



February 2023

Minister: Rev. Joe Adams
Mob: 0798 541 7000

A friend in Portugal shared this reading with me today and I wanted to offer it to you. Written by John Roedel, it's titled 'Nothing to Cure' and is an imagined conversation between God and someone:

Me: Hey God.

God: Hey John.

Me: Cure autism.

God: No.

Me: Why?

God: There is nothing to cure.

Me: Huh?

God: Autistic people aren't broken. They aren't sick. They are just people singing a beautiful song with lyrics that are foreign to you.

Me : But sometimes I don't understand what song my son is singing ...

God: That's ok. Forget the lyrics and just sit back and enjoy the melody.

Me: I don't like to see him struggle.

God: All flowers struggle before they blossom.

Me: If you won't cure autism what will you do?

God: I'll have you help me cure something else.

Me: What's that?

God: Ignorance.

John Roedel offers us such an important message for life. The Church, sadly, has not always been welcoming or even kind to people who are different or those whose children struggle to handle life and are Neurodiverse. The phrase neurodiversity is a

catch all for children or people who experience and process information differently to the majority.

This is a definition on the British Dyslexia Website: Neurodiversity is a relatively new term. It helps to promote the view that neurological differences are to be recognised and respected as any other human variation. It is used to counter negative social connotations that currently exist and to make it easier for people of all neurotypes to contribute to the world as they are, rather than attempting to think or appear more 'typically'.

People with mental health issues or anxiety, are not broken. Neither are those adults or children who are autistic or have Asperger, or dyslexia or ADHD or any other condition that means they are neurodivergent and handle life and information. They should always be safe in Churches and I wish they had been and were today, but sadly I've seen many places where they aren't.

Thankfully we have worked over the last many years to be a Church where people are welcomed and loved for who they are not who we wish they could be. I am proud to be the minister of a Church who get this and practice loving people and accepting them. This is what the message of Jesus is all about; loving and welcoming everyone, just as they, and more learning to value their unique gifts and letting their songs ring out. Thanks be to God.

Rev'd Joe

NOTES FROM THE VESTRY

The very first day of the New Year – being a Sunday - brought us to church for a lovely service with Joanne Eckersley, inspiring us with her strength and deep faith, as we head into, what seems to many, a worrying future with war and conflict around the world, and great problems in our own country, with so many suffering from the cold, hunger, sickness - the list seems endless.

But Joanne lifted our hearts and our spirits, and in the first week of January we opened our doors on Wednesday 4th as our Coffee Morning officially became a Warm Space, open from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and offering warmth, food and company to as many as 25-30 people. Three cheers for Chris Firmin and Andrew Toppie and all involved.

Friday 6th was the day we celebrated the life of our dear friend David Ablewhite, hugely loved, and irreplaceable. The church was full of friends and family – for a magnificent service led by Rev. Joe Adams, and a feast of food in the hall afterwards. We all applauded the fantastic montage of photographs of David's life. There were tears, laughter, and so much love. Anyone who has ever visited our church will have been warmly welcomed by David. I know I was. I loved to sing with him in the Choir, and was enthralled by his brilliant history talks. What a great man.

Our yearly Covenant Service came on Sunday 8th, and the church was really full again. It's exciting to see new faces, and a joy to see some we have been missing. Once again Joe led the service with such strength and encouragement to brave the worry and concern of the world we currently inhabit, by trusting in our faith, and holding out for a better future as we take anxious steps into the New Year. We prayed as he movingly read out the names, which had been left on our Memory Tree over Christmas, and as the service progressed we pledged ourselves to continue to uphold the church through the coming year and to be strong in our commitment to Christ.

Sunday 15th brought another new start – Naomi Snelling came from St. Margaret's and gave us a lovely Anglican based service. Her confidence and energy was a delight. She is currently an Ordinand and will be ordained a Curate next year. We hope she will return to lead a service at Wimpole Road again soon. Our Three Together project has borne much fruit.

On January 22nd our visiting minister came from the Army - the dynamic Joe Navoka CQMS. He works in Military Intelligence but is also training as a priest. The theme of the service being 'Are you brave enough to come and follow me?' He gave us a powerful testimony of his realisation that he was called to be a priest during his time in Afghanistan when, he believes, his life was saved number of times by Jesus - clearly his ability to lead was needed, not only in battle, but in the pulpit.

The month ended as it began with another inspiring service with Rev. Joe Adams. We learned all about the life and mission of the Irish Saint Brigid. We have been greatly blessed by Joe's ministry, and he will be hugely missed, not just by us, but by the wider community here who have benefited so much from his care and compassion. As they say - his will be 'a hard act to follow'.

Deborah Floy

NEW MINISTER

We are delighted to let you know that we have been matched with Rev. Hannah Chun who will be joining the Circuit in September as a probationer presbyter. Hannah is currently completing her pre-ordination training at The Queen's Foundation in Birmingham.

Hannah will be working with the congregations at Lexden, Mersea, Wimpole Road and Wivenhoe as part of the Circuit team. Please can we keep Hannah and her family in our thoughts and prayers at this time of change and transition for them.

Rev. Chris Preece Superintendent Minister

Colchester Methodist Circuit

THURSDAY CIRCLE

We return from our Christmas and New Year break on **2 February**, when our Minister, Joe, will be the speaker.

Coming up:

9 February A talk by Brian Carline, entitled 'Soil, Sweat and Tears'. He is an author, broadcaster and after-dinner speaker, so it should be a good afternoon.

16 February Our AGM presided over by Rev. Joe. Afterwards we will sing some favourite hymns.

23 February A Beetle Drive. A small prize for the highest scoring person and an even smaller 'booby' prize for the lowest score!

2 March A volunteer will give us an update on the work of the East Anglian Children's Hospital. (This is in preparation for our Quiz afternoon on 16 March).

Everyone is welcome to come and join us on **Thursday afternoons at 2.30 p.m.**

Joan Gomer – Secretary

OVER 60'S LUNCH CLUB AT ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH

Monday 6 February from midday for 12:30 lunch

If you are interested in coming along please give Jill a ring on (01206) **572605**. Booking is essential for catering purposes.

Two courses will be served with tea or coffee to follow for a charge of **£5**. Dietary needs can be catered for if known in advance.

Many thanks from The Lunch Club Team

PRAYER CORNER

Dear Heavenly Father

We pray for our neighbours in the surrounding community, for those who feel isolated and alone or have worries and concerns.

In our Church family we remember friends who are unwell and have worries over their health.

We hold their names in our hearts and we pray for healing and comfort.

We bring these our prayers in the name of Jesus who calls us to follow him and to love one another. Amen

CIRCUIT SPA DAY

SERVING THE PRESENT AGE?

‘To serve the present age, my calling to fulfil’ Charles Wesley STF 658

This can be a question that fills us either with fear or excitement. I’m hoping that it is the latter! As the calendar moves on a year, it is often a time of reflection. It is then that we perhaps begin to think, within the life of the church, how we serve the present age, hence the question. It has been a great encouragement in my short time with you to see all that is going on within the churches and to see so many of the churches beginning warm spaces as we respond to the energy crisis and seek to serve our local communities in this, and our other work, too.

As disciples of Christ, we are all called to share the message of God’s love to others but this isn’t something we always find easy. Considering how we reach out to others and the plans we make for this is the principle of mission planning that we agreed at the September Circuit Meeting. However, this can feel a bit daunting. Maybe asking ourselves how we serve our local communities in this present day and age, and on into the future, is a little easier.

To help all of the churches in the Circuit to consider ‘where next’ in terms of seeking God’s leading and discerning where the hopes and dreams might be for the churches, we are holding a Circuit day on **Saturday 4th March between 10am and 3pm at The Ark**. This will be a day to ‘springboard’ our thinking and help us to come together, share with one another and begin to think about where we go next as churches and for this to feed into wider Circuit thinking. Angela Brydon (District Discipleship Enabler) and Steve Watson (District Property Officer) have kindly agreed to come and lead our day and we are delighted to welcome them and for them to share their expertise with us. They will help us to begin to think through the different elements of discerning God’s leading and how the use of our property is led by our mission.

Maybe, as we seek God to consider how we ‘**Serve the Present Age,**’ it will probably become known as the **Circuit SPA Day!** This would be an interesting talking point and a springboard for conversation. The day is open to anyone, and it would be great if there was representation from each of the churches. As a possible way forward, it may be that churches wish to think of people within, and beyond, their office holders who would like to come so that there is a broad spectrum of representation from within the churches.

I hope that as many people as possible will want to come along and we look forward to a day of sharing, facilitation and conversation.

God’s blessings for a fruitful 2023,

Chris Preece

It would be helpful to have some idea of numbers attending by **Monday 27 February**, although it's no problem to decide later and then come along as well. We don't want anyone to feel that they can't come but a vague idea of numbers gives us a starting point. Sign-up sheets are in the Vestibule, and for any food allergy requirements. Drinks will be provided.

We thought it would be good for us to come together for a 'bring and share' lunch. This is a symbolic act of unity as well as keeping things simple! With a view to leading us towards some sense of balance we thought it would be good to separate out the savoury and sweet just a little. If you are coming as a representative of a church here is a suggested starting point: **Sweet - Wimpole Road**

THE SAVING OF THE GREAT EVANGELIST JOHN WESLEY FROM A FIRE

In her book 'George Rhodes of the Levels' A.E.Woodhouse writes on page 1, "John Rhodes of Oulton married in 1689 Sarah Flockton, also of Rothwell, and probably the daughter of Samuel Flockton and his wife Betteris Craven of Guiseley. He died in 1738."

A footnote says "John Rhodes was no doubt the ancestor who, according to tradition, rescued the infant John Wesley from the burning rectory at Epworth in 1709. The house was in flames when the child, Jackey, was seen at one of the upper windows. A man named Rhodes cried, "*Here, I'll fix myself against the wall. Lift a light man onto my shoulders.*"

A second man, Barnard, climbed onto his back and reached the child just as the roof fell in."

JOHN RHODES, 1665-1738, b.YORKSHIRE

{This fascinating story was unearthed by David Ablewhite, whilst researching his wife Jean's paternal ancestors. It was mentioned at his funeral and Frances Miles commented, "*How fascinating to read about John Rhodes - what a truly remarkable story woven into your wife's honourable ancestors, and what an invaluable gift John's actions were to Methodism and the country!*"}

2022 by Ann Finch

War, tragedy and deprivation – but a good year for me.
The year I joined the Methodist Church.
They never leave you in the lurch.
Wimpole Road sing and pray with adoration,
Gather information, helping the needy.
There is praise, fellowship and fun.
Thereby God's work is done.

{The following reading was also read at David's funeral, and was sent to me by a good friend in America, who had also suffered a family bereavement. Several people have asked for a copy, so it is reproduced here. Alison}.

THE LAW OF ATTRACTION

“Every minute someone leaves this world behind.
Age has nothing to do with it.
We are all in ‘the line’ without knowing it.
We never know how many people are before us.

We cannot move to the back of the line.
We cannot step out of the line.
We cannot avoid the line.
So while we wait in line:

Make moments count.
Make priorities.
Make the time.
Make your gifts known.

Make a nobody feel like a somebody.
Make your voice heard.
Make the small things big.
Make someone smile.

Make the change.
Make love.
Make up.
Make peace.

Make sure to tell your people they are loved.
Make sure to have no regrets.
Make sure you are ready...”

{Taken from ‘Every Minute Someone Leaves This World’ by Marianne Baum}

THANK YOU CARD FROM REV. PAUL HOWES

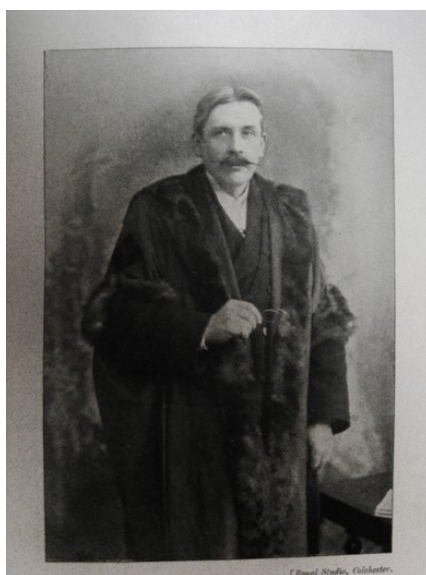
Very many thanks for your appreciation of ministry at Wimpole Road so generously expressed by your Christmas gifts.

It is always a privilege to share worship and fellowship with you.

We pray that you will be richly blessed in all your explorations of the New Year.

Yours in His Love, Paul, Melanie and Beth xx

AT WIMPOLE ROAD WE OWE A GREAT DEAL TO THIS MAN FRED NASH



Ever since I first researched the story of Wimpole Road I have been aware of Fred Nash, but until now I have never come across a photograph of him. In documents he is Herbert Frederick Nash. When he died his death was registered as Frederick, but I understand that in his daily life he was simply Fred. So – meet Fred Nash.

When the first Trust was drawn up in 1889, Fred was appointed one of the Trustees and Secretary of the Trustees. His work load was immense until the church opened in 1904 and continued until his early death. He was one of the Trustees appointed to sign the Building Contract and he stood as Guarantor for the debt.

Having researched him further I find that at the age of 12 he earned 4d a day bird-scaring and then became an office boy, earning 4s a week. He eventually became a Political Agent and the Secretary of Certified Liberal Agents. He moved to Colchester sometime after 1891 and in 1901 was living at 23 Wimpole Road, with his wife and 3 sons.

He became the Election Agent for the Liberal MP for Colchester, Sir Weetman D Pearson (later Lord Cowdray). I have written before of the Liberal influence in New Town and the planting of the Wesleyan Methodist cause here.

His wife was invited to lay one of the 11 memorial stones but was unwell, so he stood in for her. As was expected in those days he passed £10 to the Building Fund (inviting people to lay memorial stones was a good way of raising money – and we still have the silver trowel used on that occasion!)

His wife did open the Church door on the day of the opening and there was a further donation in addition to the stone laying gift, and other substantial sums donated to the Building Fund.

His work continued until he died of pneumonia in the Midland Hotel in Manchester on 29 April 1906. He is buried in Colchester Cemetery and left over £4000. Before he died he found time to become the Secretary of the original Colchester Football Club and helped found the Pearson Charity Cup.

Press reports of his funeral at Wimpole Road state that it was attended by the MP and *“The church was crowded in every part and hundreds were unable to gain admission”* - (bear in mind that there were a great many more pews in those days). The report continues, *“Strong men wept as the Minister proceeded and his words dropped like dew on the hearts of the mourners”*. Fred was only 52.

We owe a great debt to him.

Martin Broom

COLCHESTER SOUP RUN

The Churches across Colchester are once again united and coming together to resurrect this much needed community outreach. It will be based from Eld Lane Baptist Church and initially on a Saturday evening between 6:45 and 7:45 pm. The 4th Saturday of the month, is allocated for Wimpole Road and Lion Walk alternately to take responsibility. This will entail either making sandwiches or to actually go on the ‘Soup Run’ to serve them, along with hot drinks and soup.

So far Wimpole Road has 5 volunteers, so **more are urgently needed**. If you think you might be able to help with this, either making sandwiches and / or serving them please can you speak to me. We commence at the end of March.

Donations of soup, tea, coffee and hot chocolate as well as money to purchase said items, are also much appreciated. Thank you.

Edward Pentney

GOOD NEWS OUR CHURCH HAS ACHIEVED AN ECO CHURCH BRONZE AWARD

Eco Church is an A Rocha UK project, which encourages churches to care for God’s Earth. Following on from the ‘Dreaming for the Future’ meeting in July, Edward, Juliet, and myself met to complete an Eco Survey. The survey asked questions about four aspects of our church life. The first section was about our worship and teaching, which we scored highly on as we include care of creation in our services. Also our leadership team have made a formal commitment to improving the environmental credentials of our church.

The next section was buildings. We achieved bronze standard because we are using a green tariff for our church Gas and Electricity supply and have some double glazing. In this section there is much we could do to improve, including calculating our

carbon footprint, knowing our energy efficiency of the main boiler on church premises; making sure that all our light bulbs are energy efficient and to consider generating renewable energy on/for our premises e.g., from solar panels or solar hot water.

The next section was about land. As we do not have actual land we are responsible for, this section is not applicable and did not contribute to our award application.

The final section was community and global engagement. Again it asked if any member were involved in community projects such as litter picking, that members shared car lifts to church and whether we encourage people to walk and cycle to church if possible. We could really improve with more global engagement by participating in Tearfund 'Toilet Twinning' scheme and registering with the Fairtrade Foundation as a Fairtrade Church. We scored well is that our church tries to use locally grown food and includes vegetarian and vegan options of meals we provide for community projects we run, such as Make Lunch and Warm Space. Also, that our church funds are ethically invested.

Thank you all for all that we are currently doing as a church to protect and preserve God's environment and now we need to decide as a church what more can we do to protect our environment for our children and our children's children.

I just wanted to remind us of the climate pledges we made as part of our worship together on 16 October to show how we are continuing to care for the Lord's earth.

- May we only use earth's resources we really need
- Drive less
- Turn heating down – already done! Ensure church heats more efficiency.
- To recycle more
- To stop wasting water!
- To examine where food items have come from and so reduce 'air miles'
- Reduce plastic in waste. Encourage wildlife in garden.
- Not to eat food other than locally sourced, wherever possible
- To pledge to grow own food and fruits. Promote afforestation (plant trees in a new area).
- Not to eat food other than locally sourced whenever possible.
- No buying plants in plastic pots. Never use peat.
- Avoid consumerism, being mindful not to waste produce. Care for the voiceless animals of this world.
- Use more locally sourced produce to reduce carbon footprint
- To consider use of water more
- Grow lots of flowers for bees and insects. Save more water. Use less gas and Electricity. Plant Trees.
- Damaged creation. Polluted sea, lakes, river with plastic, clothes, food wraps, bags.

- Reduce waste – food, water and heating. Buy local products and walk or cycle instead of car or bus.
- Every little helps
- Walk don't drive.
- Use more peat free compost in our garden
- Stop being so wasteful, and recycle more
- Try to keep wastage less.
- Heal the world make it a better place.
- Change earth before its too late!
- We need to act now!

Oh God in you we trust to save our planet earth, in Jesus Mighty name. Amen

Sally Crafer

The season of Lent begins this month on Ash Wednesday on 22 February.

**The following is a Shrove Tuesday verse taken from a Wild Goose publication
'EGGS AND ASHES'**

Today is Shrove Tuesday (HOORAY) - Tomorrow is Ash Wednesday,
which is the beginning of Lent.

Long ago some Christians did not eat eggs during Lent.

Lent lasts for 40 days - I wonder what the chickens did!

Before Lent began

on Shrove Tuesday - which is today (HOORAY) -

the Christians cooked all their eggs and ate them.

They must have had scrambled eggs, soft - boiled eggs, fried eggs, poached eggs
coddled eggs and hard-boiled eggs.

And one year, when there were still eggs left over,

someone tried mixing them with flour and milk

and invented pancakes (YUM, YUM)

And so, ever since on Shrove Tuesday,

which is today (HOORAY) we make pancakes.

And we eat them with sugar, lemon, syrup, jam, ice-cream,

and onion gravy just kidding!

We love pancakes - they are (YUM, YUM, YUM)

CAN YOU HELP?

A few of the upright hospital armchairs used in the Parlour are urgently in need of being re-covered. These were donated and well used (as very comfortable) so it would be good to extend their life.

If you know of anyone (or are able yourself) to help in this regard, please contact one of the Stewards. This needs doing as a matter of urgency, to comply with regulations.

DIARY DATES

- Church Council – **Wednesday 8 February 7.00 p.m.**
- Wimpole Road Methodist Church **Wednesday 15 February 9:00—12 noon** – Essex Free Uniform Exchange.

FORD RIDE LONDON-ESSEX 100 EVENT – Sunday 28 May 2023

To provide a platform for people to raise crucial funds for charity and to inspire more people to cycle – and to showcase the beauty of Essex.

The 2023 Ford Ride London-Essex route enters Essex through Epping Forest and continues through central Epping, Ongar, Leaden Roding, Great Dunmow, Felsted and Writtle, before returning to Ongar and heading back into London.

My sponsorship page is www.justgiving.com/stephen-tuthill-swain, with an initial target of £450 for the NSPCC as part of TeamNSPCC; although, if we surpass that, I don't see why we can't raise more than that initial target, as it is such a good cause.

We are already half way there with my employer already given the NSPCC £150 on my behalf through my sponsorship page, so we only have to raise £250 to reach my initial target.

Thank you for your support, *Stephen-Tuthill-Swain*

A WHISPER OF SPRING

By Enid Pearson

We went for a walk in a wild wind,
Clouds were like smoke in the sky,
Trees made a sound like the ocean
As the wind went travelling by.

The last leaves of winter were airborne,
There were very few birds on the wing,
But earth's air held a beautiful promise,
For the wind brought a whisper of spring.

To blow all of winter away;
He calls each new bud to flourish,
And in gladness each one will obey.

Regal crocuses shine with glory
To brighten the dark winter earth;
All of nature is changing,
To the time of the Easter rebirth.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

The friends of Connie Mercer, who died on Monday 30 January. Although not a member at Wimpole Road her late husband Tony was, as were his parents. Connie would have been well known to many and although she worshipped at St. Barnabas she maintained a keen interest in Wimpole Road and attended the Thursday Circle.

All those known to us who have ongoing health problems, especially Margaret.

THREE TOGETHER BIBLE STUDY AND LENT COURSE

Our next Bible Study meeting will be at **7:30 p.m. on Thursday 16 February** when we will be discussing the book 'Where the Hell is God?' selected by Sally. This can be bought as a Kindle book or a paperback from Amazon or other book shops.

The week after (**Thursday 23 February**) we will start our weekly Lent meeting where we will be watching and discussing the BBC series 'Broken'. Further details will follow about this. If you want any more information please speak to me.

Andrew Topple.

WIMPOLE ROAD CHURCH SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday mornings at 11.00 a.m.

5 February	Sally Crafer
12 February	Rev. Martin Camroux
19 February	Rev. David Moody
26 February	Rev. Joe Adams – Holy Communion

A WARM WELCOME AWAITS

Join us after the service for coffee/tea and biscuits in the church parlour for a time of refreshments and fellowship.

CHRISTIAN THOUGHT OF THE DAY

'The true measure of a man is how he treats someone who can do him absolutely no good.'

Samuel Johnson



WORKING TOGETHER



PRAYER MEETING Tuesday 10.00 - 10.30 a.m.

Meeting number: 195 594 506 password 011904

JOINT BIBLE STUDY GROUP – please speak to Andrew Topples for more details

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.

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

KEEP UP TO DATE ON OUR WEBSITE:

www.wimpoleroadchurch.org.uk