



November 2024
Minister: Rev. Hannah Chun
Mob: 07935 612 414

Dear Friends,

This past week, I have been on the Year 2 Probationers training through the Queen's Foundation in Birmingham. This is my final and fifth year in training with Queen's. I have one more residential in June and with that, my time at Queen's will draw to a close.

Looking back, I have encountered many ups and downs in my training to become a minister. The studies have brought joy, but many times I felt as though I was hitting my head against a brick wall as I sensed the more I learned the less I knew! Something I *have* especially valued on this journey of studies is the mutual support I have gained through being with peers on a similar path. The space to be able to share the joys, frustrations and questions of faith and ministry with those who seem to 'get it' has been so valuable. It has taken time to build trust and relationships, but I believe we have become a safe sounding board to one another because we know that none of us are perfect and we are all in this learning together.

I wonder where you might be in your journey of faith? Where and with whom do you find the space to share your deep joys, discoveries, frustrations and questions when it comes to faith and discipleship? Where and with whom can you sound these out to test out your thoughts without feeling judged? We cannot be Christians on our own. We need each other and the mutual support we can offer one another is so crucial in helping us grow and thrive as disciples of Christ. As disciples, we are on a lifelong journey of learning together, and learning is not necessarily about achievement or ticking boxes, but about how we can connect with one another.

All we 'do' as a church, the plans we make, and the visions we hold for the future are all very necessary in helping us go forward so we do not remain complacent and stagnant in our faith and mission. However, I wonder whether we may lose sight of the 'being with', 'sitting with' and 'journeying with' one another when our focus is on the 'doing'. How good are we at being in the here and now whilst sharing our faith experiences *with* one another?

When Martha was distracted with the 'doing', Jesus noticed her distress and told her not to be worried and upset by the many things she had to do, but to sit awhile with him along with Mary. Do you identify with Martha or Mary? Maybe we are called to be both. But for now, let us remember the importance of 'being with' Jesus and with one another. At times it is in the slowing down, the sitting beside and being *with* people in the here and now where we may catch glimpses of God's heart and nature which is to be *with* us.

May God bless you and be with you,

Hannah

ALPHA COURSE JANUARY 2025

Following the success of our last joint ALPHA course with St. Stephen's in the summer, we have plans to run a further course for 6 weeks starting on Tuesday 7 January. The ALPHA course is an opportunity to explore the basics of the Christian faith through discussion assisted by watching short videos. It is open to all people; regardless of where they might be on their faith journey to simply understand more about Christianity and what it might mean to us in the world today. During the course we will be exploring topics such as:

- Is there more to life than this?
- Who is Jesus?
- Why did Jesus die?
- Why and how do I pray?
- How and why should I read the Bible?
- Who is the Holy Spirit and what does the Holy Spirit do?

If you think this would be helpful to you and you might be interested in coming along or you know anybody who you think would find this helpful please speak to me or one of our Church Stewards to get more information.

It is also wonderful that off the back of the last ALPHA course there will be a special Confirmation Service, conducted by Bishop Roger for those who have requested confirmation. This will take place at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 28 November at St. Stephen's. A warm invitation is extended to everybody to attend this special service.

In the meantime, we ask that you offer prayer as we plan this next course and also for those being confirmed.

Rev. Hannah

NOTES FROM THE VESTRY

At the end of September, I had a call that every steward dreads, “*The preacher for the coming Sunday is unwell, over to you!*”

To be fair I was offered some helpful suggestions during that conversation but the sense of panic had already set in. A quick prayer after the receiver was replaced and then the ‘Three Together’ Facebook worship I had watched the evening before came flooding back. Would Jonathan mind if we used that for Sunday?

Wheels were set in motion and as you will remember, our dear friend offered to lead the whole service - he became my new best friend! The service was as always, very meaningful and gratefully received.

The duties of the stewards are really housekeeping to ensure the smooth running of the church behind the scenes - it is rare to be faced with something that causes such anxious concern.

Thinking back over the years since my dear Dad was a steward and I was still at school, I’ve been comparing the way the role has changed. Many a Sunday lunch was ruined because the stewards on duty failed to find that missing five pence when counting and recording the offertory. We don’t count it on Sundays now.

The duty steward arrived to unlock and get ready about half an hour beforehand, sometimes arriving to meet an early worshipper waiting to be let in. We arrive an hour before now so that all the ‘jobs’ can be done by the time you arrive and we can devote the pre-service time to being there to talk, listen and welcome all who come in.

Data is recorded in a very different way and communication between us all has changed unrecognisably but the principle and service in what we do has really remained the same.

Whilst away on our recent holiday to the States, we visited both an Episcopal and a United Methodist Church for Sunday services and it was good to worship in both. However, one was a little more friendly than the other and it made me think of how we try at Wimpole Road to ensure everyone feels welcome and comfortable. Hence stewards are always early so we can help to do just that. Josh sends his love and very best wishes to everyone.

As we begin to prepare for the very busy season of Advent and Christmas, please keep the team in your prayers and if anyone feels called to join us, you will be very welcome.

Every blessing

Christine

LETTER FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Friends,

Spoiler Alert: This letter makes references to an episode of 'All Creatures Great and Small' first shown on 17th October 2024

There's nothing better than watching a gentle TV drama set in a beautiful part of the world where a variety of reflections can be drawn based on the life of the characters contained within it. When I watched this episode of 'All Creatures Great and Small' there were several aspects I could have chosen to write about, but I have chosen just one.

Richard Carmody is living at Skeldale House, the veterinary practice's home and receives his exam results letting him know that he is now a qualified vet. More than this, he has received an 'outstanding distinction' and has been offered a research post in London which was entirely suited to his skills and outlook. His initial reaction is to turn this down to stay in Yorkshire. By the end of the programme, he has changed his mind. So, what happened?

Carmody hadn't experienced a sense of belonging in his early life and had found this at Skeldale House. He'd found a place where he could be himself. Once he was assured that he would always have a place to come back to in Yorkshire it gave him the confidence to step out and go to London where his skills would have been used to great effect through the opportunity offered to him.

As disciples of Christ, we are invited to follow the ways of Jesus, to let God come alongside us and to know that we belong with him. This sense of belonging enables us to feel secure, and then to step out in new ways. We have in Jesus someone in whom we can always turn and who guides us through the Holy Spirit. Belonging to Christ means we are assured of eternal life both for now and always. This invitation should fill us with a deep sense of peace, comfort and belonging.

We respond to this invitation through the way we live and the actions we take. This is to serve God where we are and for others to see the way God is working in and through our lives, as individuals and as a church community. It is where we have the confidence to take new steps in the ways in which we serve Christ knowing that it's not about success but about being faithful to who God made us to be. We may be being prompted in a new way to serve God and we should explore this knowing that first and foremost, we belong to Christ and therefore we will always have the security of that relationship. God will work through others to provide the resources that are needed, and we can be reassured of that through the Holy Spirit.

'All Creatures Great and Small' is, on the surface, a gentle weeknight drama. However, there is much we can learn about life from it and about God through it. As we work together, let's seek the ways God may be leading us and respond with confidence, knowing this comes from a deep sense of our identity in Christ.

God bless,

Chris

THURSDAY CIRCLE

In September we had an afternoon of Autumn Activities with Rev. Hannah. She took some really good photos of us at work and these are on our notice board – so please have a look.

We began October with a return visit by the Concorde Singers, who cheered our spirits as they entertained us with a concert of music, both choral and piano.

The following week Brian Carline gave a talk entitled ‘Tripe and Trotters’. He is an author and broadcaster and he is such a witty speaker – he had us laughing a lot! Debbie (inspired by the talk’s title) led us in a prayer for pigs! (See on the next page – most amusing!)

On 17 October Nick Wickenden talked to us about Wilkins Jam Factory, where he is the Curator of the Museum. We were all given a small jar of Wilkins jam to take home! Interest in the subject was such that we had two new people attend.

On 24 October I spoke on ‘Crime and Punishment’ in my family history!

Coming up:

- 7 November** In a change to the original programme, Douglas Broom (a former maths teacher) will give us a talk entitled ‘Nothing’.
- 14 November** Gunni Graygoose will give us an afternoon of seated activities. Do come and join us!
- 21 November** A return visit by Di Bignell, a Blue Badge Guide, who will talk on Colchester’s Lost Pubs.
- 28 November** Jean Quinn, a good friend to Thursday Circle, will talk on ‘Quilts for Care Leavers’.

Our new programme covering late January to June 2025 is now available. Please see me if you do not already have a copy.

Our meetings are at **2.30 p.m. on Thursdays**: admission charge £1 but £2 for some afternoons. All are welcome – young or old, male or female, churchgoer or not.

Joan Gomer *Secretary*

THANK YOU LETTER FROM WATERAID

Thank you so much to everyone at Wimpole Road Methodist Church, Thursday Circle, for your generous donation of £52.00. With your group’s support, we can continue ensuring everyone, everywhere has a sustainable source of clean water and access to proper hygiene and sanitation.

Emily McGuinness – Community Team - WaterAid

PRAYER FOR PIGS

We thank you Lord for pigs.
Let every pig live free - of cage or pen.
Let every pig feel the sun on its back, the rain, the hail, the snow and the wind.
Let every pig decide when to sleep or root; eat or not.
Let every pig wallow.
Let every pig leg it to soft shelter when the heavens open.
Let every pig toss fresh straw to make a bed.
Let every pig grunt greetings to pigs or people it knows.
Let every pig wag its tail for joy.
Let every pig lie and bask in the sun or shade.
Let every pig snuggle its young unhindered.
Let every pig explore.
Let every pig choose to behave as a pig; as nature intended.

Amen

{from 'Uppedstickswithpigs' - Baginbun Beach, Wexford, Ireland}

NEW TOWN COMMUNITY DAY 2024 – FINAL TOTALS

Just to let you know the final totals are in! Very special thanks to Kayleigh Rippingale and Pam Cox who have covered the Council's booking fee from their locality budget and also the cost of the Mobile Skate Park. Our other expenses this year were covered by the Public Health funding grant and also Sodexo who, as well as running the barbecue, provided all the food!

We are delighted that, as a result of these very generous contributions, all takings on the day will be split between this year's charities (St. Helena Hospice and Autism Anglia) who will receive just over £800 each.

Once again many thanks for all your help and support.

Juliet

HOUSEKEEPING

For anyone using the kitchen you may have noticed an extra bin or two. We are trying to keep up with re-cycling, so attempting to separate rubbish into paper and plastic, soft plastics/crisp packets etc. and general waste.

As yet we don't have any receptacle for food waste and tea bags/coffee grounds so they will have to go in the general bin unless they are kindly taken home by your good selves.

Thank you for your help - it will save me rummaging through the black bin bag to do our bit for the environment.

Christine Firmin

WIMPOLE ROAD METHODIST CHURCH - AN ECO CHURCH?

Let's think about the role we all have in caring for the whole of creation and climate justice today. We know that climate disasters and wars had led to displacement of people home's and damage to the environment. It is a concern that all humans are sharing in this modern age. It is the devastating damage of the planet earth. Climate change, loss of types of animals and flowers species and pollution of streams and rivers.

It is something everyone knows something about. Just knowing about it will never be enough. We need to be changing our own lifestyles and encourage those with power to make changes that will prevent further harm to earth and all its inhabitants, so with this in mind I thought it would be a good time to review how our church community is getting on with this challenge we first embarked on in 2022.

Before the Circuit had a mission plan, with part of that plan to become an Eco Circuit, our church had already committed to make changes to care for creation. As an individual church we registered our interest in becoming an Eco Church. A Rocha UK's Eco Church programme equips churches in England and Wales to care for creation.

The Eco Church survey, with its supporting resources, will help churches to 'go green' in all areas of church life. The work we have already done here at Wimpole Road has achieved an Eco Bronze Church award. We are now in the process of working towards a Silver Eco Church award.

So what positive changes has Wimpole Church achieved?

- We are committed as a church to include the theme of care of God's planet and all it's inhabitants regularly in our shared acts of worship.
- We have made changes to the land which we own by planting wildflower seeds by the kitchen and upcycled an old stepladder to become a planter.
- In front of the church on our resin driveway we have bee friendly plants and flowers in planters.
- We also now have a bicycle rack there to encourage people to cycle when using the church premises.
- We have thought a lot about the waste that we produce and have made a conscious effort to reduce the total amount and to separate rubbish into cardboard, plastics, soft plastics and tins and now have different labelled bins to make it easier to think about recycling.
- We have thought about our energy suppliers and use a company that promotes the use of more green energy.
- We have a small group of people who meet regularly to review our progress with the A Rocha green church scheme and think of further ways we can make improvements.

Ideas for the future include making a small wildflower meadow; changing the type of lights in the church to LED lights which use less energy; and thinking of practical ways to reduce the amount of heat loss from our buildings.

Are we prepared to take further action as a church community and as individuals to protect our common environment, God's creation, from further damage effecting future generations like our children, grand children and great grand children? I would hope that at the next Church Council meeting we can discuss what being an Eco Church means to us all.

Sally Crafer

SOUP RUN

Wimpole Road has been involved in the Soup Run in Colchester since it started many years ago and it was first under the leadership of Jean Ablewhite (Juliet's mother). Jean and David Ablewhite were very active in starting the Soup Run for the homeless in Colchester.

I have also been involved in this good cause for many years and have been the organiser for Wimpole Road for some time, relying on the generosity of a few others, to keep this venture going in helping the homeless people of Colchester.

We are responsible for the Soup Run on the 4th Saturday of every other month, so 6 times a year. We like to have 4 people ideally (2 ladies & 2 men) on each Run with 3 or 4 people making sandwiches (we can always do with more volunteers).

I am currently thinking about stepping down from this very worthwhile cause, as for nearly the last 2 years I have been going out every time we are on the Run. Unfortunately, I am not as fit as I used to be, and we only have one other man on the Run regularly.

We are in desperate need for more men in particular to come forward to help, otherwise it looks like (after many years of being involved,) that Wimpole Road will have to pack up this very worthwhile venture. This would be a great shame and a big loss to the good reputation that Wimpole Road has in helping people and the community.

Please speak to me if you feel you can help either by making sandwiches or helping on the actual Soup Run, I am sure you would find it very rewarding.

Thank you

Edward Pentney

DIARY DATE

Saturday 9 November at Castle 9 a.m. – 10. a.m.

'Serving the Present Age?' - Circuit Prayer Group, led by Rev. Hannah Chun.

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

FOLLOWING JESUS

There was a man called Jesus,
Who came down here on earth,
And found a group of people,
Who would help him in his work.

He first turned to some fishermen
In their boat upon the sea,
Told them of God's message
And said, "*Come and follow me.*"

*I have come to free you all
From guilt and from neglect,
And give you God's new life plan,
Of love, and of respect.*

*My path will be a stony one
And sometimes hard to bear,
But I need you to support me
If only you'll be there".*

Then others followed Jesus
As he went upon his way.
They watched him heal the blind and lame
And kept the crowds at bay.

Were with him when he held a child,
And raised her from the dead.
Then helped him feed the multitude,
With a few fish and some bread.

We all can follow Jesus.
Every woman, child and man,
Look at how we live our lives
And keep to God's own plan.

For Jesus is our pattern
So our aim must surely be
To hold his hand and walk with him,
When he says "*Follow me*".

Norma Peckston

WIMPOLE ROAD CHURCH SERVICES FOR NOVEMBER

Sunday mornings at 11.00 a.m.

3 November	Phil Bingham
10 November 10.45 a.m.	Joanne Eckersley Remembrance Sunday
17 November	Local Arrangement
24 November	Rev. Hannah Chun / Holy Communion Pastoral Commissioning and New Membership Service

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.*

PRAYER CORNER

I look to Christ this day
for strength in my weakness,
for healing in my sickness.

I look to Christ this day
for hope in my despair,
for love in my hatred.

I look to Christ this day
for peace in my restlessness,
for forgiveness in my sin.

I look to Christ this day
for fullness in my emptiness,
for life in my death.

I look to Christ this day
and pray that Christ will look upon me.

{from the Methodist Prayer Handbook}

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

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



WORKING TOGETHER



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

**'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.

LINK TO ST. STEPHEN'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

<http://ststephens-colchester.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2024-11-November-2024-Newsletter-V01.00.pdf>

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

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The land yields its harvest; God our God blesses us. – Psalm 67:6.

Autumn is also a season of thanksgiving. It's a season of praise.
It's a season to gather with family and friends to thank God
for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us.