its miserable grip. That's why we're aiming for CAP centres covering the UK, each bringing life changing freedom and good news to people in desperate need. Always through the Church. Always hope.

Who are we looking for?

We recognise that everyone brings their own unique strengths to each role and that God works through our weaknesses too. Undertaking a volunteer role is an opportunity to grow and develop as part of your centre team, supported by your Centre Manager.

There are teams within CAP that provide blessing to clients (be it a new fridge or washing machine etc if they don't have one or theirs breaks down), those that befriend clients to help them through the process of getting debt free, a client events team that puts on events so that clients can experience some joy and find out what it is like to be part of a church family, the prayer team and the evangelism team.

To clarify, a befriender is someone who has a passion for people and lives out what it means to build community. Being in debt is often linked to social isolation for many of our clients. Debt can mean having no disposable income to socialise with friends, carrying the stigma associated with being in debt and having low self-esteem.

Person specification

- Great relationship-building skills
- Non-judgemental and caring
- Passionate about helping people and bringing hope to them
- Trustworthy in keeping confidential information
- In agreement with CAP's core values and statement of faith
- Willing to pray with their CAP team
- Understands the concept of keeping good boundaries
- Clearly demonstrates a heart and passion for the charity and the local church

Rebecca Taylor

THE SUN STILL SHONE

The sun still shone, on the day he died.
Flowers opened and looked at the sky.
The sky was blue, not a cloud in sight.
The world hadn't changed – it didn't seem right.

And the grass was green and still smelled sweet,
as it gave up its scent underneath my feet.
And the birds still sang in the trees above,
sang the songs he knew and loved.

And the people who never knew his name
travelled around by bus or train,
or rushed about in the busy street,
shouting 'hello' to friends they meet.

The world moved on ignoring our pain,
not waiting for us to join it again.
And we who loved him grieved alone
on the day he died, when the sun still shone.

Norma Peckston

*{Written after the death of her husband Norman.
This poem was read out at his funeral and
Norma has given her permission for it to be reproduced here}*

A Thought for Lent by Christine Duthie

‘THE HANDS OF CHRIST’

The Hands of Christ reach out to us in many ways, from his birth to his death.

There are many paintings depicting the Christmas story - we see Jesus the baby with his tiny hands reaching out during those early days. The baby Jesus reached out to many visitors, to shepherds, Wise Men, to Anna and to Simeon who all met with the promised Messiah.

As he grew Jesus, like any child would have placed his small hands in his mother's hands, and she would have taken his hands in hers and protected him.

But the day would come when she could not protect his hands anymore and his hands would be held and cruelly bound.

There is a well known painting by John Everitt Millais which shows Jesus as a young boy in the carpenter's workshop.

We perhaps sometimes forget that Jesus had a trade - so like any workman his hands would have been used to handling wood and other heavy materials. His hands would have been used to dirty work. As a result it is, therefore, not hard to imagine that Jesus' hands may have been roughened or scarred by the tools he used.

In the carpenter's hands we would come to see the story of his life's work.

There are many stories to be found in the Gospels of Jesus' healing hands - hands that protected the vulnerable and reached out to heal the untouchable - the leper or those afflicted by evil spirits, those who many would try to avoid.

Jesus' last act of healing was at the time he was arrested and he healed the ear of the person who had been attacked by a disciple.

So Jesus' healing hands reached out at the end and they continue to reach out to us today.

(To be concluded next month)

GETTING READY FOR EASTER

LENT STUDY GROUP

This will be at **7:30 pm on the Thursdays during Lent** commencing on **3 March**. These will be ecumenical as we join with our friends at St. Stephen's and St. Margaret's. We will be meeting at the following Churches for these:

- **St. Stephen's on 3 & 24 March**
- **Wimpole Road on 10 & 31 March, and**
- **St. Margaret's on 17 March and 7 April**

MAUNDY THURSDAY

We will be marking Maundy Thursday with a Communion Service at **7:30 pm at St. Stephen's** as well as the Thursday Circle meeting in the afternoon at Wimpole Road.

GOOD FRIDAY

On Good Friday there will be a **Walk of Witness around New Town**, starting from Wimpole Road (where we will have a time together of reflection and prayer) and ending at St. Stephen's for refreshments and hot cross buns.

Dear mother earth, who day by day

Unfoldest blessings on our way.

O praise him, alleluia!

The flowers and fruits that in thee grow

Let them his glory also show.

O praise him, O praise him,

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

St. Francis of Assisi

A CELTIC PRAYER

In the name of the restful father,
In the name of the calming son,
In the name of the peaceful spirit,
May we and God be one.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

Family of Beryl Cowan, whose funeral is Monday 7 March.

Rachel Allen – recovering from a serious operation and still very poorly.

Any ministerial concerns please contact Rev. Joe Adams or a Steward.

WIMPOLE ROAD CHURCH SERVICES FOR MARCH

Sunday mornings at 11.00 a.m.

6 March	Sally Crafer – guest speaker Patience
13 March	Rev. Joe Adams – Holy Communion
20 March	Rev. David Moody
27 March	Rev. Joe Adams

A WARM WELCOME AWAITS

KEEP UP TO DATE ON OUR WEBSITE:

www.wimpoleroadchurch.org.uk

FUTURE NEWSROUNDS

Please don't forget, if you have stories, items or prayer requests that you would like to contribute to a future monthly Newsround please contact me by telephone, e-mail or post.

Tel: (01206) 869505 or e-mail: **alison.ablewhite@btinternet.com**



WORKING TOGETHER



PRAYER MEETING Tuesday 10.00 - 10.30 a.m.

Meeting number: 195 594 506 password 011904

BIBLE STUDY Thursday 7.30 - 8.30 p.m.

Meeting number: 780 700 295 password 011904

Join online via Zoom or Dial in from your phone on:

0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240 or 0131 460 1196

**'THREE TOGETHER'
ONLINE FACEBOOK SERVICE
EVERY SUNDAY
at 6.30 p.m.**

Ecumenical worship led by and shared with all three churches, Wimpole Road, St. Stephen's and St. Margaret's.

SUNDAY SERVICE REPLAY

This is available for anyone and it would be lovely if you were able to join us.

It is hosted via Zoom and allows people to simply dial into the call from their telephones.

We run this at **2.30 p.m.** every Sunday afternoon.

Phone numbers to use to dial in:

0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240 or 0131 460 1196

Meeting ID: 458 171 4255 {Password if needed is 011904}