



**February 2024**  
**Minister: Rev. Hannah Chun**  
**Mob: 07935 612 414**

Dear Friends,

A few weekends ago, my family and I visited Dedham for the first time. I had heard so much about the beautiful village and well, it's Constable Country! There was plenty to be excited about. We attempted to do the walk partway towards Flatford Mill along the River Stour. However, we realised about a quarter way into the walk that our footgear was not suitable for what this walk would entail. We should have worn our wellies! The further we got the muddier it became and soon enough we were squelching through thick gloopy mud for the rest of the walk. Looking back at that experience, I realised I had been so focused on looking at the ground and where I was stepping that I hadn't taken the time to drink in the beauty of the scenery around me.

Sometimes when we're so focused on looking down or looking into the details we may miss the bigger picture. The details are important, but I wonder whether there might be a tendency to be 'stuck in the mud' if we never look up to see the fuller landscape around us. We recently had our 'Vision for the Future' meeting and spent some time looking at the bigger picture of where we currently might be as a church. From the information we gathered, it was plain to see that the church is doing quite a lot, especially in terms of making connections with our community. That is something to celebrate!

February is a busy month. There will be plenty of the finer details to focus on. We have our first Church Council of the year. On 11<sup>th</sup> February we will be welcoming three children into our church through baptism. Then we begin our Lenten journey on Ash

Wednesday which will be preceded by Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day, when traditionally all the sugar was used up in the household to prepare for Lent. Some of us may choose to either give up or take on something during Lent. No matter how we choose to follow this Lenten journey, may we be reminded that all the smaller details of this season ultimately lead us to the bigger picture of Easter and Christ's resurrection. The message of Easter is the backdrop to Lent and all we believe in as Christians.

May you discover afresh the broader landscape of God's love for you as you journey through this Lent. I feel the words said at the moment of baptism can have meaning for all of us as we ponder on the bigger picture of what Jesus did for us.

*For you Jesus Christ came into the world;  
For you he lived and showed God's love;  
For you he suffered death on the Cross;  
For you he triumphed over death,  
Rising to newness of life;  
For you he prays at God's right hand:  
All this for you,  
Before you could know anything of it.  
(Methodist Worship Book)*

God bless,  
**Hannah**

## **NOTES FROM THE VESTRY**

As January comes to a close, we reflect on a good start to the calendar year. On Sunday mornings, we welcomed back local preachers Eddie Lansdown and Alan Beesley and also enjoyed our first service with Rev. Amy Walters, chaplain to the Forces, who led our worship on 14 January.

Our annual Covenant service at Wimpole Road took place on 21 January, led for the first time by Rev. Hannah - an opportunity for us to recognise all that God has done for us, and renew our own covenant with God. It was lovely to see so many there, including some new faces that have joined our worship in recent weeks.

On 24 January, we held our Vision for the Future meeting where, guided by Rev. Hannah, we reviewed the work we are currently involved in at Wimpole Road as part of our Mission Plan and how this links to the calling of the Methodist Church through Worship, Learning and Caring, Service and Evangelism.

It was so encouraging to see how many active ventures there are, including Warm Space and Coffee Mornings, Toddler Group, Carpet Bowls, Thursday Circle, Make Lunch and Community Larder, Holiday Club, Community Day, Soup Run and Food Bank (at St. Stephen's).

These are all in addition to our worship on Sunday mornings and evenings (as part of Three Together), Prayer and Bible Study groups. We continue to look for ways to develop in the Church, including our ongoing work to improve our Eco Church credentials.

If anyone would like to know more about any of the above, please do speak to one of the Stewards, it would be lovely to have your ideas and input.

God Bless

***Juliet Balls***

## **LETTER FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT**

Dear Friends,

Sometimes when we go for a walk down the street, we see something that grabs our attention. This may be an advert or a well-dressed window or something that is slightly out of the ordinary for a particular reason. Often it is just there, and rarely does it come with any form of explanation.

A week or so ago, I was walking down the High Street when a sign caught my eye. It said, *'How can we tell people that we exist?'* It well and truly got my attention, not least because it was next to a vacant shop. Next to it was some explanation as to the artist, Mark Titchner who has been commissioned by Our Colchester Business Improvement District in collaboration with Firstsite. He is producing artwork based on questions suggested by Colchester residents focusing on life in the city today.

This question *'how can we tell people that we exist?'* could mean so many different things. It could be about advertising for someone to come and fill an empty shop, raise the profile and aspirations of the city or a plea for something to change. I immediately read it in the context of the story of God. We are told in the Bible that we should share the Kingdom of God with others or at the end of Matthew's gospel to go and make disciples as in the Great Commission. Archbishop William Temple once said, *'The church is the only cooperative society in the world which exists for the benefit of its non-members.'* How can we do that if we don't tell people we exist?

As we continue to have a focus on how we reach out as churches and as a Circuit to others, this is a valuable question for us today. The Methodist Church in its statement of 'Our Calling' talks of four aspects: Worship, Learning and Caring, Service and Evangelism. For evangelism we are asked to make more followers of Christ. We can only do that if we tell people we exist.

How we share with others the love and grace of God, through Christ is done through our being empowered by the Holy Spirit. We don't do it on our own. We do it with and through God but also with each other. Every church has its own way of letting others know we exist, but we mustn't hide our lights under a bushel. As individuals, we can share

our faith in the simple ways that help others through words and actions see something of the care and compassion of Christ.

The answer to the question *'how can we tell people that we exist'* may look different for each person and church but it is a good question on which to ponder. We may feel that we can't share our faith, or we don't know what to do. The sign on the High Street is bold and eye catching. Let's not be afraid to ask others the question that's on the sign and trust in the Holy Spirit to enable the conversations to unfold and see where it leads.

God bless,

*Rev. Chris Preece*

### **THURSDAY CIRCLE**

Having had a break for Christmas and January, we resume our meetings on **Thursday 1 February**, when Rev. Hannah is the speaker.

Coming up for the rest of the month:

- **8 February**      Playing Board Games
- **15 February**      Come to our Annual General Meeting to learn what we have been doing over the last year. Followed by Songs of Praise.
- **22 February**      Game of 'Catchphrase' – 'Say What you See'.
- **29 February**      Presentation by Colchester Owl Rescue

Our meetings are at **2.30 p.m.** and everyone is welcome to attend.

*Joan Gomer - Secretary*

### **WIMPOLE ROAD BOWLS CLUB**

We were very pleased to be awarded a grant of £500 from a charity known as the 500 Club and administered by local Colchester businesses.

With the money we are going to buy ourselves a brand new mat which will give us many happy hours of play and companionship.

The award was for our work as a community based organisation.

*Graham Duthie- Bowls Captain*

## **BACK TO NORMAL**

When all trace has disappeared;  
the Christmas trees; the angels from the tops;  
all cards and decorations cleared;  
all bottles of wine and fizzy pops.

The last mince pies now consumed,  
only a small piece of Christmas cake remains.  
Back to normality now resumed.  
Back to work in buses, cars and trains.

How dull it seems in January's cold days.  
Some miss the family get togethers.  
The merriment missed in so many ways.  
The emptiness and bitter cold weather!

We're now in the New Year 2024,  
spring to look forward to, summer holidays,  
things to enjoy, more and more.  
We are so lucky in so many ways.

*Pat Farrow*

## **'GREENER' SEA, RAIL AND LORRY JOURNEY**

*I thought that you and especially our rail enthusiasts, Gabriel, Myles, Peter Studd and Richard Bruce and our ECO leader Sally Crafer would be interested in the following item taken from The Railway magazine:*

Operated by a freight company for Maritime Transport the journey on the morning of September 28 last year formed part of a three- leg lower emission container movement operation.

Unloaded from the 'Laura Maersk' a new vessel built with the aim of reducing greenhouse gas output by running on methanol, the container headed northwards as part of a train hauled by a hydro-treated vegetable oil-fuelled locomotive where emissions are estimated to be 90% lower than diesel.

The final leg of the container's trip was to Maersk's warehouse facility by electric lorry.

*Submitted by Graham Duthie*

## **NO PEACE**

There is no peace in Bethlehem tonight.  
No sleeping baby in a manger bed.  
No gentle lullaby by lantern light.  
Only desperate prayers are said.

There is no peace in Bethlehem tonight.  
No shining star above a borrowed shed.  
The night is only filled with fear.  
Only words of war are said.

We pray for peace in Bethlehem tonight.  
Let love move into every angry heart,  
so once again stars fill the skies  
and peace lives in each troubled heart.

*Norma Peckston*

## **CAROL SINGING UPDATE**

Great News! From our Carol Singing in December we were able to raise £357 to support the wonderful work done by Beacon House.

Thank you to everybody who took part and came to sing and play and a huge thank you to all our friends and neighbours in New Town and the Odd One Out pub who gave so generously.

## **CHRIST ALONE**

Who answers Christ's insistent call  
Must give himself, his life, his all,  
Without one backward look.  
Who sets his hand upon the plough,  
And glances back with anxious brow,  
his calling has mistook.  
Christ claims him, wholly for his own:  
He must be Christ, and Christ alone.

*Taken from 'Called to Praise'*

## **PRINTER INKS**

If anyone can use 7 x Epson 29 (Strawberry) printer inks

*Contact Debby 07831 594872*

## COMMUNITY DAY

To avoid clashing with the Colchester Free Family Fun Festival in Castle Park, we have changed our provisional date for 2024 to **Saturday 31 August**.

Initial planning meeting for this year's Community Day will be on **Wednesday 28 February at 7.30 p.m.** in the Church Parlour and we do hope you will be able to come along.

If you are unable to attend but have any ideas / comments / suggestions, please let me know.

*Juliet Balls*

### THE FUTURE?

Mummy, someone's just told me  
that the sky was once blue  
and the sea was too.  
Is it true, is it true?

And outside our shelter  
there were flowers and trees  
and birds and bees.  
How can that be?

I've read in the story books  
tattered and old  
there was once a warm sun.  
Now it's cold, always cold.

What happened Mummy,  
to small boats with sails,  
the fishes and whales?  
Now they're tales, only tales.

Why is it so cold now  
since the sadness came,  
each day is the same?  
Who's to blame, who's to blame?

*Norma Peckston*

## WIMPOLE ROAD CHURCH SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday mornings at 11.00 a.m.

4 February	Rev. Paul Howes
11 February	Rev. Hannah Chun / Holy Communion / Baptisms
18 February	Joe Navoka
25 February	Joanne Eckersley

### A WARM WELCOME AWAITS

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

### DIARY DATES

**Wednesday 7 February 7.30 p.m.**

**Wimpole Road Church Council - everyone welcome.**

**Saturday 10 February at The Well 9 a.m. – 10. a.m.**

**‘Serving the Present Age?’ Circuit Prayer Group, led by Christine Firmin.**

To support God’s mission for our churches in Colchester. All welcome

**Ash Wednesday 14 February.**

**Ashing Services at St. Stephen’s @ 10:30 am & 7:30 p.m.**

**Thursday 15 February at 7:30 p.m.**

**Weekly Lent Course ‘Come & See’ hosted at Wimpole Road - all welcome**

**Saturday 24 February 6.30 p.m.**

**Mersea Methodist Church Quiz.**

Supper included, suggested donation £5 towards church funds

Contact Ann on: (01206) 386841 Mob: 07538 613601 email: [brook877@btinternet.com](mailto:brook877@btinternet.com)

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### FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

*All those known to us who have ongoing health problems  
and any who are in need of support at this time.*

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## WORKING TOGETHER



**PRAYER MEETING Tuesday 10.00 - 10.30 a.m.**  
Meeting number: 195 594 506 password 011904

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**'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.

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## LINK TO ST. STEPHEN'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

<http://ststephens-colchester.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024-02-February-2024-Newsletter-V01.00.pdf>

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## 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](mailto:alison.ablewhite@btinternet.com)

## KEEP UP TO DATE ON OUR WEBSITE:

[www.wimpoleroadchurch.org.uk](http://www.wimpoleroadchurch.org.uk)

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## PRAYER CORNER

Loving Lord, we have celebrated Christmas and have praised you for the gift of Jesus,  
the Light that is Jesus has shone again  
and we hope and trust that one day that Light will shine in the hearts of everyone.

As we travel into the New Year we bring ourselves in service to you  
that we may follow where Jesus has led. Amen