



February 2025

Minister: Rev. Hannah Chun
Mob: 07935 612 414

Dear Friends,

I've just finished watching *The Durrells*. This is a heartwarming British comedy-drama series loosely based on Gerald Durrell's autobiographical books about his family's four years (1935-1939) on the Greek island of Corfu. Louisa Durrell is the mother of four children, Larry, Leslie, Margo and Gerald. After Louisa's husband dies leaving them penniless, they suddenly decide to move from Bournemouth to the Greek island of Corfu, where things are a little cheaper. The family encounter all sorts of struggles as they adapt to life on the island, from shortage of money to language and cultural barriers. They soon fall in love with life in Corfu and its people whilst winning the hearts of the Corfiots. Although their language or culture is not the same, they learn to love, accept and celebrate their differences no matter how bizarre.

February usually feels like the month of 'love' as all things to do with Valentine's Day begin emerging in the shops. On 9th February many churches will highlight Racial Justice Sunday. And recently many places marked Holocaust Memorial Day, especially the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. At this time in the year, it seems we are being reminded once again of all that has been achieved to ensure all people are valued and treated with love, fairness and equality, but also that there is still so much to be done. It is a reminder that all of us who are called to love as Christ have much to do to share and spread that all-encompassing love.

In the last episode of *The Durrells*, the family make the painful decision to leave Corfu and head back to England due to the war. Louisa addresses a crowd of Corfiots with a

farewell speech, and says, *“If there has to be a war, my one wish is that we realise, when it's all over, that we need to love each other just a little bit more.”*

Sadly, wars still exist, and differences between people continue to form a barrier in many places in our world and communities. In such times, how might we love just a little bit more? Hugh Sherlock, a Jamaican Methodist minister, mentions, ‘speaking with the accent’ of God’s love in his hymn ‘Lord, thy church on earth is seeking’ (HP 774). Whatever accent we have or wherever we are from, the only thing that truly brings us together is that we speak in the accent of God’s love. What might our ‘accent’ as a church and as individuals be? Do we speak with the ‘accent’ of God’s love? How might that sound and look like?

Let us remember that God has already given us this love, Jesus has already shown us this love, and the Spirit who lives in us guides us to live it out in all its various ‘accents’. So, may the accent with which you speak continue to be of God’s love and may that ring loud and clear in the ears and hearts of those who hear and encounter it.

God bless,

Hannah

NOTES FROM THE VESTRY

MISSION STATEMENT

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

As I write this note, I have just returned from our Stewards Meeting and I thought it would be worth reflecting on our Mission Statement which you can see above and sense check in my mind that all that we discussed and considered this evening actually fulfil this statement and the aims which sit beneath it. And, the good news is that I think it has done! Can I please encourage you to re-read the Mission Statement that was re-published in last month’s Newsround and is also on display at Church, in both the Vestibule and the Parlour. Maybe study the aims that follow on from this and test us as a Church community and individuals against these aims.

The Mission Statement is a foundation upon which our Mission Plan is built. In a similar vein to the words of our Covenant Service prayer which we shared together earlier in January - some of these aims will come easily to us, collectively or as individuals, and bring us joy and satisfaction, whilst others might not come so easily to us and bring significant challenges. Our Annual General Meeting and Vision Planning meeting in the next few months will give us a really good opportunity to discuss and explore any new ideas further.

With this in mind, when you look at these aims are there areas where you feel we should be doing more or doing things differently or where you could support our work? Are there

vacancies at Church which you might be willing to step forward into? Some of these might play to your natural strengths and talents whilst others might seem somewhat daunting. Please do pray about this and speak to Rev. Hannah or one of the Stewards if you feel called to step forward. In addition to any current vacancies, we will also be looking for at least one new Church Steward at the Annual General Meeting, which is coming up in the early summer - might this be a role you could fulfil?

So, as we approach the end of January we are already looking forward to and planning ahead for the coming months. Let's be honest, in the blink of an eye we will be eating pancakes as we prepare for Lent and then 40 days will whiz past and it will be Easter and so it goes on.... In all our planning we must stay focused on Jesus and the aims we have set out in the Mission Statement. Personally, I have sought to sense check that which is planned and I am satisfied that these activities all achieve at the very least one of these aims and more often than not many of them. We have so much that happens week in and week out along with a number of other annual events and activities, with our focus right now being on Lent and Easter, Pentecost, our support and involvement with New Town Open Gardens, Holiday Club, the Community Day and of course our forthcoming building project.

You will have read the piece in last month's Newsround about our Prayer for the Month and you will have joined in with this each Sunday morning at the beginning of the service. We hope that you have found this helpful and that you have felt able to use this in your own personal prayer cycle. You will see later in this edition of the Newsround the prayer for this month which we encourage you to join with us in saying both on Sunday mornings and throughout the week. In your prayer, please can we ask that you also include the topics mentioned above?

Andrew Topple

LETTER FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Friends,

Isn't it interesting how two very different experiences can lead you to draw just one conclusion? The first was trying to make a letter fit on one page. I'd changed the margins to make them 'medium' as opposed to 'normal.' Then I'd made the space between paragraphs 10 point font size as opposed to 12. This was all to try and make more fit on a page without it seeming to be crowded.

The second experience, just an hour or so later, was when the shop assistant said, 'I'm sorry to keep you waiting.' It hadn't seemed like a long wait at all. I was second in the queue for two checkouts after all! It had been quite pleasant to pause in the middle of the day.

Whether it's the margins of the page or a break between one activity and another, each of these experiences had prompted a reflection on space. Is space something to fill, by trying not to make it look full, or is space something to be welcomed, even if it was only a few seconds waiting in a queue? What about when we find there is too much space?

This conclusion created a sacred space all of its own. The activities of the day and our lives change. Sometimes they alter within the day and sometimes over the seasons of our lives. For some people, it might be trying to fit more into the same amount of time but for others, it might seem there's more space, especially if something has forced a change in routine. If we realise these times are a sacred space, we can find God within them.

Jesus took time to find part of the day to pray and to be with his Father. It is in the spaces that the Holy Spirit can work, prompting and guiding us into new ways. As we recognise God in the spaces of the day, we will learn more about his nature and character and this can only be good. Our view of God is enlarged as we take the time to stop and reflect.

Where are the spaces in our day? Are they bigger or smaller than we'd choose? Can we consider those spaces as sacred spaces? These are important questions to ask ourselves. If we were to find these times as being sacred spaces allowing God to work through them, seeking and noticing God at work, all our lives could be so much richer. We can use these spaces to pray for the world, our country, each other and spend some time resting in the company of God.

Let's allow ourselves the sacred moments of space, whether large or small, increasing or decreasing, as times to be with Jesus and to allow the Holy Spirit to prompt us. In and through them all, God will draw us to him and meet us where we are. My encouragement to us all is to embrace the space!

God bless,

Chris

PRAYER FOR THIS MONTH

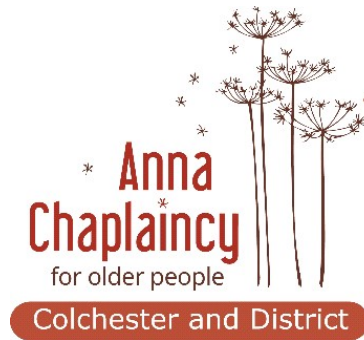
**Lord, grant us boldness to proclaim your Gospel.
Use us to speak of your love and truth in our community.
Amen.**

Acts 4:29

“Now Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants
to speak your word with great boldness.”

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To help another on life's way,  
To smile and chase a frown away.  
To bring good cheer to one who's sad,  
To make some lonely person glad.  
To share my joys and blessings too,  
This will I try each day to do.



## **EXCITING MOMENT! ANNA CHAPLAINCY FOR THE CIRCUIT**

As part of the Circuit Mission Plan time has been spent discerning where we believe God is leading in developing the work of the Circuit. One area was to particularly look at supporting older people, recognising that ‘older’ can mean many things!

At the December Circuit Meeting the working group fed back and it was agreed that the Circuit would employ an Anna Chaplain for 20 hours per week for four years. This work will be funded by the Circuit (for half the costs) with grant funding currently being sought for the remaining amount. We are hoping to advertise for the role to begin in September (subject to funding being in place and the right person applying). This is such an exciting development but what is an Anna Chaplain and what does it mean for the Circuit?

Anna Chaplaincy is a national network led by the Bible Reading Fellowship who provide support, induction, training and development for Anna Chaplains. Anna Chaplains are named after the widow Anna who appears in Luke 2. Anna appears with Simeon and both are seen as good role models for older people. An Anna Chaplain would be there to offer spiritual care and support to people who have a strong, little or no faith. Anna Chaplains are appointed, authorised and sent out, in this case by the Circuit, to support older people. To be recognised as an Anna Chaplaincy partner in the network, we have entered into a recognised agreement, meaning we now have our own approved logo - please see above.

This is a missional role which is not designed to replace work in any of the churches but to support and complement it. It is a faith based role, offering a spiritual ‘listening ear’ rather than social care. As the scope for this role could be vast, it will initially begin with a focus on care homes, of which there are over 100 in Colchester. It will be a role where networks need to be built, teams formed, which may be from within Methodism but also ecumenically. Anna Chaplains don’t work on their own. Teams can contribute in many ways in the leading of worship, or by becoming an Anna Friend who works alongside the Anna Chaplain supporting in practical ways. The intention is to start small and then expand based on the skills, gifts and talents of the person appointed. The possibilities are endless!

This role is a new way for the Circuit to share the love of Christ with others. At this stage, please can you...

**Pray** – together for the introduction of the role and the right person to apply.

**Talk** –about the possibilities, offer suggestions, and find out more.

There will be opportunities to get involved and please consider this, in however small a way, once an appointment has been made. More info to come - watch this space!

If you would like to find out more, please speak to any member of the group who have been working on this:

*Chris Preece, Hannah Chun, Christine Firmin, Robin Spittle, Rachel van Staveren, Di Thompson and Tony Trevers.*

### THURSDAY CIRCLE

Following a break over Christmas and the New Year, Thursday Circle opened up on 30 January, when we played HOY.

Coming up:

- |             |                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 February  | AGM – followed by reading poetry. Come and find out what we have been doing over the past year!                                                                              |
| 13 February | A relaxing afternoon listening to CD's.                                                                                                                                      |
| 20 February | Change of programme – Jie will be talking about dragons in China.                                                                                                            |
| 27 February | Following a request I am repeating a talk I gave in 2021, about when I did the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in the 1960's...<br>Jean Quinn will also talk about her experience. |

If you are free, do come along and join us on Thursday afternoons  
at 2.30 p.m. We would love to see you!

*Joan Gomer*  
*Secretary*

### THANK YOU

John and I would like to thank all the kind friends from the church who have rallied round and helped us over the past few weeks. Thank you also to those friends who have taken an interest in the progress of my recovery. We do appreciate this support.

*Joan Gomer*

## HOW TO PRAY

To pray to God is easy  
Like a telephone call but free.  
His line is always open, try it out and see.  
A twenty-four hour service.

You know he's always there,  
Tell him all your problems,  
Let him know you care.

Tell him that you love him,  
Thank him for this day,  
Tell him he's terrific,  
This is how you pray.

Your Bible is your mobile phone  
Lift it up and look.  
How can you accept his call  
If your phone is off the hook?

He is a caring Father  
Who hates to see you fall  
So! Do not wait till it's too late  
Go now! And make your call.

*From: The Little Book of Heavenly Humour by Syd Little*

## DIARY DATES

**Saturday 8 February at Wimpole Road 9.00 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.**  
**'Serving the Present Age?' - Circuit Prayer Group, led by Keith Thompson.**  
To support God's mission for our churches in Colchester. All welcome

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

## **NEW TOWN COMMUNITY DAY 2025 – Initial Planning Meeting**

The *provisional* date for this year's Community Day is **Saturday 30 August 2025.**

Our initial planning meeting will be on **Tuesday 4 March 2025 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*

## WIMPOLE ROAD CHURCH SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday mornings at 11.00 a.m.

|             |                                  |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| 2 February  | Local Arrangement                |
| 9 February  | Rev. Hannah Chun. Holy Communion |
| 16 February | Local Arrangement                |
| 23 February | Joe Navoka                       |

### 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.*

### FAITH AND HOPE

Hope! What a wonderful word –  
with faith we believe our request will be heard.  
With joy we receive comfort and power  
that guides and protects us through each crucial hour.

Hope! Is the star of life's long road  
as we plant a good seed it will lighten our load.  
Trusting with patience our hopes to renew  
in all that we say and all that we do.

*Marjory Green*

### OUR FATHER

Father, who formed the family of man,  
high throned in heaven evermore the same.  
Our prayer is still as Christian prayer began,  
that hallowed be Thy name.

Father, who formed the family of man,  
yours be the glory, heaven and earth adore.  
The kingdom and the power, since time began,  
now and for evermore.





## 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/2025/01/2025-02-February-2025-Newsletter-Comp-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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*"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched – they must be felt with the heart."*

*Helen Keller*