



**January 2025**  
**Minister: Rev. Hannah Chun**  
**Mob: 07935 612 414**

Dear Friends,

Some of you may know that I drive a yellow Nissan Juke. Due to the nature of my work, I spend a lot of time driving from one place to the next. However, amid all the driving I have not come across many other yellow Nissan Jukes. There have been a handful I would say.

In my first few months here in Colchester, I was pleasantly surprised when I came across another yellow Nissan Juke. The driver smiled and excitedly waved back at me. Since then, I have noticed most yellow Nissan Juke drivers do the same! So I too smile and wave back. I don't know who these drivers are but somehow I felt welcomed, included and able to participate in this lovely chain reaction. An interesting community of yellow Nissan Juke drivers has been formed that spreads happiness and joy.

Another new year has dawned and at this time in the Methodist Church, we hold a Covenant Service where we are reminded of God's all-embracing and all-inclusive love for all. It is all about God's desire to enfold everyone in an unconditional and limitless love, which does not depend on whether anyone deserves it or not. The Covenant between God and us has already been made possible and given freely. It is not a type of contract where we promise to offer our good services to each other. Nevertheless, once we realise and encounter God's immense love and grace we may wish to respond to that love through the way we live out our lives with one another. God has begun that chain reaction and we are called to respond in love, to smile and wave back, then spread that love on.

Chain reactions start small, but like ripples in the water, they spread out and grow. What small chain reactions in response to God's love might we start?

We may or may not make New Year's resolutions. I usually find making big New Year's resolutions unhelpful because I can never keep them. If I do make them, I prefer to begin somewhere small.

What small steps can we make as individuals and as a church this year? Just because it is the New Year we don't need to make big, grand beginnings. It can begin with small green shoots that have the potential to flourish and grow. I believe that is how our lives as disciples and our churches as communities can flourish also. It begins with God's love wrapped in a small gesture, a smile, a friendly wave or a kind encouraging word.

Each of us has the gift and potential to start a chain reaction which will create ripples filled with the message of God's all-inclusive love. It begins small and it starts with us. So, may you experience anew God's rippling love run through you and into others this year.

Happy New Year and God bless,

***Hannah***

### **THANK YOU FROM HANNAH**

Dear all,

I hope you all had a good Christmas and welcomed the New Year with joy. Thank you for all your lovely Christmas cards and warm wishes.

I just wanted to say a big thank you, especially to all our stewards who worked so hard over the festive season to decorate the church and prepare for all the special extra services.

We had a particularly lovely service where we invited our Coffee Morning guests from the Woodlands Day Centre for a Christmas service in the church and party afterwards in the Parlour. Those from the Centre along with others from the Wednesday Warm Spaces Coffee Morning joined for a wonderful time together. Thank you to all who were involved in putting this meaningful event together so the message of Christmas could be shared with the community. This was the first time we held such a service. May it be the first of many.

Thank you all for the support and love you offer to this ministry.

Many thanks,

***Hannah***

### **PRECIOUS GIFTS**

When we count our many blessings - it isn't hard to see  
That life's most valued treasures are the treasures that are free.

For it isn't what we own or buy that signifies our wealth,  
It's the precious gifts that have no price –  
Our family, friends and health.

## NOTES FROM THE VESTRY

All the stewards would like to wish everyone who is reading this a very happy and healthy 2025. I will also add that the wish of many would be the addition of hope and peace all over the world.

So we now have another New Year beginning! How do you view the New Year? Do you make New Year Resolutions? What is the longest you have ever kept one up? I always feel blessed that we who are in the West are so very fortunate. Let us all help make this a new beginning for us at Wimpole Road. We have moved on in so many ways over the last few years. I believe that all of us can make some contribution to encourage and support those who make decisions, and work hard to enhance the many advantages that we enjoy here at our church. I believe that we are a congregation that warmly welcomes newcomers, and will invite them to have a coffee or a chat if this is what they would like. Our congregation has certainly increased over time, and it has been good to welcome all these people, whenever they come.

Once again here we are with the season of Advent behind us, which is (as Rev. Hannah said in the last Newsround), the season of Christ coming near to us, to reveal himself to us. Christmas too has passed, and what wonderful celebrations we had preceding Christmas, marking this very important time of the year in so many meaningful ways. At this stage I have to mention the Christmas Trees that Christine and Peter get for us each year from Tim Smith at Boxted and this year was no exception. I'm told that he always ensures we get exactly what we want, and the trees are always ready on time. So many people commented on them, and the icing on the cake was the marvellous job that was done in their decoration. Thank you Tim, Christine, Peter, and the talented decorators!

What a memorable Carol Service we had on the Sunday before Christmas Day. This year, once again we were delighted to welcome members from St. Margaret's, and St. Stephen's along with Wimpole Road church as one of our 'Three Together' services. It was such a joy to see the amount of worshippers, which certainly swelled the congregation. The refreshments provided afterwards in the parlour were welcomed by everyone who was able to come and partake. The decorations of the church were so delightful, and were a real compliment to those who were responsible. Thank you.

There is so much work and goodwill that often goes behind the scene at our lovely church. You will be aware of how much the stewards' team is responsible for and we do thank every one of them. Lately you may have heard or read about the 'Mission Plan' which is going on at all our churches right now. You can read a copy of this plan for Wimpole Road at the back of the church, and I commend it to you. It is a plan with 4 key areas: Worship; Learning and Caring; Service and Evangelism.

This is going on in all Methodist churches, and it starts by reminding us what our Mission Statement is (*"We are here to worship God, and to spread the message of his love for all, expressed in Jesus Christ"*)

None of us is perfect - we do not have to perfectly practice each of these commitments all the time. We are called only to practice them as we are able.

From the lectern you will already have heard that we are now going to share a prayer for each month, which is also printed in the Newsround.

Also details about progressing with the kitchenette and toilet project, and the aim to bring it to fruition. Please look out for the date of the next meeting concerning this, and come if you can.

As always we have been blessed with many happy occasions in our lives, but have also seen sad times. Every family has its problems, and our church is a place where we are able to 'unload' prayers and thoughts for others and ourselves.

Blessings to all and best wishes for a very happy and healthy 2025.

*Margaret Clubb*

## **LETTER FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT**

Dear Friends,

Each season has different characteristics. In the winter, there are a number of animals who hibernate. Hedgehogs are but one example with others including bumblebees, bats and chipmunks. Other animals, such as badgers enter a period of lower activity rather than totally hibernating. Hibernation is a time of slowing things down, not least for nature because of greater difficulty in finding food sources. I wonder what we can learn from our animal friends as we enter the new year.

January is a month where the bright lights of Christmas have been taken down, but the nights have not got substantially lighter, although there is a marked change between the beginning and the end of the month in this respect. It is a month which can be quite difficult for some and maybe hibernation feels like a good idea.

For the animals who hibernate, it is a time to stop and regroup, a time to build up energy once again ready for the new season. Maybe this feels like a good idea for us as humans as well. We know that when God created the world, he rested on the seventh day. It is also one of the commandments and we know that in New Testament times, Jesus also regularly took time to rest, contemplate, reflect and regroup. The period of hibernation for animals is much more substantial than taking a regular day of Sabbath rest but the themes of reflection, contemplation and regrouping are all part of the rhythm of life.

As we enter the new year, many people will have made some new year resolutions. Others may choose not to. The world around us encourages us to reflect as we come into the new year. Maybe we could think about the rhythms we have in our lives and ask ourselves how they reflect our discipleship and time with God. The rhythms we have in our life are to sustain us, to help us to regroup on a regular basis and to prepare for a new season.

In January we join together in our Covenant service. This is a time where we think about our relationship with God and the Covenant prayer is one which asks us to reflect deeply. John Wesley encouraged people to spend a day in contemplation and reflection prior to the service, considering the implications of it for their discipleship, witness and service. Maybe in the few days before the Covenant service, taking some time to sit with the prayer might be something to think about.

Maybe this January is a time for us to spend time with God, learn from the actions of Jesus and allow the Holy Spirit to work in us, guiding us for the next season. I encourage us all to reflect on the rhythms we have in our lives, and how we might best serve God together in the coming weeks and months.

Happy New Year! God bless,

*Chris*

## **WIMPOLE ROAD METHODIST CHURCH**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

**“We are here to worship God and to spread the message of His love for all,  
expressed in Jesus Christ”**

#### **Aims:**

- To maintain a visible presence in the community and provide appropriate and meaningful worship.
- To make everyone welcome, regular worshipper or casual visitor
- To make access easy and welcoming and make sure all are comfortable and can see and hear well
- To make the worship and teaching relevant to everyday living
- To develop the life of the Church
- Encourage everyone to play their part in the Church and to value each contribution.
- Be united in fellowship, love and purpose
- Support the work of the Church in prayer, service and giving to achieve these objectives
- To encourage personal discovery

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### **PRAYING TOGETHER**

We have much to thank God for, freedom to worship and a beautiful building in which to come together to do so.

We also have much to ask God for and praying together is a powerful way to make our requests known.

Speaking to Christians from other churches about prayer, one comment has remained in my mind particularly,

***‘The churches that are growing are the churches that pray together’.***

We have ample opportunity on a Sunday during our worship to pray together as a faithful community, but for various reasons we don’t come together during the rest of the week.

Corporate prayer is valuable in so many ways:

- It encourages
- It helps the weak become strong
- An act of confession.
- It builds unity
- It invests in evangelism

Praying with others invests in God’s work to bring people to faith in Jesus Christ.

Acts 2:47 reads ***‘...as we pray, the Lord works to draw others to himself’.***

All seven churches in the circuit have been charged with looking at their mission statements and work on a mission plan to ensure we are looking forwards to continue God’s work in a meaningful way.

At Wimpole Road, as part of our mission plan we are praying about and working towards changing the way we extend our worship into fellowship on Sundays.

The aim:

- to grow disciples for Christ in this troubled world in which we live
- to share his love and Grace and work together to bring more into his kingdom.

With this in mind, there will be a short prayer in the Newsround every month.

If you are able, please pray that prayer each day.

We will then as a community be sharing with each other in spirit if not in body to pray together that God will uphold us, strengthen us and draw others to Him.

God Bless

***Christine Firmin***

**PRAYER FOR THIS MONTH**

**Heavenly Father,**

**fill our church with your presence.**

**May your spirit move among us,**

**drawing people closer to you and one another.**

**Amen**

**Exodus 33:14** The Lord replied, ‘My presence will go with you and I will give you rest.’

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## THURSDAY CIRCLE

Well - I began December in fear and trepidation, and I wasn't the one *having the operation!* Our esteemed leader Joan Gomer was leaving us to get a new knee, leaving me in charge of the Thursday Circle ...

But nervous as I was, there was really no need to panic, because Joan (of course) had planned the three Christmas programmes down to the finest detail. She had handed me sheaves of instructions and allocated readings, and all that was required of me was try to look as if I knew what I was doing! Plus the wonderful Thursday Circle ladies rallied round, and everyone made sure we had the jolliest of times.

We began with an afternoon of Christmas Fun – with delicious Christmas readings and those great, much loved records, like Bing Crosby singing 'White Christmas'. Mince pies made their first appearance of course...

The following week we had the joyful return of 'The Entertainers', who sang their hearts out, and made us laugh, and stayed for tea. When did you last hear a concert where you knew every song, and were allowed to sing along? A splendid tea followed. Everyone brought something delicious, crackers were pulled, jokes were told, and we groaned and laughed. Such fun!

Finally, we had our Christmas Service with readings, carols and prayers, accompanied by dear Beryl Leech on the Parlour piano, but best of all – led by Joan, who had returned from her operation and was in fine fettle.

There will be no meetings through January, but we look forward to seeing you all again in February. We wish you a very Happy New Year.

*Deborah Floy*

## MOON GAZER

Last night, whilst gazing at the moon, I made some Christmas wishes.  
I wished the world a better place – and it could happen soon.

Christmas, a magical time – not for all. Our world is not a perfect place.  
Wars, people starving – tyrant leaders – we must not let it fall!

We cannot cast a magic spell. Let's try to make the New Year bright.  
Spread happiness around the world, then, perhaps, all will be well?

*Pat Farrow*

## THANK YOU FROM KEN

**Ken Young** wishes to thank friends at Wimpole Road  
for the gift of a lovely box of biscuits for Christmas.

## A SIMPLE THING

It was such a simple thing,  
The birth of Jesus, our Lord and King.  
Perhaps by just a single light,  
The son of God was born that night.  
The only sounds, his mothers sigh,  
And from the babe, a little cry.

Mary wrapped her baby round,  
Still there was very little sound.  
Even the cattle in the stall,  
Hardly made a sound at all,  
Yet seemed to sense there in the hay,  
This was a most important day.

We still use a single light,  
To think of Jesus born that night.  
On the night when few knew his name,  
The night the kings and shepherds came.  
Most of the world slept, unaware  
That God had sent his royal heir.

And now we too come worshipping,  
In the Christmas songs we sing,  
Carolling by candle light  
In its pure and shining light.  
It was such a simple thing,  
The birth of Jesus, our Lord and King.

*Norma Peckston*

Child of the stable - secret birth,  
The Lord by right of the lords of earth,  
Let angels sing of a King new-born –  
The world is weaving a crown of thorn.  
A crown of thorn for that infant head  
Cradled soft in the manger bed.

{H & P No. 124}



## **A CORNER FOR PRAYER**

Radiant God, light for all  
People and all places,  
By the guidance of a star  
You led the magi  
To worship the Christ Child.

By the light of faith  
Lead us to worship you  
In peace and love,  
And guide us in your way.  
We pray in the name of Christ,  
Light of the World.  
Amen

## **DIARY DATES**

**Saturday 11 January at Wivenhoe 9.00 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.**  
**‘Serving the Present Age?’ - Circuit Prayer Group, led by Sally Crafer.**  
To support God’s mission for our churches in Colchester. All welcome

**Thursday 6 February 7.00 p.m. Church Council.** Open to everyone.

## **WIMPOLE ROAD CHURCH SERVICES FOR JANUARY**

**Sunday mornings at 11.00 a.m.**

<b>5 January</b>	<b>Local Arrangement</b>
<b>12 January</b>	<b>Rev. Hannah Chun. Covenant Service / Holy Communion</b>
<b>19 January</b>	<b>Sally Crafer</b>
<b>26 January</b>	<b>Jonathan Sparkes</b>

## **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.*

## **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

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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**

<https://ststephens-colchester.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/2025-01-January-2025-Newsletter-V01.00-comp.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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"The old has gone, the new is here!

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ"

{2 Corinthians 5:17-18}