



February 2026

Minister: Rev. Hannah Chun
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Dear Friends,

As we step into the month of February, we may find ourselves preparing for a meaningful turning point in the life of the Church. We are entering the season of Lent. It is a period that invites us to begin with laughter and shared tables on Shrove Tuesday, then soon after, leads us into prayer, reflection, and renewal with Ash Wednesday.

Shrove Tuesday is a day often filled with the simple tossing and joy of pancakes, conversation, and community. Pancake Day reminds us that faith is not meant to be lived only in solemn moments, but also in joy and fellowship. Gathering together, sharing food, and delighting in one another's company are holy things too. They echo the relational nature of God who desires to sit at the table with us, share a meal, and enter into conversation. Fellowship itself is part of our worship and a sacred act.

Yet, as quickly as the frying pans are put away, we are invited into stillness. Ash Wednesday follows immediately after, marking the beginning of Lent, a season that calls us to pause, to look honestly at our lives, and to turn our hearts once more toward God. Ash Wednesday services often place ashes upon people's foreheads and they are a humble and powerful sign. It is a reminder of our frailty, our mortality, and above all, our need for grace.

The quickness at which the joy of Shrove Tuesday slides into the fragile spirit of Ash Wednesday mirrors the realities of daily life. One moment all may be going well, and the next, unexpected or painful situations can creep up on us.

In those moments, may we find comfort in knowing that Jesus went through the ups and downs of life as well. Jesus himself experienced the full range of human life, the wilderness and the storms, betrayal and physical pain, and ultimately the joy of resurrection at Easter.

And we too are invited to live each day in the hope that flows from Easter through Jesus who longs to give us life.

As a church family, may we embrace this journey together, laughing together on Shrove Tuesday, and walking faithfully together through the days of Lent. Whether your Lenten practice is quiet or active, traditional or simple, know that every sincere step taken toward God is precious in his eyes.

May this February be a time of both joy and reflection, and may God bless you richly as we move from pancakes to ashes, and onward into the hope of Easter.

God bless,

Hannah

WHAT IS SHROVE TUESDAY?

Christians believe that the 40 days before Easter (called Lent) mark the time that Jesus spent fasting in the desert. Traditionally, this time was spent praying and fasting, which meant not eating a range of foods including meat, eggs, fats and milk. The word 'shrove' comes from a Roman Catholic practice. To 'shrive' meant going to confess your sins and being absolved by a priest. In the past, a 'shriving' bell was rung on Shrove Tuesday to call people to church to confess their sins before lent began.

NEWS FROM THE VESTRY

Firstly, may I begin (on behalf of the Stewards) by saying an immense thank you to everyone at Wimpole Road! I think you will agree that the kitchenette has proved to be an immense success. Although it's still early days (and there have been one or two slight hiccups), overall, thanks to all of you it has enhanced the fellowship shared after the service, and even those who don't partake of refreshments still linger for conversation. Another great benefit is the willingness to lend a hand, either with the washing up or serving tea and coffee. This is much appreciated as Juliet, Debbie and myself have other commitments and although we're happy to set up, cannot always be behind the counter. So, grateful thanks to you all for your patience and support and shared fellowship.

Secondly (thanks to a rarity in the Circuit Plan) we have the pleasure of having Hannah lead our worship for 3 consecutive Sundays! Albeit the second of these will be via a pre-recorded sermon (making good use of our new audio-visual system and monitors!) Sunday 1st February was down as a Local Arrangement but it was felt that (in order to give the over-worked Worship Leaders a break) that the Stewards could put together a service, with Hannah's help. Hannah has compiled the whole service and we will gladly deliver her chosen message. {If successful, this may be repeated as and when needed}.

Finally, as we look ahead to spring and the joy of Easter may we reap the benefit of all the hard work and planning which dominated last year, and continue to make Wimpole Road Church the warm, welcoming and happy place to worship and share faith and fellowship.

Alison Ablewhite

LETTER FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

The days are getting longer which is a sign of Spring being just around the corner. At the same time, dusk and dawn seem to come at the times where I'm finding I'm really noticing the transition from day to night and night to day.

It's fascinating to watch how the day emerges from the night. There are some truly amazing and gorgeous sunrises with deep reds, oranges, pinks and purples. Being able to watch this and see how creation is beginning to wake up is really quite awe-inspiring. I've also noticed the soundtrack of creation as well. The birdsong seems to be that little bit brighter and louder. At the other end of the day, twilight is noticeably getting that little bit later and the period of natural light extending once again.

I'm also noticing the move from night to day when I go out for a walk. I leave the house in the dark and when I return it is light (or sometimes almost light). The birdsong sometimes gets a little swamped by the sound of traffic but to walk in this time of 'in-between' is varied and, on occasions, very special.

God's presence is as much in the in-between as in the day and the night. We may use metaphors of light and darkness to express how we're feeling, the state of the world and many other things. It's easy for it to become only about the day or the night, the light or the dark. God's presence is in all things including the places of transition and the in-between. In the liminal space between one thing and another, God's presence and work can be incredibly profound.

When we're in a changing landscape, whether this be literally in creation, or in the times and seasons of our lives, we can find we question more. Through the Holy Spirit, God works in these spaces to bring new truths and understandings of the character of Jesus and nature of God. Through these sorts of times, we may experience a closer sense of God's presence, greater clarity over a particular issue or situation, the revelation of something new we'd not noticed about God before. It is as we search for God, we seek something more and this can only be good. As God is revealed to us in Jesus, our connection to God through the Holy Spirit becomes stronger.

God will draw us closer to him through Jesus and it can be the times of transition where we are more open to God working in our lives, sometimes without entirely realising it. There are times where we naturally resist times of transition, whatever they might be, because we want a greater sense of certainty within the circumstances we face. At the same time, just as we can stop and wonder at the glory of God's creation through the dawn and dusk, let us also open our hearts once again and embrace all that God has promised through Jesus. As the days become longer, let's continue to look for signs of God's work in and through creation, our lives and the world once again.

God bless,

Chris

MONTHLY PRAYER

As we wait upon you, Our God;
prepare the ground for us
and strengthen our hearts
for the work you entrust us to do.
Amen

{Based on Nehemiah 2:10-20}

THURSDAY CIRCLE

After a break for Christmas and January, our meetings resume again on 5 February. Anyone, old or young, male or female, is welcome to join us on Thursday at 2.30 p.m.

Coming up:

5 February	Gentle Keep Fit – bring a scarf to use as a prop!
12 February	Our Annual General Meeting – hear about what we have been doing during the past year and our plans for the future.
19 February	Bring a C.D.
26 February	Beetle Drive

Joan Gomer - Secretary

SNOW (winter advice on how to keep warm and safe)

Oh! What a surprise to see the snow so crisp and sparkly white – when opening the curtains on Monday. It really was a sight.

It didn't fall too heavy here, as up North, Scotland and Wales.
It feels so cold and bitter though, but with no wind or gales.

Make sure your outside water pipes are covered and protected.
Don't want them cracked or dripping!
Top up anti-freeze in cars – they mustn't be neglected.

Pour salt on any outside steps, to keep the ice at bay.
Don't want you slipping over – that would ruin your day.

Keep your body warm with layers on, and blankets around your knees.
Turn up the thermostat indoors, so that you do not freeze.

Pat Farrow (6 January)

ALL THINGS COLOURFUL, VARIED, AND SPARKLY...

All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small. All things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.

January finds us post-Christmas season in Ordinary Time. Ordinary Time is not boring time, though, and affords us to look at things in more detail. The colour is green, and with the world in the Northern Hemisphere about to wake up this gives us the chance to look at God's Creation, 'Mother' Nature, and the environment.

All too often as human beings we like to see things in black and white, monotone as if we're watching things through an old TV; but, the more you think about God as the Creator, and the Creation as a representation of the Creator, you realise just how bright, colourful, and varied God is. Indeed, how bright, colourful, and varied his Creation is because the God who made it is bright, colourful and varied Himself. You could even call it sparkly!

Have we given ourselves time to sit quietly and reflect on our Heavenly Father, the Creator?

God's Creation is colourful, very colourful - it is varied. He made more than one type of anything, and it is sparkly. We can't even begin to count how many stars he flung into space. God's Creation is flamboyant, in so many ways, and as believers, Jesus followers, adopted children into the royal priesthood, we can only begin to love as He does when we love the flamboyant. We don't have to be flamboyant and bright ourselves, but appreciate and start to love the wideness of God's flamboyance in all its colour and variedness.

We are part of Creation - Creation is part of us - he made everything, and everyone, that God the Creator created is perfect. Let us learn how to love the same way.

Dear Heavenly Father,

We thank you for your flamboyant Creation, In all its colours, variedness, 'sparkliness'.

*We are sorry for the times that we want to see things in black and white,
As if there is only one type of anything, animal, plant, or person.*

You made a Creation so bright, so colourful, so varied, that it really blows our minds when we do start to think about it.

*We pray for our world, for everything and everyone in it that makes it the way it is,
And, in Ordinary Time when we stop to think and reflect on Creation, we pray that our eyes and hearts will be more opened to appreciate and love everything that You have created.*

*We pray this prayer in the power of the name of Jesus, loving Heavenly Father and Creator,
and the eternal presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
Amen.*

Stephen Tuthill

{Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in 'Newsround' are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the expressed views of the Church.}

A NEW YEAR'S THOUGHT

'Thinking of Others' – a very 'Christmas' thing – giving out presents, loving the joy this brings.

It need not end at Christmas; we can give all year through.
Not presents – just our friendship, and kindness - me to you.

We go to church on Sundays and go with good intentions;
listening to the sermon and singing hymns of jubilation.

We socialise at church clubs, Bowls or Thursday Circle.
Joining together, all year round, and go whatever the weather.

Peace to all men whatever nationality or creed.
The world would be a better place with no more wars or greed.

Pat Farrow

I AM

I was regretting the past
And fearing the future.

Suddenly my Lord was speaking,

My name is 'I am'”.

He paused, I waited. He continued,

*"When you live in the past with its mistakes
And regrets, it is not hard. I was not there.*

My name is not 'I was'.

*When you live in the future, with its
Problems and fears, it is hard. I am not there.*

My name is not 'I will be'.

When you live in this moment, it is not hard.

I am here. My name is 'I am'”.

{In the Bible, "I AM" (Greek: *Ego eimi*) signifies God's eternal, self-existent nature, stemming from God's revelation to Moses as "I AM WHO I AM" (Exodus 3:14), linking to the divine name Yahweh (YHWH).

Jesus uses "I AM" emphatically in John's Gospel to claim divinity, with specific "I AM" statements like:

"I AM the Bread of Life," "I AM the Light of the World," and "I AM the Good Shepherd," identifying Himself with God's eternal being and saving power}.

WIMPOLE ROAD CHURCH SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday mornings at 11.00 a.m.

1 February	Local Arrangement
8 February	Rev. Hannah Chun / Holy Communion
15 February	Sally Crafer
22 February	Jonathan Sparkes

A WARM WELCOME AWAITS

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

DIARY DATES

Thursday 12 February 7.00 p.m. Church Council. Open to all church members.

Saturday 14 February at The Ark 9.00 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.

‘Serving the Present Age?’ - Circuit Prayer Group.

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

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

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

If you would like to make a donation towards our work here at Wimpole Road, and within our wider community, you can do so by using the QR code below:



There is also a card reader situated at the back of the church.



WORKING TOGETHER



PRAYER MEETING Tuesday 10.00 - 10.30 a.m.

Please email: wimpoleroadmc@gmail.com for access details.

LINK TO OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

<https://www.facebook.com/WimpoleRoadMethodists>

LINK TO ST. STEPHEN'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

<http://ststephens-colchester.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/2026-02-February-2026-Newsletter-Compressed-V01.00.pdf>

FUTURE NEWSROUNDS

If you have any items that you would like to contribute to a future monthly Newsround - please e-mail:

alison.ablewhite@btinternet.com

KEEP UP TO DATE ON OUR WEBSITE:

www.wimpoleroadchurch.org.uk

“I wish not merely to be called Christian,
but also to be Christian”

Saint Ignatius