



August 2026

Minister: Rev. Hannah Chun
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Dear Friends,

In recent days, many of us have been deeply saddened by the tragic events at Mersea Island, where three people lost their lives. The 15-year-old daughter and her mother died at the scene. Their seven-year-old cousin, who was airlifted to hospital, sadly died today as I write this. Our hearts go out to their families and friends, to those who witnessed these events, to the emergency services who responded with courage and compassion, to the man who bravely swam out to sea three times in an effort to rescue others, and to everyone whose sense of safety has been shaken by this heartbreaking loss.

When tragedy strikes so close to home, it leaves us with questions that have no easy answers. We may wonder: *Where was God? Why do such things happen? How can we speak of hope in the face of such sorrow?*

The lectionary readings are currently taking us through Romans, where Paul writes that the Spirit "*intercedes with sighs too deep for words*" (Romans 8.26). Scripture does not deny the reality of suffering, but it does promise that the Holy Spirit is with us in it. The Spirit groans, weeps and grieves alongside us, just as Jesus wept deeply at the tomb of Lazarus.

When we cannot see an end to the suffering in our world, we may feel helpless and unsure how to pray. Yet our faith assures us that God holds together both the joys and sorrows of human life. Nothing that brings us delight is too small for God's attention, and no grief is too heavy for God's embrace. God's promise is not that we will never face pain, but that we will never face it alone.

Perhaps you are going through a difficult season yourself. Perhaps you are living with uncertainty, struggling to find the words to pray, or wondering where God is in the midst of it all.

If so, remember that God does not ask us to have all the answers. He simply invites us to come to him as we are, bringing our honest thoughts before him. Even when our prayers are no more than tears, silence or sighs, the Holy Spirit is already praying within us and for us.

As we continue to hold the families and all those affected by the Mersea Island tragedy in our prayers, may we also continue to reach out to one another, offering the quiet assurance of Christ's presence through the care and kindness we show. And may the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, and may you know the comfort of the Father, the companionship of the Son, and the closeness of the Holy Spirit in the days ahead.

God bless,

Hannah

PRAYER FOR THIS MONTH

**Lord our God,
help us we pray to rejoice in hope,
be patient in tribulation
and faithful in prayer.**

Amen

{Romans 12:12}

NEWS FROM THE VESTRY

Do you find that time seems to pass in one of two ways? Either a memory that happened fairly recently seems like ages ago, or things that occurred in the distant past seem like yesterday. I sit thinking of those dreadful days in COVID, but for me it really now seems as though it was in another life timeline. In contrast, I can hardly believe it's been nine years since I packed away the green marking pens and retired, the time has flown by.

I mention this because during our General Church Meeting last month, the Stewards team were unanimously reappointed to serve for the next connexional year. It may surprise some to know that the Methodist Church has what it calls 'The Six-year Rule' an understanding that every officer in the church remains in post for no longer than, yes, you've guessed it, six years.

This ensures that everyone gets a chance to serve in their place of worship and it helps avoid getting stuck in a rut where new approaches to various situations can be explored.

Now for some of you, it may seem your Stewards team started their roles only a short while ago, it just seems like forever or, that time has passed so quickly no one realises how long we've actually been in post.

I bring this conundrum to your attention, not because any of us are not willing to continue, but because at some point we will need, for whatever reason, to stop.

I started my second term as Steward well over twenty years ago, Alison longer than that and Margaret, Juliet and Andrew, not too far behind. Even with my limited mathematics skills I can see that's a little longer than the recognised time in office.

Friends, I do urge you to pray over the coming year about a succession plan for the steward team and if you, or someone you sit near or know, could be called to be part of it.

You may very well feel how I did when I was first asked - ill equipped, unworthy, with too little enough time etc. but, and it's a BIG BUT, God will give you everything you need. You will be supported and encouraged and given the grace and courage, and sometimes humility, to carry out your duties.

Should you feel prompted to consider serving as a steward at any time over the next twelve months we will be happy to discuss the role with you or perhaps, invite you to shadow some duties to give further understanding of what might be required.

Thank you for reading to the end of this epistle, thank you for continuing to pray for the current team and thank you for praying for what happens next.

Every blessing

Christine

1 Peter 4 v 10:

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others,
as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*

Psalms 100 v.2:

Serve the LORD with gladness; come before His presence with singing

LETTER FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

Having spent a few days in Matlock meeting up with a friend, we spent one day visiting the Heights of Abraham. Travelling by cable car is not my preferred mode of transport but I took a deep breath and found it wasn't as bad a time as I anticipated. Having seen it from the road, there is the point where the cable cars slow right down in the middle, seeming to stop, to allow people to get on and off at the top and bottom. At this point, if you're brave enough to look, there is a remarkable view all around.

As I look back on the cable car journey many things come to mind. There are times where things seem to go quite quickly, and there's a lot of things to consider. On other occasions it is not the case and the stopping in the middle, not quite sure of the direction to take may be another. Going uphill can be exciting as reaching out to something new, or it can feel like a real struggle where nothing seems to fall into place. Going down rapidly can feel like a nosedive or a relief.

In relation to God, there can be times where our walk with Jesus feels like all these things. Sometimes it is only one, and at others, it is a combination of several of them all at once. As a disciple we are always seeking to become more like Christ. What does becoming look like for each of us? To become more like Christ will take a different path for us all. In Psalm 139 we are reminded that we are 'fearfully and wonderfully made' and that there is nowhere we can go where God isn't already present. God knows us better than we know ourselves, our thoughts, actions and words.

This should be encouraging as we recognise that God made us to be unique and so our journey with Jesus is also unique. At the same time, sat in a cable car suspended half way between the top and bottom of a hill, whether in actuality or metaphorically, can be somewhat disquieting. We are always searching for answers but sometimes we need to stop, rest and trust in God.

August is a month where the routines change, roads are quieter, some places are busier, the usual activities stop or change and it can be a time of disquiet. For some, it feels like running full steam ahead whereas for others it is too quiet and the time drags. It is a time to be patient and to develop our trust in God. The Holy Spirit will guide us in the becoming more like Jesus but we need to allow the space of a different time and routine to prompt us in what 'becoming' looks like in this moment.

As we take the time to do something different, we might take the metaphor of the cable car journey and think about where we are with God and who, in this season, we are becoming. It may be a good time to bring before Jesus the things which are on our hearts, knowing that God knows them already, but that the Holy Spirit is waiting for the moment to continue the transformation in our lives that has already begun.

God bless,

Chris

Following on from the Pet Service

I was reminded of the following hymn

from

The Methodist Sunday School Hymn Book.

Christine Duthie

All things which live below the sky,
Or move within the sea,
Are creatures of the Lord most high,
And brothers unto me.

I love to hear the robin sing,
Perched on the highest bough;
To see the rook with purple wing
Follow the shining plough.

I love to watch the swallow skim
The river in his flight;
To mark, when day is growing dim,
The glow-worm's silvery light;

The sea-gull whiter than the foam,
The fish that dart beneath;
The lowing cattle coming home;
The goats upon the heath.

Beneath His heaven there's room for all;
He gives to all their meat;
He sees the meanest sparrow fall
Unnoticed in the street.

Almighty Father, King of kings,
The lover of the meek,
Make me a friend of helpless things,
Defender of the weak.

{Edward John Brailsford 1841- 1921}

"THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD"

For some reason I was thinking of this phrase the other day and that brought back memories of our Annual Church Outing.

On one occasion we visited Knebworth House, the former home of Sir Edward Lytton who coined the phrase in one of his novels.

Our Annual Church Outing was a day that we spent together in fun and fellowship, and over the course of about twenty years we enjoyed trips to a variety of different places.

These included Canterbury, Norwich and London, Audley End, Wimpole Hall (near Cambridge) Kenwood House, Blickling Hall, Sandringham House and (for something different) day trips to the North Norfolk Railway, the Mid-Norfolk Railway, the Bure Valley Railway and boat trips on the river at Broxbourne and on the Norfolk Broads.

Plus, on two or three occasions theatre trips with the once in a lifetime opportunity to see Debbie performing in a couple of her many plays.

They were good days.

One of the highlights was the poem written by our dear friend Norma Peckston and always themed around the places we were going to on that particular outing.

There were the 'goody bags' which included a banana, a chocolate biscuit and a bottle of water.

And then there was The Quiz to exercise our minds and to pass away the time as we travelled to our destination.

The driver was always helpful and I loved ringing Kings Coaches to book the coach in the knowledge that we were in very good hands.

There were also on one or two trips, the added delight of tea at a Methodist Church on the way home.

We always arrived home safely and very tired as we bid one another farewell at the end of a happy day.

And thinking about pens and letter writing some of you will know that I love writing a 'proper letter' whenever I can, and only the other day I said to Christine.

"Christine I know what I would like for my Christmas or Birthday present this year".

"And what would that be, dear " she replied.

"A new Fountain Pen" I said.

Graham Duthie

THURSDAY CIRCLE

Our first meeting in July was a talk on the work the Catherine Bullen Foundation has achieved since 2004 in rural Namibia, and the following week our Quiz Afternoon raised £48 for this charity. Thank you to all who attended or contributed in any way.

On 16 July we played 'Countdown', making the longest word possible out of nine random letters. This was followed by testing our knowledge of the English language in a game of 'Call My Bluff'. It is amazing what strange words there are in the Shorter Oxford Dictionary!

There is not formal programme for the weeks in August but we will be meeting informally each Thursday at the usual time of 2.30 p.m. for people to come along chat, drink tea or coffee or perhaps play Scrabble or card games.

There is a change to the programme listed for 3 September, and this will now be Rev. Tim Flowers talking about his work as an army padre.

Do come and join us on **Thursday afternoons at 2.30 p.m.** We would love to see you!

Joan Gomer (Secretary)

SUMMERTIME

by Pat Farrow

What bliss we had on Monday, the coolest, windiest day.
After weeks and weeks of heat-waves, you can understand me say.

Wearing the lightest clothes, or hardly none at all!
All praying for refreshing rain but none has yet to fall.

Too hot to sit outside for long -like a tropical paradise?
Too hot to cook, too hot to work, drinking lots of squash with ice.

Global warming is to blame, or, is it really us?
Polluting the air with traffic fumes, we've got no cause to fuss.

We must reduce our carbon footprint, go green in every way,
else year on year the heat will rise and scorch us all away!

A SUMMER PRAYER

Dear God,

This summer, God, may our breathing slow and our hearts open.

God, help us to be present to all that is,

so that we might best see all that might be. Amen

WIMPOLE ROAD CHURCH SERVICES FOR AUGUST

Sunday mornings at 11.00 a.m.

2 August	Joanne Eckersley
9 August	Ron Firmin
16 August	Sally Crafer
23 August	Rev. Chris Preece / Holy Communion
30 August	Local Arrangement

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

Saturday 8 August at The Well 9.00 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.

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

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/2026/07/2026-08-August-2026-Newsletter-Compressed-V01.00.pdf>

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

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