



April 2025

Minister: Rev. Hannah Chun

Mob: 07935 612 414

I was attending a Presbyteral Synod last week, which is a yearly gathering for ministers in the Methodist Church. This year, I was pleased not to have to travel very far as it took place in Colchester at Castle Methodist Church. I did feel for those who had to endure the unpleasantries of the A12! I found this Synod particularly meaningful, not only because it took place in Colchester but because it marked the moment I was given the affirmation to go forward into ordination.

The morning session usually involves worship and Holy Communion, whilst the afternoon session marks some pivotal points in people's ministries. It marked three main stages: it affirmed and welcomed probationers at the beginning of their ministerial journey; it heard the ministerial stories of those who wished to 'sit down' (retire), and it gave thanks for the ministries of those who have died. It was moving to see how the community of presbyters journeyed with and supported one another through the various key stages of ministry. It was another reminder that I wasn't alone in this vocation.

All of us travel through various stages in life. We also go through stages in our spiritual journey. The stages in that journey may not always feel as though we are going onwards and upwards. There are stages we draw nearer to God and then grow distant from God.

The period of Lent leading up to Easter is a stage in our spiritual journey, which can help us draw nearer to God. It is a time we can set aside intentionally to discover more about ourselves and more of God. It is a good time for us to examine the things we need to let go of to gain space for the stirrings of new life to enter.

I wonder what stage you are in your spiritual journey with God. Is it a difficult and confusing time, or is it defined by new hope and life? If you are going through a rocky, wobbly or doubting stage in your journey, I encourage you to remember that you are not alone. You have your spiritual church family who is there to journey alongside and support you through the ups and downs. The saying goes that 'It takes a village to raise a child', but I also believe it takes a village, a church community to raise wholesome disciples. You have been that 'village' to me as well. I would not be where I am today if it hadn't been for your support and nurture.

So, as we trek through this stage in our journey of Lent and Easter, may we remember that we have each other, but most of all, we can find solace in Jesus who walks with us through our pains, sorrows and joys and longs to take us with him to the resurrection promise of renewed hope where fears are conquered and silenced.

God bless and Happy Easter!

Hannah

NOTES FROM THE VESTRY

Spring brings with it a mixture of sunshine and showers, and this is reflected also in our church life. Sadly we mourn the loss of our dear friend Daniel Sackey, whose funeral is on **Monday 7 April at 12.30 p.m.**

However sunshine is provided by being able to celebrate the **95th birthday of Beryl Leech**, on Mothering Sunday. This lovely service was led by Hannah and as a church we were able to congratulate Beryl and also to thank her for all the many years of loyal service she has given here at Wimpole Road. These include leading a successful Junior Choir in the 1970's, which resulted in several performances. They were superseded by a succession of widely varied concerts and entertainments, which often went 'on tour' to various churches and venues. These were hugely popular and involved many hours of rehearsals. Beryl invited some loyal talented musical friends to help at these events, and their input was greatly appreciated. Since 2004 Beryl has been our Choir Mistress, occasionally playing the piano for services as well as at Thursday Circle.

Whilst still in this period of Lent, our thoughts turn towards the events of Holy Week and the joy of Easter.

Thursday Circle will hold their **Maundy Thursday Service at 2.30 p.m.** – a warm invitation extended to any visitors.

Hannah will lead a **Maundy Thursday Service of Holy Communion at 6.30 p.m.** and everyone is welcome.

Our **Good Friday service at Wimpole Road will be at 10.00 a.m.** and will be led by Jonathan Sparkes.

Easter Sunday will commence with a short service of **Holy Communion at 9.00 a.m.** led by Hannah. Hannah has kindly offered to provide this extra service and we hope that as many people as possible will make the effort to attend. Tea and coffee will be provided afterwards for those wishing to remain for the later service. We welcome Phil Bingham to lead our **Easter Sunday service at 11.00 a.m.**

We rejoice in congratulating Hannah on completing her probationary period, which will culminate in her ordination on 29 June in Telford, where she will be received into Full Connexion. The ordination service will take place in Shrewsbury later that day.

However there will be a **Testimony Service here at Wimpole Road on Sunday 11 May at 6.30 p.m.** This is a Circuit Service, and Rev. Dr David Chapman (Chair of the District) will be opening the service. Rev Chris Preece (Superintendent) will be preaching and Hannah will share a testimony of her probationer journey.

We look forward to stewarding and sharing together in these various services and a reminder that we would dearly welcome another member to our Steward's team. Please speak to one of us if you are interested in helping.

Alison Ablewhite

LETTER FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

I write this as I have returned from the Circuit Retreat Day which was held at Mersea. It was a good time to meet with others and to have some intentional time and space with God. The day provided an opportunity to step outside the 'normal' things of life for a few hours, pray and reflect.

The period of Lent encourages us to do this and to deliberately set aside some time to be with God, to spend time with Jesus and to allow the Holy Spirit to move within and between us. We see Jesus doing this on a number of occasions in the Bible to spend with God.

I also write this as I am about to go on sabbatical through the months of April, May and June. To take a sabbatical is an expectation of all ministers and it is a time to step outside Circuit life for a period and to consider ministry from a different perspective. During this time I will be considering the areas of leadership and discipleship and music in worship. It will also be a period to spend some time with God in different ways. I really hope it will be a positive time for everyone in the Circuit as well in whatever form this takes.

Each of these examples is an invitation to see things from a different viewpoint, God's perspective. As we reflect on our life of faith and how we bring it together with our daily life, we can always ask how this might appear from God's perspective. As we approach the Easter season in April, and then Pentecost in early June, both are a radical expression of God's grace and transforming love. They encourage us to see things from God's point

of view and to acknowledge the ways in which the world irrevocably changed with the resurrection and the sending of the Holy Spirit.

The hope we celebrate on Easter Day is seeing the transforming love of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. It is Jesus who died on the cross on Good Friday and rose again on Easter Day so we may have the opportunity of new life in Christ. This is a life of wholeness, peace and joy. It is a love which is freely offered and to which we are invited to respond to the salvation we have received from God and serve God by sharing that love with others.

However, we may do it; I hope we can take time over the next few months to find the opportunity to ask how things might seem from Jesus' perspective. How is the Holy Spirit moving to show us what this might look like? We may find it in the natural world, spending time with friends and family, through our studies and reflection or whatever it might be. We do know that however we do it, we will be met with the love and grace of God, who will always be with us, guiding us and shaping us as we allow him to do.

I wish you a peace-filled and joyful time.

Easter blessings to you all,

Chris

REV. CHRIS PREECE SABBATICAL

Chris is on Sabbatical from 1st April to 30th June this year.

Some of her time will be spent away but she will be also spending some time in the Manse.

While on Sabbatical Chris is planning to look at the broad areas of leadership and discipleship and music in worship.

PRAYER FOR THIS MONTH

**Dear God,
we pray for guidance, patience and perseverance in our journey of faith.
Let us not grow weary in doing good deeds.**

Amen.

**“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time,
we will reap a harvest if we do not give up”**

Galatians 6: v9

THURSDAY CIRCLE

We ended February with my giving an updated version of a talk on doing the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in the 1960's. This was well received and supplemented by our good friend Jean Quinn adding her experiences of doing the award in the same period in Luton.

March began with our member Pat Farrow reading her poetry. Sadly I had to miss this session but received very good reports of it.

The following week we held a quiz afternoon, which raised £62 for the East Anglian Children's Hospice (a very worthwhile cause). Thanks to all who contributed in any way. We have now been provided with a microphone to help those who have hearing problems, and it has proved very useful.

Next we had another talk by the very witty broadcaster and after dinner speaker, Brian Carline. This one entitled 'Our Street', was about the area in Salford where he grew up. We all laughed a lot and thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon.

Our last meeting in March was led by our very own minister, Rev. Hannah. After showing us beautiful pictures of stained glass windows in a church in Kent, we had a relaxing afternoon sewing squares of material onto a handkerchief. Thank you Hannah, for a very different afternoon to our normal Thursdays!

Coming up:

- 3 April** A return visit by Peter Mockford to talk on 'Rationing and War Time Recipes'.
- 6 April** We have responsibility for the Sunday Morning Service, and the Worship Leaders will assist us with this.
- 10 April** Another talk by Peter Jones – this time entitled 'Keeping Busy'.
- 17 April** Our Maundy Thursday Service.
- 24 April** Thursday Circle's Birthday Party, with entertainment by 'The Performers'.

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

Beryl Leech would like to thank all her church friends for their cards, gifts and good wishes on her 95th birthday.

POPE FRANCIS REFLECTING FROM HOSPITAL:

"The walls of hospitals have heard more honest prayers than churches...
They have witnessed far more sincere kisses than those in airports...
It is in hospitals that you see a homophobe being saved by a gay doctor.
A privileged doctor saving the life of a beggar...
In intensive care, you see a Jew taking care of a racist...
A police officer and a prisoner in the same room receiving the same care...
A wealthy patient waiting for a liver transplant, ready to receive the organ from a poor donor...

It is in these moments, when the hospital touches the wounds of people, that different worlds intersect according to a divine design. And in this communion of destinies, we realize that alone, we are nothing.

The absolute truth of people, most of the time, only reveals itself in moments of pain or in the real threat of an irreversible loss.
A hospital is a place where human beings remove their masks and show themselves as they truly are, in their purest essence.

This life will pass quickly, so do not waste it fighting with people.
Do not criticize your body too much.
Do not complain excessively.
Do not lose sleep over bills.
Make sure to hug your loved ones.
Do not worry too much about keeping the house spotless.
Material goods must be earned by each person—do not dedicate yourself to accumulating an inheritance.

You are waiting for too much: Christmas, Friday, next year, when you have money, when love arrives, when everything is perfect...
Listen, perfection does not exist.
A human being cannot attain it because we are simply not made to be fulfilled here.

Here, we are given an opportunity to learn.
So, make the most of this trial of life—and do it now.
Respect yourself, respect others. Walk your own path, and let go of the path others have chosen for you.

Respect: do not comment, do not judge, do not interfere.
Love more, forgive more, embrace more, live more intensely!
And leave the rest in the hands of the Creator."

Pope Francis

WHO ARE YOU?

"Who are you?"
Asked Moses of the burning bush.
"I am who I will be"
you said.

And so you were
the pillar of fire,
the pillar of smoke,
the voice on the mountain top,
the voice calling in the night,
the finger writing on the wall.

And you were
the baby in the manger
the man on the cross,
the risen Rabboni,
the stranger on the road,
the flame and wind of Pentecost,
the light and voice of the Damascus Road.

You are still
the warmer of hearts
the strengthener of the weak,
the inspirer of the timid,
and the challenger of the strong,
coming to all as you need to be.

O God, you are, what you will be.

{Taken from the Magnet magazine}

TIME FOR PRAYER

Dear Loving God,
We thank you for your care and concern for us.
During this time of Lent we reflect on Jesus' journey to Jerusalem
and to the Cross on Calvary.
Christ makes for us a touching place as we journey with him to the Resurrection,
in hope of the glorious Easter Day.

Amen

LENT: WHAT IS IT? WHY IS IT?

The highlight of the year for Christians is Easter, the day when our Lord rose from the dead.

Lent is a forty-day season of preparation for Easter. Lent always begins on a Wednesday, called Ash Wednesday.

Why 40 days? Because Jesus fasted and was tempted in the wilderness for 40 days. Lent, then, is our time of fasting, prayer, temptation and repentance.

Lent is not required anywhere in scriptures, but it has been a custom, which Christians have practiced for most of the last two thousand years.

In many languages, the word 'Lent' actually means 'fast'. This is where the custom of giving up something for Lent originated.

However, just to confuse things, Lent is actually 46 days rather than 40 days.

Why?

Because the 40 days of Lent are supposed to be days of fasting, which means days of discipline and self-restraint.

But Sunday, the Lord's Day, should never be a day of fasting, but a day of celebration!

So each Sunday we suspend our Lenten disciplines and celebrate. Lent is 40 'fasting' days spread out over a total of 46 days beginning on Ash Wednesday.

The focus of Lent was always threefold:

1. It was a time to prepare new converts for baptism through intensive classes and instruction.
2. It was a time for long-standing Christians to review their lives and renew their commitment to Jesus Christ.
3. It was a time for backsliders to be restored to the faith.

In every case, it is a time for serious, disciplined self-examination, a time spent in intensive prayer and repentance before the cross of Calvary.

To represent the dark and serious business of Lent, one custom has been to strip churches of all flowers, candles, and colours during Lent.

This custom helps us to turn inward and examine ourselves, even as it reminds us of the dark and colourless Sabbath day when Jesus lay dead in the tomb.

DIARY DATES

Saturday 12 April at Castle 9.00 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.

‘Serving the Present Age?’ - Circuit Prayer Group, led by Chris Firmin.

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

Maundy Thursday Service at 2.30 p.m. – a warm invitation extended to any visitors.

Maundy Thursday Service of Holy Communion at 6.30 p.m. led by Rev. Hannah.

Good Friday service at 10.00 a.m. and will be led by Jonathan Sparkes.

Wednesday 23 April (midday) a short Easter Celebration Service with our friends from Woodlands and other Coffee Morning guests.

WIMPOLE ROAD CHURCH SERVICES FOR APRIL

Sunday mornings at 11.00 a.m.

6 April	Thursday Circle Service
13 April	John Anthony
20 April 9.00 a.m.	Easter Holy Communion Rev. Hannah Chun
20 April	Easter Sunday - Phil Bingham
27 April	Rev. Hannah Chun - Holy Communion

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, especially Daniel’s family and friends..*

Daniel Sackey – his funeral will be at **Wimpole Road Church on Monday 7 April at 12.30 p.m.** followed by a burial at **2.00 p.m.**

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Pauline and Martin have - at last moved. Their new address is:  
1 The Retreat, West Bergholt CO6 3HN.  
No home telephone but mobiles remain the same.



## WORKING TOGETHER



**PRAYER MEETING Tuesday 10.00 - 10.30 a.m.**

Please email: [wimpoleroadmc@gmail.com](mailto:wimpoleroadmc@gmail.com) for access details.

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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/2025/03/2025-04-April-2025-Newsletter-Compressed-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 heart that is fullest of good works has in it the least room for Satan's temptations.  
*John Bunyan (1628–1688)*