



HADLEIGH UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Great Meeting
WITH MONKS ELEIGH



*Providing Family, Celebrating Diversity and Serving the community
Through and For the **LOVE** of Jesus Christ*

Monthly Newsletter
April 2025

VISIT THE WEBSITE:
www.hadleighurc.org.uk



FIND US ON FACEBOOK:
Hadleigh United Reformed Church
Hadleigh URC Messy Church

April 2025 – Newsletter No. 843

6th April	10.30 am Passion Sunday – Revd John Cook 6:30 pm – Joint Lent Service – St John's, Ipswich
13th April	10:30 am Palm Sunday - Service with Holy Communion – Revd James Dalgleish
17th April	Maundy Thursday 7:00pm Service with Holy Communion – Michael Tillett
18th April	Good Friday 10.00 am – Walk of Witness 2:00 pm – An Hour At The Cross – Michael Tillett
20th April	Easter Day 10.30 am – All Age Service with Holy Communion – Michael Tillett with Blossoming The Cross
27th April	10.30am – Café Church Eco Church – Jan Dicks and Claire Coster
4th May	10:30 am – George Barnes and Michael Tillett

ARTICLES TO THE EDITOR

Please could you let Claire Coster have all items for
the May 2025 Newsletter before

Tuesday 22nd April PLEASE

Email to secretary@hadleighurc.org.uk



Letter from our Minister

Psalms for All Seasons

Like many folk of faith, I love a Psalm. The Psalms seem to address such a wide variety of human experience. They range from exuberant joy and praise, to the depths of despair and suffering. We find praise, anger and seemingly unanswered questions. Sometimes we may be shocked by what we read, such as in the oft omitted concluding verses of Psalm 137 (take a look) when the writer's anger spills out in thoughts of revenge and vindication.

The shortest, Psalm 117, with just two verses, is a marvel of a concise expression of the heart. The longest, Psalm 119, with one hundred and seventy-six verses, works meticulously through the themes of the Law in exploring Gods ways. It is broken into 22 sections, each of similar length and each beginning with a letter of the Hebrew Alphabet, in order. Imagine having to learn that one off by heart!

I wonder just how well we know the psalms. We certainly have favourites that we could possibly recite from memory (or at least the metrical hymn version). But there are some which are more demanding, even troubling. Often these stem from the most troubled and trying of times and include questioning, despair and crying out to God.

Here, in the heart of Lent, a time of waiting, preparation and longing, as we look ahead to the events of Holy Week and Easter, we have time to stop and reflect. Looking at the world around, the growing troubles and sense of hopelessness we can certainly join in the words of the psalmists, whether

from our own experience or through empathy with others, for example:

“Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice!” (Psalm 130:1)

“My soul is in deep anguish. How long, Lord, how long?” (Psalm 6:3)

“Why, Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” (Psalm 10:1)

Why not take an opportunity to dig deeper into the psalms and explore some of the less “cheerful” ones, in the light of the world today and then pray, pray with all your heart for the world, the nation, the community and the church. Offer up the cries of despair, ask the difficult questions, seek God’s in it all. Then, as with so many of these Psalms, conclude with praise. Praise acknowledges the wonder and faithfulness of God and, even though from our perspective we may not understand, we can trust that God is continuing to work his purposes out and therefore we have hope and do not need to fear.

Revd Adam Earle

Newsletter Compiler Needed - PLEASE

Are you good at using Microsoft Word?

Can you commit to spending about three hours a month compiling the newsletter?

Training and support given.

Please speak to Claire or Paul if you think you can help.

What can we look forward too?

Dear Friends,

If you look at the two great celebrations of the Churches' year, both involve a lengthy period of preparation. As we approach Christmas, we have the dark days of Advent during which we hear of the expectation of a coming Messiah as revealed in the Old Testament though the Patriarchs and the Prophets and in the New Testament through the witness of John the Baptist and Mary as she carries the Christ-child. As we journey towards Easter, we have Lent which can be a drab season only lightened by an emerging Spring. Both though are times of preparation and penitence, so very necessary if we are to celebrate properly. The good news is we are Easter people. In a few short weeks we will proclaim "Christ is Risen – He is Risen indeed! Alleluia" with Christians all over the world.

We have much to look forward to in our worship this Easter.....

On Palm Sunday 13th April we welcome our friend Revd Jim Dalgleish who comes to lead our worship and celebrate Holy Communion. I am sure we will hear again the story of the procession to Jerusalem and hear the cries of "Hosanna to the Son of David" that welcomed him and so scared the powers of Jesus' day.

On Maundy Thursday 17th April at 7.00pm we have an opportunity to join with Jesus and the disciples in a memorial of that last supper they shared, where feet were washed by the Son of God and a Passover meal was given new significance in the light of Jesus own sacrifice.

Our service will have a Celtic flavour with elements of an Iona type service. We will reflect on the role of the disciples and wash some volunteers' feet (hopefully!) and pause for a moment to reflect on the struggles of those last few hours of Jesus life, for him, and the disciples.

On Good Friday 18th April at 2.00pm, following the walk of witness in the morning, we will gather around the foot of cross and through prayer, scripture and song, stay with Jesus as he suffers and dies, for us and all the world.

At 10.30am on Easter Day, a service, looking through the eyes of the Witnesses in the Gospels and Epistles, to celebrate the Resurrection, and through words, praises and Communion to become once again true Easter people, who know and are empowered to share the wonder of Christ's Resurrection and proclaim His Lordship of our lives.

There is much to look forward too! Do see what you might be able to join us for this year. Last year many of you were able to join in each of these services. Make Holy Week special again. If transport is an issue let us know and we will see how we can help.

If you would like to volunteer to have your feet washed on Maundy Thursday sign up on the list in Church!

As a church making a new beginning as a part of the Ipswich and East Pastorate let's take advantage of the new beginning that Easter offers us to re-dedicate ourselves to share the glorious truth that is at the heart of our faith.

JESUS CHRIST IS RISEN – HE IS RISEN INDEED, ALLELUIA!

Michael Tillett

An invitation to HEAT's Spring speaker meetings

April 10th 7.30pm

An evening with Tony Juniper CBE, Chair of Natural England, St Mary's Church (tbc)

All events are free. Donations to cover expenses appreciated

Parable Group Report from Wendy Atkins

This month we took on the rather troubling parable of the Widow and the Judge. This parable as written is a very short story. Surely Jesus must have delivered it with much more detail and explanation and much repartee from the crowd who first heard it. To flesh it out Luke has made his own editorial additions both before and after the spoken text.

What do we know about widows and judges in our scriptures? Repeatedly in the Hebrew Scriptures and in The New Testament we are instructed to care for widows, alongside orphans and aliens. Widows are without a male protector and are therefore particularly vulnerable. They are also assumed to be poor. What about judges who are surely assumed to be just but are not always found to be so. A lawful court should have had three judges. Is this an informal appeal to a particular notorious judge?

We are not told what the woman's grievance was, nor why the judge initially refused to help her, nor why he eventually capitulated. So there is much to speculate upon. The widow is often labelled persistent, but we could also describe her as fearless and feisty, a warrior for justice. The judge is often called unjust, but he accedes that he has no regard for God or mankind, so it seems he has no reputation to lose. So what are we to make of it all?

I imagine Jesus' crowd would have backed the widow. "Go for it girl, give it some welly!" Judges were not very popular and often perceived as unjust, so his eventual climb down might have met with jeers and cat calls. The Greek original suggests the judge feared physical attack, as in a boxing match. Was this a metaphorical fear or an actual fear?

Luke's editorial suggests this is a pattern for prayer. How do we feel about a god who only responds to persistent and repetitive prayer? If Jesus requires us to be warriors for justice in a general and not individual sense as in the case of the widow, this

is not made very clear. Surely our work, witness and prayer must be aimed at dismantling the humanly created structures which impede the flow of God's justice. We pray urgently for quick solutions to war in Gaza and Ukraine as Luke seems to offer, yet we thankfully recall events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dismantling of Apartheid which almost took us by surprise. So are we to be persistent in prayer as Luke urges and will the Second Coming of Jesus find faith on earth? Are we indeed Warriors for Justice?

Next Bring a Parable is on April 3rd, led by David, considering The Parable of the Lost Sheep (Matthew 18 vv 10-14) and The Dry Bones (Ezekiel 37 vv1-14).

SAMARA'S AID SUMMER AFTERNOON TEA

SATURDAY 19th JULY 2: 30 – 5:00 pm

AT MAUREEN'S NATURE GARDEN, MONKS ELEIGH

Come along for afternoon tea in Maureen's garden, followed by a guided tour of the nature meadow.

Pop the date into your diaries ready for a time of fellowship and relaxation, immersing yourselves in God's amazing world of nature.

Many thanks for your support with the soup lunch fundraiser on Sunday 23rd February, an amazing £225 has been sent to Samaras Aid.

Maureen and Hilary



The safety of our team is our greatest priority now. This is a time that I really urge you to pray for us, for our team, for protection and for genuine peace. You may hear little news about Syria now, but that is not an indicator of the situation on the ground. The needs surrounding Syria are greater than I can say.

HUNGRY CHILDREN - HARROWING HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

The humanitarian situation is worse now than any of us remember it. Significant numbers of people across the country have not received salaries since November, many of whom were already living hand to mouth. The teams running our two current outreach centres are deeply shocked seeing the level of poverty that has escalated in such a short space of time. The children coming to our centres now are coming primarily to eat. This is in spite of the fact that many are still too afraid to come at all. Those who come barely care about education now. How can they when they are hungry and frightened?

We now have 100-150 children coming to this rural outreach centre each day from one village. In the previous times no one from this village came to this outreach centre as they felt they didn't need our support. Now, they feel isolated and afraid. A teacher from that area is working with us now, serving from his heart because he sees the suffering of his people and wants to support them. They see our centre as their only hope. When he saw the cooked meals that our team make for the children, he was so happy and said how amazing this is, as there was meat in the substantial meal too.

We are praying that the situation won't get any worse than it has been. That is one of the deep fears people have. There are a number of scenarios that seem very plausible in Syria, each of which most people dread. There is a deep feeling of uneasiness in each of the areas we are working in. But we are still working, are still focused on opening our new outreach centres, and providing essential services to the best of our abilities, to the poor and vulnerable.

OTHER CHANGES There are some positive changes. Some countries have made the decision to start lifting some sanctions, but it remains to be seen who will, when, and what difference it will make. Progress appears painfully slow, and the situation on the ground is increasingly grave for so many.

Fuel is now available to buy, unrestricted, but is now far more expensive than it was before, and even then it was barely affordable for many. There is far less electricity in many places. Where it used to come a couple of times a day for 30-60 minutes, some of our staff in certain areas, even in cities, have had none for more than a week. I don't remember this happening in any of the areas we were working in before, except when we worked in post-siege areas.

GIVING If you would like to help us support people in need in Syria, please direct donations to our ORPHANS AND WIDOWS fund. Please email Sue if you make a bank transfer to let her know at accounts@samarasaidappeal.org
Love Samara and the team

GARDEN AND INDOOR 'CAR BOOT' SALE

SATURDAY 7TH JUNE 2:00 – 4:00 pm
AT HADLEIGH UNITED REFORMED CHURCH GARDEN &
ANSELL CENTRE

We are raising funds for our Christmas 2025 Blythswood Care Shoebox Appeal.

£5 a table. Book from 1st May, with Hilary 822208

Hopefully the weather will be kind for us to make it a successful fundraising event.

We shall be having refreshments available during the event, so any help with making, baking and providing of cakes, scones, cookies, biscuits etc., would be very welcome, as would any help on the day.

Thank you. Hilary.

Report from the March Elders' Meeting

It was good to be able to meet in person this month, although it clashed with the FA Cup match between Ipswich and Nottingham Forest so a couple of elders were not as focused on the agenda as they could have been!

We discussed the agenda for the Church Meeting as well as hearing from the Elders who have been preparing the advert and job description for the Premises Coordinator. We are very grateful to Jan and Tom who are taking on the roles until a new person is appointed.

We also discussed the Ipswich & East Pastorate Lent services and the Churches Together in Hadleigh Lent Bible Study. We have opportunities this Lent to reflect and prepare for Easter.
Claire



Commitment
for **Life**

Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love

Christian Aid Week 2025, 11th – 17th May

This year, we have a special service on 11th May when Richard Lewney from Bar Hill Church LEP will be our speaker. The service will be followed by a soup lunch in the Ansell Centre. All money raised will be given to Christian Aid. This is instead of the lunch which I normally organise on the Friday before Christian Aid Week. The lunch will be open to everyone, not just those who have attended our service. We will be inviting friends from St Mary's and other churches in Hadleigh as well as people from outside the church. Please make a note of the date and mention it to your friends. If you can make some soup or a cake or help in the kitchen please speak to me.

I am considering challenging myself to spend only £10 on food for a week (£20 if Brian joins me!) and then donate the money saved to Christian Aid. A few years ago there was a challenge to eat for £1 a day but I think inflation means that £10 a week would be the equivalent! I hope to have a go in the next few weeks so will let you know how I get on in the next newsletter. Perhaps some of you would like to join me in this challenge. Jan

An Excerpt from Commitment for Life Newsletter, Spring 2025

It was just a few short years after Christ had been crucified, and the disciples of Jesus were being crucified for their faith. The Roman empire valued victory above all. It tolerated no opposition. Its rulers meted out unrestrained violence on any dissent, whether perceived or

real. No one dare challenge the much-vaunted *Pax Romana* – except those pesky Christians

For the disciples, it must have felt like the end of the world. Yet, John writing from a desolate island on the edge of the empire, shares a profound vision. He saw the Big Picture: ‘the arc of the moral universe bends towards justice’ (to quote Martin Luther King). And so, in John’s profound vision, the Risen Jesus overthrows the injustices of the Domination System. This worldly system knows only how to conquer, pillage and destroy. But empire never lasts declares John with great confidence despite having not much evidence to support his claim. He writes in Revelation 18: 1 – 2a *‘After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendour. With a mighty voice he shouted, “Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a dwelling for demons....”’*

As we enter 2005, we might reflect on how Babylon seems once again to have gone quite mad in our times. We have a wrathful, Caligula-caricature in the White House. We have had a genocide live streamed on our devices. Our government penalises the sick and elderly so that billionaires can make more money. The weak and the vulnerable are used as pawns to be killed in the great game of land and resource acquisition. The planet has broken through 1.5 degrees of warming and civilisation is on the verge of collapse, threatening the lives of billions of souls. But you, dear *Commitment for Life* supporter, are our modern day John of Patmos. You can see the Big Picture. You can see Jesus is risen. Christ has overcome. Babylon in its modern form cannot survive. It will fall. In even the tiniest act of love or justice, empire collapses. That is our confident hope. God’s kingdom is coming, hallelujah! Thank you for all you do to thwart unfairness and inequality not only in your daily Christian life, but also in your prayers and actions on behalf of the poorest in the world.

Kevin Snyman (Commitment for Life)

Eco-Church

You may remember that at the end of last year we explained that the Eco-church surveys are split into five categories. We have to answer questions in each category in order to apply for our silver award. The categories are Worship and Teaching, Buildings and Energy, Land and Nature, Community and Global Engagement and Lifestyle.

Below are some examples of the questions in the Land and Nature Section. It was easy to achieve the bronze award in this section, but going for silver is a lot more challenging.

- Our church encourages nature to flourish on our land by providing bird boxes, bat boxes, bug hotels etc etc
- Our church is intentional about leaving 'untidy' areas during the autumn/winter that support over-wintering wildlife:
- Our church recognises that healthy soils are critical for the flourishing of biodiversity
- Our church grows food on our site (including in planters, boxes etc.)
- Our church manages mowing in a way that encourages the growth of wild flowers.
- In the last year, our church has been actively engaged in planting and/or managing trees and/or hedgerows for wildlife on our land or in the local community.

If anyone would like to get involved, please speak to Claire or Jan

A Rocha tip for April

Spending time appreciating God's creation can be an act of worship. Nature can be experienced when we notice an insect, hear a bird sing, feel the earth beneath our hands or even when we watch a documentary. There is strong evidence that nature is also good for our mental health. Try to immerse yourself in nature every day, even for just a few minutes and give thanks to God for His good creation.



May Show 2025

As many of you already know, as a Church, we have a marquee at the Hadleigh Show. This year it is on 17th May 2025. On the stall we sell sweets and provide cakes, coffee and tea for donations. This year we would also like to do a little jumble sale of items to sell for donations.

Can **YOU** help us?

We need people to bake cakes, scones or cookies or anything else you would like to make. We will put a sign up sheet at the back of church so we know the rough idea of how many donations we will receive.

We also need any brick-a-brac, books, toys or unused items you don't want any more.

We will also put a sign up sheet at the back of church if you could help with setting up the tent, help on the day, or packing up at the end of the day on Saturday.

Any help you could give would be very much appreciated!

Tom and Chloe

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

TREAT ... because everyone deserves one

At the end of May, the Ansell Community Centre will be transformed into a colourful, creative and wellbeing hub for three days. For the second year running TREAT will be offering a unique space for adults with learning disabilities or who are neurodiverse or both, and their families and support workers.

On offer will be arts, crafts, music, dance, drama, mindfulness, nature and sports activities. A pool party is organised on the Sunday, a coffee bar will run throughout and lunch and dinner will be provided.

The premise of TREAT is that:
everyone deserves to be "treated",
everyone deserves to be valued
and everyone deserves to be celebrated.

TREAT levels the playing field so that support workers and family members attending are encouraged to take part in activities alongside individuals they are supporting and be treated to a unique experience too.

TREAT
Ansell Community Centre
Friday 30th May – Sunday 1st June

If you are interested in reserving a place, would like to make a donation or would just like to find out more:

email: butterflyrachel2373@gmail.com or tel 07718 935939

email: simone.beadle@btinternet.com or tel 07775 786850

TREAT - How can I help?

Volunteer time to set up/pack away/make refreshments

Donate fruit, biscuits, cake, art materials

Pray that everyone involved feels relaxed, encouraged and included.

Rachel Bennett

Hadleigh United Reformed Church

(owners of The Ansell Centre and church buildings)

is looking to appoint a

PREMISES CO-ORDINATOR

Hours: Eight per week with up to six hours on site. Statutory paid holidays

Salary: National Living Wage plus £2 per hour (from April 2025 £14.21ph)

This is a people and community facing role and the successful applicant will need to be friendly, computer literate and willing to be flexible. Experience of customer service and basic invoicing would be helpful.

An enhanced DBS check will be required and Safeguarding training will be given in line with the URC policy.

For the full job description, application form and further details, please email secretary@hadleighurc.org.uk.

Applications close on 22nd April.

‘Living out the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ’

“We proclaim the resurrection of Christ when his light illuminates the dark moments of our existence.”

Pope Francis

Hadleigh and Monks Eleigh URC Monthly Finance Report

February 2025

Registered Charity No 1151084

Total income in February was £3,908 and expenditure £13,379, giving a deficit of £9,471. Income from offerings was £1,555, income from lettings £2,353. The fellowship fund stands at £212.

The two main reasons for the high expenditure in February were our insurance and our chosen charity payments. We paid a total of £3,000 to our chosen charities for 2024 and £5,358 for our annual insurance for the church and Ansell Centre. Our monthly Ministry and Mission payment to The URC in 2025 is £2,606 (about £50 per month less than last year), other payments in February were the usual gas and electricity (£990), wages, pulpit supply and general expenses.

Please remember to sign a gift aid form if you are able to and haven't already. This allows us to reclaim 25% from HMRC on any gift you make to the church or have made over the last four years. There should be forms at the back of the church or contact me directly and I will get a form to you.

Tom Gordon, Treasurer

March 2025

“Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.”

Martin Luther

HADLEIGH – CARE IN THE COMMUNITY

ORGANISATION	TEL	ISSUE
AA National Line	01473 212224 0800 917 7650	Alcoholics Anonymous
Disability Advice Bureau	01473 217313	Local Support and Claims
Leading Lives	07860798362	Support for Learning disability
Wednesday Lunch Club	07719 496112	Lunches
First Lunch Club	01473 808835	Lunches
Samaritans National Line	01473 287727 116 123	Life support concerns
Sue Ryder	01473 295200	Nursing Home
Hadleigh DAA	07976 603805	Local dementia support
Alzheimer's Society	0333 150 3456	National Helpline
Benefit Enquiry Line	0800 882 200	Direct Gov UK
Age UK	0800 678 1602	Support, advice
Frank National Line	0300 123 6600	Advice about drugs
Parentline	0808 800 2222	Parenting Issues
Domestic Violence	0808 2000 247	Women's Aid
Police Suffolk	101	Non -Emergency Number
Sensing Change	01473 260030	Support for independent living
Hadleigh Health Centre	01473 822961	Health
NHS 111	111	Non-emergency issues
Child Helpline	0800 1111	Support for children
NSPCC	0808 8005000	Child neglect
Waterfield House	01473 944654	Care Home
Hadleigh Nursing Home	01473 858982	Care Home
Magdalen House	01473 829411	Care Home
Canterbury House	0800 032 1304	Care Home
Babergh District Council	0300 1234000	Local issues
Disability Living All'nce	0800 121 4600	Direct Gov UK benefits
Child Death Helpline	0800 282 986	Support
Gam Care	0808 802 0133	Gambling Issues
National Debt Helpline	0808 808 4000	Debt Issues
Missing People	116 000	Missing relative
Cruse Bereavement	0808 808 1677	Bereaved People helpline
Elder Abuse Helpline	0800 069 9784	Abuse of older people
MIND	0300 123 3393	Mental Well-being
Citizens Advice Bureau	01473 219777	Advice – legal, debt, housing, etc
National Grid	0800 111 999	Report gas leak
UK Power Networks	0800 316 3105 105	Loss of electrical power

Where We Meet

Great Meeting
United Reformed Church
Market Place, Hadleigh,
Suffolk, IP7 5DL



Monks Eleigh Chapel
and HOME Retreat
The Street, Monks Eleigh,
Suffolk, IP7 7JE



Contacts

Ministers

Revd David Rees and Revd Adam Earle
David 01473 402721 revdrees@gmail.com

Serving Elders

Claire Coster (Church Secretary) 01473 822850
Nigel Crisp
Chloe Elmer
Jan Dicks 01473 823413
Paul Simon 01473 829171
Ann Swallow 01473 806711

Treasurer

Tom Gordon
10 Clopton Gardens,
Hadleigh, IP7 5JG
treasurer@hadleighurc.org.uk
07825 641154

Room Bookings - Hadleigh

01473 823413
admin@hadleighurc.org.uk

Room Bookings - Monks Eleigh

Ronnie Howson 01473 310169

Newsletter Editor – Paul Simon

danton89@hotmail.com

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