

Chelmsford Circuit

Issue 25

Newsletter Date: March and April 2023



The Problem with Deprivation

Did you have pancakes on Shrove Tuesday? If you like that tradition, I wonder what you think about the one that says Lent should be a period of fasting, penitence and depriving ourselves?

Generally speaking our whole economy seems to revolve around a model that says we should all try and have as much as want of the good things in life. No much deprivation involved in our supermarket model approach to consumption! But of course life as

presented though TV ads is not the reality. Only those with sufficient disposable income can play the Supermarket Dash game in life. Others need not apply.

In light of these dominating trends then it's been interesting to see the rise of some new approaches to refrain and abstinence - like Dry January for example - no alcohol following the month when, presumably, in December there was too much.

To Shrive (as in Shrove Tuesday), meant coming before the priest, who would hear your confession, assign tasks of penance, and on God's behalf pronounce absolution from sins. Perhaps unsurprisingly this element of the Lenten traditions has been overtaken with 'Pancake Day' fun - including a half price sale on non-stick frying pans I noticed the other day!

Enforced deprivation in the light of the norm being plenty is one thing, but those with an abundance (and I count myself amongst their privileged number) do well to remember those who have no choice in such things; those who face ongoing and serious needs: The need for peace in war torn Ukraine and Yemen; the needs for healing in devastated Turkey and Syria; the need for water and food in poverty stricken homes across the world Let's take Lent into our hearts this year and hear what God might be saying to us through this Christ-inspired tradition.

Blessings and peace, Mark

CREATING SAFER SPACE FOUNDATION TRAINING

Your Safeguarding Officer will have already been in contact with you if you need to complete this course.

In addition everyone is very welcome to complete the training.

These categories might help, but everyone is welcome!

- Leaders of other (non Methodist organisations), working with children or vulnerable
 2 adults, who use church premises
- Remaining Choir/music group/drama leaders
- Any other group leaders within the church, who may have adults who are vulnerable within their group.
- Property stewards and other key holders
- Church/circuit meeting secretaries
- Church/circuit/district administrators

Saturday 11th March at Moulsham Lodge Methodist Church 9.30am - 12.30pm.

AND

Saturday 15th April at Trinity Methodist Church 9.30am - 12.30pm in The Link.

Val and Esther are happy to provide lifts if there are transport needs. Contact them directly to arrange.

If you would like to go but are struggling to sign up online please let them know.

Esther Burton Chelmsford Circuit Safeguarding Officer 07511 563919

These links are on the Circuit Website under Training.

https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk/training/foundation-creating-safer-space-safeguarding.php







Note to self – I have, up until now, relied on kind people reminding me to write some news for the circuit family. When they thought I had the hang of it all, they didn't like to put any extra stress on me and so I blissfully went about my days of study, home, and church

life without realising I had missed the Christmas publications, until I saw them in print. I felt like I let you down, as though you didn't think I was interested in keeping in touch. Perhaps this is or isn't the case, I guess you will all have varying opinions. However, it was a lesson for me. The lesson is to take responsibility not just for the big decisions we feel we must make, but the small acts of kindness and communications that can bring about a smile or just a sense that someone cares enough to remember. I often hear people saying, "I didn't know that event was happening, no-one told me," etc. but perhaps the responsibility lies with us to show an interest and find out ourselves.

I do care - I care that you all had a wonderful Christmas, I am sorry that I missed some of the events due to having flu. You have all made me so welcome in Chelmsford that I really wanted to share celebrations with you and also be there for the personal conversations of pain and loss which are raw at Christmas time. So, here I am, writing to wish you every blessing for the new year. When you read this, spring will not be far away with its newness and buds of hope.

My thoughts for us all are that God is at work already – God is in the small things and the big. Let us be curious, excited, keen to learn, listening and watching for where God is calling us to be and let us all take time to speak of our love and care for one another.

God bless,

Heather xx

(Student Minister)

The Church in Great Notley's 25th Anniversary in 2023

In 1994, a small prayer group in Great Notley had a vision for an Ecumenical church. This group gained the support of Churches Together in Braintree and then the senior church leaders of Churches Together in Essex and East London (CTEEL), who became the sponsoring body.

The first meeting of the Project Steering Group was held in 1998 and the first service was on 13th January, 1998 in a portacabin in the village, led by a lay preacher. Then in September, 2002 we had our first service in the Community Hall.

The developers, Countryside Properties, had set land aside and the members set about raising the funds necessary to build a church. The church was officially opened on 22nd August, 2010, when the first service was held and the church has continued to grow and flourish.

The Church in Great Notley is distinctive in that although it is a partnership of four denominations, Church of England, Baptist, Methodist, United Reformed, it is one congregation, sharing in worship that follows the traditions of the denominational partners.

There are celebrations at the church throughout this year, including a Celebration Service which was held in January, a family fun weekend in June and another event planned in September.

Ann Waters









God has heard all the excuses! Full training and support is available.

Ask your minister or any local preacher or click on link below https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/1982/calledtopreach130815.pdf

ECO Church

Lent will be well underway by the time you read this. I'm writing on Ash Wednesday, a day when we are reminded of our mortality. 'From dust you came and to dust you shall return.' Does that just apply to us as individuals? Could it also be a reminder that our planet, our God-given home faces the same potential mortality?

Hope

During Lent, many of the lectionary readings set for each Sunday, are, unsurprisingly stories about rebirth and renewal. And of course, there is the blockbuster resurrection story on Easter Day. No spoiler alerts from me, you'll have to look the stories up or come and join us for worship.

As a Circuit, we have committed to caring for God's creation and doing all we can to treat the planet and it's resources



gently. Three of our churches now have bronze ECO church awards and many more have registered on that journey. We are also working towards becoming an ECO Circuit. Why should this be part of our Christian discipleship? Because the Christian faith is based on resurrection and new life. Engaging with climate care, is living out the example that Jesus gave us of loving our neighbour. We pray that our planet will be reborn, and that no one else will suffer because of the effects of climate change.

Small change

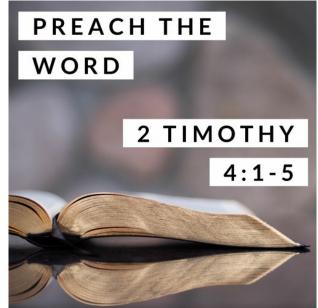
Many of you have already made changes to live greener lifestyles and recycling has now become part of everyone's daily life. What will your next step be? What small change can you make? Small changes add up to make a big difference. If you need ideas look out on the Circuit website and Facebook page – there will be a new challenge each week during Lent.

Dust

A blessing for Ash Wednesday written by Jan Richardson usually pops up on my Facebook memories each year. One simple line in the blessing always stops me in my tracks and so I'm sharing it with you. If you want to read the rest of the blessing you can do that here . I hope it is a blessing and encouragement to you and all you do to care for our planet.

'Did you not know what the Holy One can do with dust?'

Sheridan Pengelly



THOUGHTS FROM JOHN PROTHERO CHRIST CHURCH COGGESHALL

4 In the presence of God & of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living & the dead & in view of His appearing & His kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the word; be prepared in season & out of season; correct, rebuke & encourage—with great patience & careful instruction. 3 For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching

ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth & turn aside to myths. 5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

2 Timothy 4:1-5.

Dear Friends

How wonderful to think **you** might have had a hand in heaven's reason to rejoice because of something you said or did which, though seemingly small & insignificant @ the time, helped shed a light on the truth of who Jesus really is.

Rev. Mordecai Ham, a travelling evangelist, must have thanked God for the day when @ one of his Revival Meetings a 16 year old boy by the name of Billy Graham gave his heart to the Lord. Especially given the fact that Billy Graham went on to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to some 215 million people who attended one of his more than 400 Crusades, simulcasts & evangelistic rallies in more than 185 countries & territories.

Preachers have little credibility, if they fail to practise what they preach. Wouldn't you agree! So, here's a story, to that effect, about a recent jaunt into London, by train & by taxi, to collect some essential medication for Anne-Marie from St. Thomas' Hospital. Nb. Pioneering medication, too new to be available from our local pharmacy & too expensive to risk being sent to our home address, even by Courier. Before I set off on my journey, I quite literally prayed, 'Lord give me one more person for Jesus or, @ the very least, an opportunity to introduce Him to them.' And God, being God, answered my prayer in full? But not in the way I'd imagined!

'I was queuing @ the back of a long line of people, all waiting to have their orders processed @ the hospital Pharmacy, when I became aware of a lady @ the front of the queue, struggling to understand why, according to the people the other side of the glass petition, her prescription wasn't valid?

She spoke very little English & was clearly very upset & confused about the whole situation. A situation made worse by the decidedly unsympathetic response of the two assistants who, united in their resolve not to be more helpful, stood behind the counter. Long story short, the lady in question very soon realised that if she was going to make any real progress on this issue she would need to go back to the Cardiology Department on the floor immediately above, with the correct prescription in hand upon her return.

What, come the finish, did God's opening to share Jesus with this lady amount to? Getting alongside her with a gospel tract in my hand, with a view to introducing her to the four spiritual laws? Asking her if she'd ever considered what the purpose of life was? Her life in particular! Giving her a brief synopsis of how I first became a Christian & what Jesus has done for me since that time? She didn't have the language for any of that & if she had, it wasn't what she needed to hear @ that particular moment. What she needed was someone who cared enough to sit with her a while, let her know she wasn't alone & help her, albeit in a very limited way, articulate the unfairness of the bureaucratic machine she'd just, a moment or two ago, encountered. I wanted to get her a bottle of water, as a parting gesture but there wasn't time. As we exchanged goodbyes, I asked her where she was from. 'Ukraine,' she replied. And then she uttered something in her native tongue which sounded distinctly like, 'God bless you!'

Nb. As Christ's representatives here on earth, we must never underestimate the part His wordless presence plays in helping to bring saving faith alive in the heart of those, 'not yet,' His own.

As Teresa of Avila rightly observes - 'Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are His body. Christ has no body on earth but yours.'

With love from us all here @ Christ Church, John.

Friends of Essex Churches Trust Ride & Stride



What is Friends of Essex Churches Trust Ride & Stride?

Ride & Stride is a national sponsored walk/cycle ride event started by Suffolk Historic Churches Trust. It takes place every second Saturday each September to raise funds for the Trust and for participating churches. The Friends of Essex Churches Trust exists to provide grants for maintenance and improvement of historic places of worship in Essex.

More information can be found on the Friends website, www.friendsofessexchurchestrust.org.uk

I served as local organiser and rode for Suffolk Historic Churches Trust when I was a member of Trinity Methodist Church in Bury St Edmunds for over 10 years. After moving to Coggeshall in 2021, I proposed to our Christ Church membership that we should participate in 2022. Christ Church has taken part in the Ride & Stride in the past, and our church members were willing to take part again. I obtained sponsorship from work colleagues, church members, friends and relations.

The event took place on 10th September 2022. My route, which I planned beforehand, started in Coggeshall and stopping off at churches in Feering and Kelvedon, Rivenhall and Witham. I covered a wide variety of places of worship on my ride, from the little Roman Catholic church of St Mary the Immaculate in Kelvedon to Rickstones, an independent evangelical church in Witham, 14 in all. Of these, 2 were open to receive walkers and riders, the parish churches of St Mary the Virgin in Kelvedon and St Nicholas' in Witham. In the end, I raised over £200:00, half of which went to Christ Church and half to the work of the Trust.

Prior to our Circuit Meeting at the Church at Great Notley on Wednesday 8th February, I received an email from the Ride & Stride organiser at FECT with a view to drawing Chelmsford Methodist Circuit into this event. FECT is looking to double the number of open churches and quadruple the number of participants in 2023. This would be a good fundraiser in these times of financial challenges, besides providing an opportunity to publicise the work and mission of our local churches and Circuit.

Adrian Romano

https://ridestride.org/

EASTER HOLIDAY CLUB



Games Craft Food

MONDAY 03 APRIL

WEDNESDAY 05 APRIL 10:30AM - 12.30PM

WITHAM METHODIST CHURCH

Guithavon Street CM8 1BJ



BIBLE STORIES



SONGS



FUN ACTIVITIES

To register or for more info contact: Revd 'Femi 07952 862497 /

kenfem.njie@gmail.com



BIBLE COURSE SUCCESS

We have had over 20 people on the Bible Course each week with one session on Tuesdays running on Zoom and the second one face to face on Wednesdays at Trinity

Best Wishes

Mike Fogg



From the end of this month (January 2023) and through February and March Chelmsford Methodist Circuit is running the Bible Course.

There will be three opportunities to participate in this programme devised by the Bible Society.

TUESDAY JANUARY 31ST 2023

Zoom course will start at 7:30pm for nine weeks

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 1ST 2023

Face to face course will start at 2pm in the Carol Evans Room at Trinity Methodist Church In Chelmsford for nine weeks

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 2ND 2023

An alternative Zoom course will start at 7:30pm for nine weeks

Two Zoom dates are offered each week to allow participants to attend an alternative session if they have another engagement on their first choice night

Please contact Mike Fogg to register your interest in joining the Bible Course.
Mike's contact details are below:
Tel 01245-328337 email: Mikefogg@btinternet.com

IMAGES OF HYDE HALL

Mike Fogg







TRIBUTE TO THE REVD. PETER CUTMORE

(From our own Helen Catley and his son's obituary)

I have personally known Peter and, of course, Pam (as she liked to be called) since the late 1970's when they both attended Rayne Road Methodist Church. Peter moved on to oversee Coggeshall Ecumenical Church in 1989 for a few years, before commencing his long service here at Halstead Methodist Church, up until 2012. It was during this time that our friends at the U.R.C. united with us for services, pending the renovation of their new premises.

Peter's passion for farming came into it's own at Harvest Festival time and he led many of the services across the Chelmsford Circuit as well as those at Halstead. He always provided the sheaf of corn for the display at the front of the church and also a loaf in the shape of a sheaf. I remember the jar of seeds and the glass of water on the table as part of these services.

Sunday services would include quizzes — easy ones for the children and very difficult ones for the adults, which caused a great deal of hilarity! He always provided interesting sketches and examples portraying biblical stories, often assisted my late father who was often asked by Peter to come up with an item of his choosing. More often than not they would be on the same theme without them having conferred!

On checking church records I found that Peter had conducted seven weddings here and baptised nineteen babies and children; but I am unsure as to the number of funeral services actually held in our church.

Halstead Day Centre benefitted from Peter's services as he would go there with Pam, five days a week for each special season, Easter, Harvest Festival and Christmas (but giving the same talk/service repeated five times over in that week.) He also occasionally attended to give Holy Communion to those that wished to participate.

Continued/.....

It will be remembered by many the Bluebell Walks to Chalkney Woods each May, followed by a bountiful tea of cakes and scones. Pam and Peter were always waiting for us back at the home of Ann and Brian Runtle who hosted the event, ready to participate in the food which Peter always most certainly enjoyed.

Peter (or POP) as he was affectionately known to his family, was born 92 years ago to Stanley and Bertha Cutmore, a strict evangelical farming family. As a young boy he had three wishes; To be a farmer; a Preacher and a Coach Driver. He managed the first two and managed the third by going on many coach trips as a passenger.

His father bought Shardloes Farm in the 1920's with just fifty-seven acres, some barns and a tumble-down farmhouse so they bought a house in The Street at Cressing. It was there that Peter and his sister, Joy, were born, completing the family. Shardloes farmhouse was built after the war ended.

Peter began preaching at The Cressing Evangelical Church at an early age and in various churches around Essex where he met his future wife, in Shoeburyness. They had three children, Colin, Heather and Nigel. He and his father (also known as Pop) worked well together, building up the business, growing crops, raising cattle, keeping chickens and doing contract farming for neighbours. They also built replacement barns and you can still see the evidence of his improving bricklaying skills today.

In 1961 the neighbouring farm owned by Crittal came up for tenancy and the family moved into Egypt's Farm which he eventually bought. This farm continued to expand with more land and so did the family, producing six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren!

Sadly, some years later the marriage broke down and Peter met and married Pam in 1979. They enjoyed coach trips around the country because Peter did not like flying. "Too close to his Maker!" he used to say, jokingly, so they crossed the channel by coach in order to take in the sights of Europe. They purchased a bungalow in Torquay and spent many happy times there.

Continued/...

Peter and Pam loved jigsaw puzzles and dining out on a Sunday lunch time at the Moot House in Castle Hedingham and we remember such a smart lady and gentleman setting off from church for these lunches. Because he had a very sweet tooth he would always choose his dessert before even looking at the main course. The staff would always ensure that when they had his booking his favourite starter of melon was available. He rarely drank beer or wine and said he never liked tea. But he forgot that when he was in the care home and there he enjoyed a nice cuppa!)

Even though he was a farmer, Peter made no secret of the fact that he was not a keen gardener! He did, however, grow tomatoes and cucumbers in his greenhouse and then, of course, gave them to everyone to make sure they did not go to waste.

Peter enjoyed preaching and was very charismatic in the pulpit. He had a good way with the Cressing children in the Sunday School which grew in popularity with him so much that the church had to hire the village school hall to accommodate it! He often jokingly referred to the fact that part of his role as a preacher was to "Hatch, Match and Despatch!" He certainly had a sense of humour. There was a time when Pam told him her ears were ringing "Well, answer them then" he replied.

He volunteered in the community and was involved in Reading Newspapers for the Blind; he became Chairman of the School Governors at Silver End school; stood as a Conservative Counsellor; went on to preach at Christ Church, Coggeshall and, finally, Minister here at Halstead Methodist Church.

A hard working, kind, jolly and generous gentleman, Peter was loved by all who knew him but, sadly, showed signs of the cruel disease Dementia around three years ago. Once, being so adamant that he wanted to assist during harvest (it was difficult to stop him) he insisted that he could back a trailer full of grain into the barn. Unfortunately he pulled the wrong lever which opened the back of the trailer and dumped half of the load of wheat outside the barn. He only went and got a shovel thinking he could clear the grain on his own before Nigel saw it!

Continued/....

He also once took his mobility scooter down the farm track to see what Colin and Nigel were up to in the field. Unfortunately the scooter's battery ran out and Peter was gone for over an hour before he was rescued!

But he then just laughed – his sense of humour had not deserted him! But he was now needing more care and thankful to Tina for all the care she gave him when still living at home, he eventually moved into a Nursing Home to enable his specific needs to be better catered for and it was there that he sadly passed away.

Gone but never forgotten. A much-loved man who will always be remembered for his sense of duty, kindness and humour.

God bless.



We are offering the opportunity to take part in the

EASTER OFFERING

for the Methodist World

Mission fund.

Please contact Carole Fairclough to order envelopes or bookmarks to go in existing envelopes. rogerandcarole@hotmail.co.uk

We hope to hold a Dedication Service at Witham later in the year, but no date has been decided yet.

Maureen Crilley

Go Green(er) for Lent

The Lenten 40-day period before Easter gives us the opportunity to reflect on the practice of fasting and commit to giving up something that brings a real benefit to nature and helps address climate change. Below are some changes you could make that will help the environment. Take time to pray, reflect and consider these options – pick one or two or however many you'd like (you never know the changes might just stick!)





- Go plastic free
- Switch off from digital reaching for your Bible over your device(s)
- Buy less or second hand.
- Buy local or in bulk.
- Become zero waste spending a bit more on loose fruit and veg for example.



- Invite wildlife into your garden.
- Try a plant-based recipe or diet cook plant-based meals once a week for example
- Grow your own. Whether you have a garden or sunny windowsill
- Change your method of transport.
 Choose one day a week to walk,
 cycle or take public transport to
 work where you are able to.
- Take a step to save energy in your home
- Move your money. Could you divest from fossil fuels and support a bank which invests in renewables?
- Join the Eco Church community.
 Make a commitment to long term action on the environment in your local community through Eco
 Church or other greening schemes.













CHELMSFORD CIRCUIT REFUGEE FUND

At the time of writing the total raised is just under the £10K match funded target.

Congratulation to David Hodgkinson and his team for driving this forward.



Can you still donate?

Of course, keep donations coming but your money may not be match funded—there is still so much work and support needed for Ukrainians in our circuit.

Use the link on the Circuit Website.

https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk/donate/

24th February 23—Update from John Clemo

Today in the Supermarket the tannoy gave out that a minute's silence would be held to remember those who have lost their lives to the warfare in Ukraine. It's a rare thing for me to visit such a temple to commercialism on my own, and the only reason that my subconscious picked up on this announcement was the couple in front of me (who may have had more years of retirement than me) looked to one another, and put a finger to their lips.

On Thursday we sat with our Ukrainian lady and daughter and listened to a Radio 4 programme: "Ukrainians in the UK, what next?" Half an hour of talking to one family and hearing their experience (pretty good), comments from the authorities about the housing crisis (yes there is one) comments from the refugees about their qualifications don't count for anything (hard to explain and accept).

On the positive side our guest had been to Chelmsford YMCA a couple of times for Refugee Ladies Only English lessons and gave good feedback on that. For myself, I feel guilty for sticking to the lectionary on Sunday when almost half our congregation were Ukrainian refugees, and although we had 12 verses of Psalm 77 in Ukrainian, we also had Matthew 5 *Do not resist an evil person, turn the other cheek, love your enemies*.

Hopefully the part I tried major on was verse 42:

Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Thank you to those in our Circuit who are responding in any way, in this area.

John Clemo

Many thanks for all those who have supported the Circuit Newsletter by sending in articles and sharing the newsletter with colleagues, friends and family.

I really appreciate your support. God Bless you all. Karen



The next Circuit Meeting is on

Wednesday 10th May 2023

Holy Trinity—SWF

7.15pm for 7.30pm

Zoom will be available—contact the Circuit Administrator

Circuit Administrator: Karen Murrell.

Email: karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk

https://www.facebook.com/chelmsfordcircuit

http://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk

'Share your news'
Deadline for
May/June 23
to Karen by Mid
April at latest.