

Connect

Spring Edition

March to May 2025



Editor's Greeting

Revd Adam Earle

It's March already, and a great deal has happened since our last edition of Connect. The "tent" of the Ipswich and East Pastorate has spread wider and partnerships have developed. These are exciting and challenging times as the whole of the United Reformed Church looks to the future with a sense of honest realism and the hope of where God is leading us and what God has in store.

Things change, as the Moderator, Revd Lythan Nevard, reminded us at the Welcome Service at Hadleigh URC on Sunday 9th February, "When someone joins the body we are all changed." There is always room to embrace new communities, new people, and new opportunities for faith and mission. Together, as a pastorate we are committed to work, as far as we are able, to enable each of the churches to flourish. Yes, there has been change, and yes there will be further change to accommodate in various ways.

As together we seek God's will and discern the next steps that we must take to reach out and bring God's love to each of the communities embraced by the Ipswich and East URC Pastorate, let's uphold each other in prayer as we share the good news.

Congratulations

Adam and Emily Woodhouse

Many folk in the Ipswich and East pastorate will remember Revd Adam Woodhouse who completed his "Living Ministry Placement" with us in 2020 and 2021. Since his ordination in 2021, Adam served as minister in the Lancashire East Mission Partnership.

In the Autumn of 2024, Adam moved to Chesterfield and a new role as the Children and Youth Team Leader at St John's Church Owlerton, near Sheffield. Adam continues as a Non-Stipendary Minister (NSM) of the URC whilst serving in this role for the Church of England.

On Saturday 15th February, at St John's Owlerton, Adam was married to his new wife Emily. He also became the stepfather of Emily's wonderful children.



Huge congratulations to Adam, Emily and their family as they embark of this new and exciting stage of the journey of love and faith.

News from the Churches

Although we are already three months into 2025, as our last Connect Magazine (Winter Edition) was published in December, you will find some news about Christmas events. Things have been far from quiet and all sorts of interesting activities and developments have taken place since the last edition.

Castle Hill URC

Festival Nativity Service

Our annual Festival Nativity Service took place on Sunday 15th December. We were blessed to have children and adult members of the Castle Hill Amateur Players (CHAPS) join us to present a magnificent retelling of the Christmas Story, told from the perspective of the Roman Soldiers in charge of the Census in Bethlehem.



It was a brilliant time of celebration and well supported by church members and friends including many family members of the children and young people taking part. Thank you to everyone who contribute and made this such a joyous occasion.

Outdoor Carol Sing

On Tuesday 17th December we introduced a new feature to our Christmas programme. Folk from the church and the wider community gathered outside the church to sing carols and recall the Christmas story.



Despite the cold, around 60 people came along and sang their hearts out. The music was led by Revd Adam, and Revd David was MC. We shared readings for the Bible and noisily re-enacted the scene of the shepherds' encounter with the angels, with appropriate sound effects. We enjoyed a variety of old favourites. The Girls' Brigade took charge of giving out and collecting the Carol sheets and requested quite a few of their favourites along the way. Afterwards everyone was invited to share mulled fruit juice, hot chocolate, mince pies and chocolate logs.

Tiny Tots Christmas Party

Our Tiny Tots group is a well established and much valued feature of the activities, organised by members of our church family. The group meets weekly and regularly welcomes around twenty children and their adults for play, entertainment and socialising. Each year, at the end of the "Autumn Term" the leaders organise a Christmas Party.



This took place on Thursday 19th December. It was lovely to welcome twenty-six children and their grown-ups to celebrate. They enjoyed delicious food, played, sang and listened to the story of the birth of Jesus. I'm sure the children would tell you though that the highlight of the party for them was a visit from Father Christmas, who chatted to them and gave each child a present and chocolate lolly.

Care and Share

Before the Covid lock-down a regular event at the church was "Care and Share" with young folk, supported by adults, preparing simple, tasty food to share with everyone after the Sunday service. In January we were pleased to restart this and a number of young folk, associated with the church via CHAPS or Girls' Brigade, came along to prepare and present quite a spread of tasty treats for folk to share.



We held our first "revival" of the activity on Sunday 26th January and our second on 16th February. Pizza is one of the most popular creations but there was plenty to choose from. Our next "Care and Share" will be in March.

Elders @ Castle Hill

Elders play an important part in the life and organisation of the United Reformed Church and we very much appreciate the hard work that they undertake on behalf of our local

churches. We are blessed, at Castle Hill, to have had, and to have at present, committed and active serving elders.



On Sunday 5th January, as part of our Epiphany Communion Service, we were delighted not only to induct some of our elders for a second term and to pray for those continuing to serve but also to welcome and ordain a new elder, Colleen. Colleen has been a member of the church for many years. We are pleased to have her on board.

Indoor Car Boot Sales



The monthly indoor car boot sales, under the leadership of Katie (Colleen's daughter), continue. These are well attended and popular, with money raised from table subs and refreshments contributing to the mission activities of the church. Dates for the forthcoming sales are as follows:

Saturday 29th March
Saturday 26th April
Saturday 31st May
Saturday 28th June

Doors are open for buyers from 14:00 to 16:00, with a wide variety of new and pre-loved items, collectables and gifts available. All are welcome to come along and explore.

Friends of North Kigezi Diocese (FNKD) Uganda

Rachel, one of our church members, has been involved in the work of FNKD for many years and makes regular visit to Uganda to support the project locally. She is committed to a range of activities in helping to raise funds for the organisation.



Each year the church selects three charities to support throughout the year. This year, FNKD has been chosen as one of these. After Easter we will be repeating our "Spend-A-Penny" collections to help raise money to improve the toilet facilities at the project centre.

On **Sunday 16th March**, Rachel will be leading our morning worship and sharing more about the work of FNKD. On **Saturday 22nd March at 19:00** there will be a Quiz Night at the church raising funds for the FNKD Bucence Children's Centre, organised by Fiona and Mark. Teams of six per table are welcome. Please do come and support the event.

Easter "Messy" Church

Saturday 12th April 2025
12:30 to 14:00 in the Church



For many years the church has held a "Holiday Club" for young folk during the

Easter Holidays. This was interrupted by the Covid pandemic. Since that time we have focussed on offering a one "day" event. This year we are organising something a bit different in the form of an Easter (Palm Sunday) themed Messy Church.

This event is for children, young people and their families. Full details will be made available very shortly, including sign-up sheets. The session will include a variety of practical and creative activities, games, a short "reflection", and a meal for everyone to share.

If you are interested in joining us or are willing to volunteer in support of the event then please speak to Revd Adam, email him on revaje@outlook.com or call him on 01473 411316 (Please do leave a message on the answerphone if he is not available.)

Organ Concert

A reminder, as mentioned in the last edition of Connect, the first of the Ipswich Theatre Organ Club



concerts for 2025, featuring the Christie theatre organ housed in the Church, will take place at **14:30** on **Sunday 16th March**. Come and hear this magnificent "creature" in full voice. At the console will be Robert Wolfe who is the resident organist for the Wurlitzer organ in Fakenham, Norfolk. It promises to be an excellent performance.

St John's URC

Bronze Eco Church Award

We are pleased to share the news that St John's have joined the echelon



of churches to have fulfilled the various criteria to achieve the Bronze Eco Church Award. The award criteria help churches to recognise what has been achieved so far in contributing to our Christian calling to be good stewards in caring for creation and to identify objectives for further development.

The surveys point to different foci for action and good practice which cover:

- Worship & Teaching
- Buildings & Energy
- Land & Nature
- Community & Global
- Lifestyle

We will now be working, in partnership with the other churches in the Pastorate, towards our Silver award. Each of us can make a difference in various ways. Eco Church is not just about our church building and activity together but embraces our individual lifestyle.

Advent Lunch

On Sunday 8th December, following our morning worship (Toy Service) over thirty folk gathered to enjoy a tasty Advent Lunch. The meal was organised and food prepared by Alex, Jackie and Andrew. A huge thank you to them for such a splendid meal and opportunity to share a time of celebration and fellowship together.



Revd David attended the meal which became part of, for him, a bit of a “Vicar of Dibley” multi-meal Christmas experience. During the same week, he also attended two other Christmas meals. Thankfully these were not all on the same day and he did not require a JCB to carry him back to the manse.

Long Service for the Brownies & Rainbows



Gwen is shown in the photo doing the honours of welcoming some new recruits to the guiding family at St Johns. Gwen has had an

amazing journey of service spanning 58 years during which she has been Brown Owl of the 23rd Ipswich Brownies, Tawny Owl of the 40th Ipswich Brownies and Unit helper of the 2nd Hamilton Rainbows.

It is hard to imagine how many Brownies and Rainbows have been through Gwen’s care. She has nurtured each of them giving encouragement, helping to build their characters and providing them with opportunities they may not otherwise have had. All this done through her conscientious commitment and calm, quiet approach.

On behalf of St John’s URC, we thank Gwen for her unstinting act of service and wish her well as she continues her Guiding journey with the Gippeswic Trefoil Guild (Guiding for Adults).

New Members

On Sunday 2nd February, we were delighted to welcome Revds Catherine and Peter Ball into membership at St John’s. Catherine and Peter have now retired to

Saxmundham, and are enjoying the various opportunities afforded by the greater space in their diaries.



Catherine, in recent years, has been serving the St Ives Group of Churches, incorporating St Ives Free Church and Fenstanton URC. She has also been supporting the work of Westminster College as Associate Tutor in Congregational Ministry.

Peter formerly served St John's as interim minister. Most recently he served as Director of Church Resource Development, based at Westminster College, Cambridge, supporting churches throughout the URC.

We are delighted to welcome them aboard and look forward to sharing in our faith life and mission with them as part of our church family.

Leiston & Saxmundham United Church

Working As One

From the beginning of 2025, the former Saxmundham URC and Leiston United Church have come together in a wider, formal ecumenical partnership as Leiston and Saxmundham United Church (LSUC) – one church in two places. We retain both buildings, with a service pattern which includes services together or in the two

locations but operate as one organisation with one set of officers.



**LEISTON &
SAXMUNDHAM
UNITED CHURCH**
ONE CHURCH IN TWO PLACES

The United Reformed Church
& Methodist Church in Partnership

Sue has taken on the role of LSUC Secretary and Marion LSUC Treasurer. They are supported, as necessary, by Gillian as admin assistant. The current eldership is formed of the serving elders from the two joining churches.

On Sunday 5th January we had our first official service as LSUC, led by Revd David Rees. It was good to mark this moment of transition into a new year and a new united church. This is an exciting and challenging time.

There are still a number of things to resolve to ensure we can work as efficiently as possible. We will be reviewing our Mission Action Plan, producing a new LSUC plan embracing the opportunities for mission and outreach within the two communities of Leiston and Saxmundham.

We also hope that, in due course, the Churches and Christians Together groups of Leiston and Saxmundham will join forces to support and encourage one another in our mission.

LSUC Website



Leiston & Saxmundham United Church
One Church In Two Locations

A Local Ecumenical Partnership of
The United Reformed & Methodist Churches

Home Contact News & Events Calendar LSUC @ Leiston Church LSUC @ Saxmundham Chapel Room Hire Safeguarding

Welcome

Welcome to the website for Leiston & Saxmundham United Church established in November 2024 with the joining of the former Leiston United Church and Saxmundham United Reformed Church. We are one church with two locations.

Click on the menu tabs above to find out more.



LSUC @ Leiston Church



LSUC @ Saxmundham Chapel



Leiston & Saxmundham United Church is part of the Ipswich and East URC Pastorate which also includes, Castle Hill United Reformed Church (Ipswich), Felixstowe United Reformed Church, Hadleigh United Reformed Church and St John's United Reformed Church (Ipswich)

Our existing shared website has been updated to reflect the change in our relationship. The Leiston building is referred, in publicity, as LSUC @ Leiston Church and the Saxmundham building as LSUC @ Saxmundham Chapel. We have a new web address www.lsuc.org.uk - the old address is set up to forward to the new during the initial period of transition.

Christmas Dinner Party

Our first Christmas Dinner Party, was held at Saxmundham Chapel (Hall) on Saturday 7th December. We welcomed 20 folk to share in a tasty Christmas roast with a selection of desserts.

The oven in the Saxmundham hall kitchen, was a little overwhelmed by the demands placed upon it, having only previously been used for warming and a little light baking. However, our cooks Revd Adam and his wonderful wife, Gillian, managed to get everything ready on time. It was good to welcome some new folk from the town – we hope to see them again sometime soon.

This year, 2025, we are planning to have the LSUC Christmas Dinner at Leiston Church and will aim to alternate over the coming years. We already have a date in the diary so if you are one for planning ahead and would like to join us, it will be taking place at **12:30 on Saturday 13th December** in the hall of LSUC @ Leiston Church.

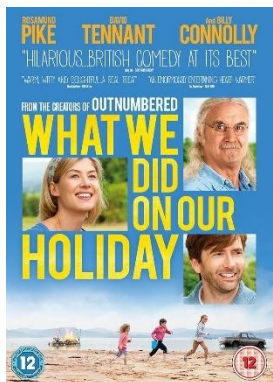


Carols & Cake

Carols & Cake, held in the hall at Leiston Church on 15th December, was very well attended with barely an empty seat. We raised the roof with a selection of well known, traditional carols. Gillian and Revd Adam shared some songs for us to listen to, there were Bible readings, prayers and three amusing, thought provoking monologues presented by Revd Adam taking on the roles of an Innkeeper, a shepherd and one of the wise men. The “cake” which followed was also thoroughly enjoyable and we were more than full when we left.

Film Afternoons LSUC @ Saxmundham Chapel

The first of our popular Film afternoons, for 2025, at Saxmundham, took place on Saturday 1st February. We began our time together with Soup and Bacon Rolls followed by Fruit and Cookies. We then settled to enjoy the film “What We Did on our Holiday” starring Rosamund Pike, David Tennant and Billy Connolly. It is a surprising, intriguing and heartwarming film.



Our next Film Afternoon is scheduled for **Saturday 5th April** from **13:00 to 15:00** in the hall at **LSUC @ Saxmundham Chapel**. We will begin with a light lunch and then enjoy a vintage film, released in 1955, created by Alfred Hitchcock – one of his few true comedies. It is described as a light comedy-drama with a touch of romance. It has a rather unusual theme as the characters struggle to solve a problem, with amusing consequences. As usual we are not able to advertise the film in print or online but we are happy to tell you, so do please ask if you want to know more. All are welcome to join us.

Spring Mini Concert & Tea

Following the success of our two mini concerts in Saxmundham and Leiston last year, we have our next event – **Spring Mini Concert & Tea – “Love is in the Air”** scheduled to take place at LSUC @ Leiston Church on **Saturday 10th May**. The Concert will begin at **14:00** and will last for about 45 minutes. It will, as the title suggests, include a variety of love themed songs, organ music



(provided the organ behaves itself) and some (we hope) amusing elements.

Afterwards we adjourn to the hall for afternoon tea with sandwiches, cakes and scones. There is no charge for the event but we welcome donations to cover the cost of the food and to contribute towards the mission and work of Leiston and Saxmundham United Church.

There will be another mini-concert and tea in the Autumn, to be held at Saxmundham, so keep an ear and eye out for further details.

Felixstowe URC

Creative Christmas Fun @ Monday Club

The Monday Club meets regularly on the second Monday of each month from 2:30pm. We enjoy a range of activities over the year. Our December meeting is usually our Christmas Celebration. On Monday 9th December we gathered to sing carols and were pleased to welcome Revd Adam to share with us some of his creative Christmas craft creations.

We learned about the origins of Christmas crackers and each made a traditional wrapped bonbon (the origins of the Christmas Cracker). Adam demonstrated a traditional method for making crackers using cardboard tubes and crepe paper.

We found out about the Scandinavian tradition of Tomtes or Christmas Gnomes and Adam demonstrated a fun way of making gnomes, as gifts, incorporating the much-loved Chocolate Orange.





Adam shared some of his other creations and we had a raffle to distribute these in a fun way. Adam's demonstration concluded with the first outing of his Racing Reindeer game which, we understand, also put in an appearance at the

Saxmundham Christmas Dinner Party.



Our meeting concluded with tea and a selection of tasty Christmas treats. We are pleased to report that Revd Adam's "official" tasting of the various items on offer led to his approval! We suspect he may have tasted some of the items more than once.

Christmas Carols & Orwell Connection

On Sunday 22nd December, at 15:00, we held our annual carol service. This year we were delighted to welcome the Orwell Connection choir to lead us in singing as well as bringing some choral items to enrich our celebration. The choir sung some beautiful pieces by John Rutter including "All Bells in Paradise", "The Candlelight Carol" and "The Star Carol".



Revd David led the service, with readers from the congregation sharing traditional Bible passages. Revd Adam played the organ and presented (as at LSUC's Carol & Cake) three amusing but thought-provoking monologues as "The Inkeeper", "A Shepherd" and "A Wise Man". After the service we enjoyed refreshments (including mince pies) in the large hall.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity United Service



On Sunday 26th January, at the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Felixstowe URC hosted this year's United Service. The service drew from the published material by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, prepared by the ecumenical community at Bose in Northern Italy. The theme was "Do you believe this?" and also marked 1700 years since the Council of Nicaea took place, from which the Nicene Creed emanated.

Our preacher was Revd Wendy Smith from St Phillips (Felixstowe) who shared something of her faith and journey. Revd David led the service with readers from various churches and Revd Adam provided the music.

It was a joyful occasion during which each member of the large congregation was given an LED nightlight candle. Those present were invited, as a symbol of unity, to bring forward their candles and place them on a standing cross, designed to hold them. The result was both beautiful and moving.



Ukraine 2 Felixstowe (U2F)



Felixstowe URC continues to support the work of Ukraine 2 Felixstowe, providing meeting and learning spaces within

the building, without charge. These include regular English language sessions (held in the Hub – former Choir vestry), supported by some members of the church family and a monthly Sunday evening gathering for social, creative activities, helped by volunteers from the wider community and some of our church family. For these evenings a specific children and young people's activity is also provided.

U2F supports around 60 Ukrainian guest in the Felixstowe community. The anniversary of the present invasion of Ukraine, by Russia, was 24th February. Please continue to pray for the people of Ukraine as the future remains uncertain and some of the recent news we have heard about settlement talks and erroneously apportioning blame, have been very disturbing. Pray for a just and lasting peace which seeks to uphold the dignity, integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine.

Hadleigh URC

New Partnership New Opportunities New Vision



As the newest member of the Ipswich and East URC Pastorate we would like to say a very big thank you to all of you for your warm and encouraging welcome. We are very much looking forward, and committed to, working together with all the churches to enable each of them to flourish and realise its missional potential for God's Kingdom.



The “official” welcome service took place on the afternoon of Sunday 9th February. It was a real thrill to welcome so many folk from the pastorate churches, friends from the churches in Hadleigh and other friends to share in this time of celebration.

Worship was led by the Moderator of Eastern Synod, Revd Lythan Nevard and included a celebration of the Lord's Supper. Lythan's message pointed us to future hope and active, enthusiastic engagement in mission inspired by her recent visit to Rome and an opportunity to meet with Pope Francis. She encouraged us to “Be More Shepherd!” both delighting in our encounter with Christ and telling others of what we have seen and heard, just like the shepherds who visited the manger and left praising God and telling everyone they met.



After the official words of welcome to the pastorate, we shared a statement of commitment:

As members, elders and ministers of the Ipswich and East Pastorate do you commit yourselves in partnership to support each

other in mission, encourage each other in discipleship and share with each other in ministry and leadership in obedience to Jesus, our Lord and Saviour?

All With God's help, we do. May we grow together in unity and be built up into the body of Christ in love to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

During the service we also thanked Revd John Cook for his support and encouragement of the church, as Interim Moderator, during the period of vacancy.



After our warming and encouraging time of worship we moved to the Ansell Centre for tea and refreshments. There was a wonderful variety of tasty treats

Don't Forget Monks Eleigh



Although we do not hold regular worship services at Monks Eleigh, here's a reminder that Hadleigh URC continues to support and maintain the chapel hall of Monks Eleigh as

a wonderful resource for gatherings and retreat opportunities.



Known as HOME – “Heart of Monks Eleigh” Retreat Centre, the old chapel hall is beautifully kept with space and equipment, including a kitchen area and adjacent toilets (with accessible facilities).



It's a place to find space: time to reflect, to meet, to talk, to be quiet, to recharge batteries, to just 'be'. It's available to everyone, of any faith or none. Groups or individuals can use it for meetings, retreats, or simply as a base to explore the surrounding area.

A short walk from the chapel is a five acre area of water meadow, preserved as a haven for wildlife by one of the centre's management team. In line with the vision and ethos of HOME, The Quiet Place is also available to individuals and groups on day retreat. You can follow a special trail with reflections or just stroll and sit and ponder. The distinctive wet meadow ecosystem is a natural home to special species of butterflies, birds and dragonflies.

If you would like to find out more about this wonderful resource, please visit the web

page (from which some of this text is drawn):

www.hadleighurc.org.uk/home-day-retreat-centre

You can also contact Ronnie via email: ronnie@ronann.com or call 01473 310169.

Hadleigh URC Website

To discover more about the work and vision of Hadleigh URC (with Monks Eleigh) you can visit our website:

www.hadleighurc.org.uk from which you can also download our weekly news sheet and monthly newsletters.

Pastorate News



Fruitfulness on the Frontline



Last year (2024) a number of folk from across the pastorate took part in the course “Fruitfulness on the Front Line” from the London

Institute of Contemporary Christianity, based on the book of the same name by Mark Greene. The course encourages us to think about our day to day lives, the contexts in which we live and the people we encounter, as being the frontline of our mission as the church.

During February this year Revd David and Revd Adam have led times of worship in each of the churches, centred on introducing and reviewing the key message of the book and course. After the course

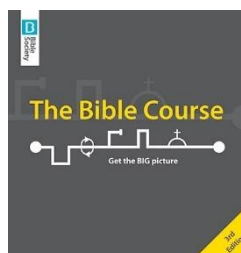
was completed last year (and a break for the Summer), a number of folk who had taken part in the course gathered to discuss ways of extending engagement with the material and helping us all to view our day to day living in the light of God’s call and mission. As part of that conversation the February 2025 services were considered as a useful opportunity to spread the message.

The simple, encouraging and challenging ideas offered by the course make it an ideal source of inspiration as we continue to look forward, in faith, to the future work and mission of our pastorate churches. We will be holding a second “round” of Fruitfulness Sundays in the Autumn and would like to offer more folk the opportunity to take part in the course, offering in-person sessions locally if people feel this would be useful.

There is a follow-on course, Growing on the Frontline which we would like to offer in due course so please watch this space and listen out for future details.



The Bible Course



Our most recent opportunity for learning and discipleship in the pastorate (in partnership with the local Methodist Circuit) has been the Bible

Society’s Bible Course. This provides an engaging overview of the Bible as a continual story with various stages, and themes which carry throughout. It goes at quite a pace, covering the entire Bible in just 8 sessions. Those who participated online (via Zoom) or in person at Felixstowe URC felt that there was plenty of inspiration and opportunity for further exploration and

discussion of some of the questions that arose during the course.

A small group of folk, who took part in the course, met at Felixstowe Methodist Church (FMC) @ Trinity, on Monday 23rd February to consider how we might go forward. There were a number of useful suggestions including pursuing the “Romans” course offered by the Bible Society at some point in the not-too-distant future. We have also planned to meet, from time to time, for “Matters Arising” discussions and reflection opportunities, focused on different questions raised.

The first of these sessions will take place at **FMC @ Trinity (Felixstowe) at 10:30 on Monday 28th April**. The focus of the session will be “In the beginning!” and we will explore, in greater detail, the first four chapters of the book of Genesis. All are welcome to join us, even if you were not able to participate in the Bible Course this time round.

We would also like to offer an opportunity for folk to join in similar discussions online, via Zoom. Revd Adam would be willing to offer such an opportunity if people would like to take part. The first session could also be on Monday 28th April at 19:00. Please do let Adam know if you would be interested in participating. Further details will be circulated nearer the time.

Lent Worship “Pilgrimage”

The season on Lent begins on Ash Wednesday which, this year, falls on Wednesday 5th March. This signifies a change in focus and mood as we enter a reflective period in the build up to Easter. The forty days of Lent (excluding Sundays which remain feast days



throughout) bring to mind the period of fasting and preparation that Jesus underwent in the wilderness.

This year, we will be following the “tradition”, established over the past couple of years, of holding reflective services on Sunday afternoons during Lent. We visit each church in the pastorate and invite folk from the other churches to join us. Worship is followed by refreshments and fellowship.

16:00 Sunday 9th March

Castle Hill United Reformed Church
(Dryden Road, Ipswich IP1 6QF)
Led by Revd Adam Earle

16:00 Sunday 16th March

Hadleigh United Reformed Church
(Market Place, Hadleigh IP7 5DL)
Led by Revd David Rees

16:00 Sunday 23rd March

Felixstowe United Reformed Church
Tomline Road, Felixstowe IP11 7PA
Led by Revd Adam Earle

14:00 Sunday 30th March (N.B. Time)

LSUC @ Leiston Church
High Street, Leiston IP16 4EL
Led by Revd David Rees

18:30 Sunday 6th April (N.B. Time)

St John’s United Reformed Church
Cowper Street, Ipswich IP4 5JD
Led by Revd David Rees & Revd Adam Earle

At this final service we will also be joined by friends from the other NE Ipswich Churches to share in united worship.

Ash Wednesday Worship & Lunch

A new thing for Leiston and Saxmundham United Church (LSUC) and for the pastorate, we will be holding a time of reflective worship, followed by a simple lunch of Soup, bread, cheese



and fruit, on Ash Wednesday itself. Please do come and join us to mark the beginning of this reflective season and to begin our journey together.

11:00 Wednesday 5th March

LSUC @ Leiston Church
High Street, Leiston IP16 4EL
Led by Revd Adam Earle

Lent Courses 2025

Lent is also a time for us to engage in reflection and study to build our faith and seek God's will and purposes through scripture. Across the Pastorate there are a number of different opportunities to engage in Lent courses and activities. These are as follows:

Ipswich & East Lent Course

Relationships

The Heart of the Matter

Relationships matter; they are at the very heart of the Christian faith and the Gospel. Our God, the Holy Trinity is, at heart, a perfect loving relationship.



There are four core relationships that support abundant life – with God, with Community, with Creation and with Ourselves. When these are weakened or broken, humanity struggles. Through films, art, images, poetry, scripture and discussion we will explore the nature and importance of these and how we can grow in faith, love and relationship.

The course consists of five sessions, an introduction and then one session focussing on each relationship. The course will be offered, in person, on Wednesdays, with an

afternoon and an evening presentation on the dates shown here:

St John's URC – Cowper St, Ipswich IP4 5JD

Wednesday Afternoons @ 14:00

12th, 19th & 26th March, 2nd & 9th April

Castle Hill URC – Dryden Rd, Ipswich IP1 6QF

Wednesday Evenings @ 19:00

12th, 19th & 26th March, 2nd & 9th April

If you would like to take part, please do sign up on the sheets provided at Castle Hill, St John's or Felixstowe or email Revd Adam. The course booklets will be available free of charge. We will be joined by friends from Christ Church (Ipswich).

If you have any questions please speak to or contact Revd Adam on revaje@outlook.com

Hadleigh Churches

Together

Lent Course

Based on the book
"The Things He Carried"
by Stephen Cottrell



Tuesday Evening Sessions

Starting at 19:30 as follows:

11th March – Salvation Army Hall

Duke St, Hadleigh IP7 5DP

18th March – Hadleigh URC

Market Place, Hadleigh IP7 5DL

25th March – Salvation Army Hall

Duke St, Hadleigh IP7 5DP

1st April – Hadleigh URC

Market Place, Hadleigh IP7 5DL

8th April – Salvation Army Hall

Duke St, Hadleigh IP7 5DP

Thursday Afternoon Sessions

14:00 @ St Mary's Church

Church St, Hadleigh IP7 5DT

on the following dates:

13th, 20th & 27th March, 3rd & 10th April

All are welcome to join us and explore what the book has to offer and the meaning of Lent.

Please contact office@stmaryhadleigh.co.uk for further details.

CTF Lent Courses

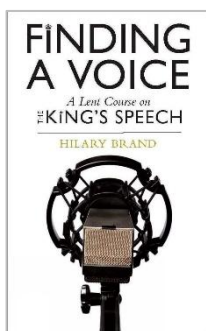
There are two courses being offered in Felixstowe this year.



Finding A Voice

Based on the film "The King's Speech"

The **whole film** will be shown at the following times and venues:



14:00 Monday 3rd March

St Mary's, High Street, Walton IP11 9DS

10:00 Tuesday 4th March

St John's, Orwell Road, Felixstowe IP11 7PW

19:00 Tuesday 4th March (Pancakes too!)

All Saints Church, Kesgrave IP5 1AA

13:00 Thursday 6th March (Bring your lunch)

Ranelagh Road Fellowship IP11 7HA

The **study** sessions (anyone welcome to join any group) will be held as follows:

16:00 FMC @ Seaton Rd IP11 9BT

Sunday 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th Mar & 6th Apr

14:00 St Mary's, Walton IP11 9DS

Monday 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st Mar & 7th Apr

10:00 St John's, Felixstowe IP11 7PW

Tuesday 11th, 18th, 25th Mar & 1st & 7th Apr

14:00 Ss Peter & Paul, Felixstowe IP11 9NF

Tuesday 11th, 18th, 25th Mar & 1st & 7th Apr

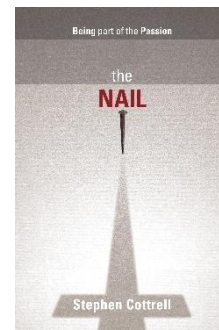
13:00 Ranelagh Road Fellowship IP11 7HA

Thursday 13th, 20th, 27th Mar & 3rd & 9th Apr

Book Study

Looking at "The Nail"

by Stephen Cottrell



The Nail makes the reader part of the Passion. Moving, first-person accounts from eye-witnesses and active participants place the reader right in the heart of events leading to the crucifixion and beyond. As each witness tells their story they give their excuse for passing responsibility for the crucifixion nails to another who then takes up the story.

19:00 Wednesday Evening

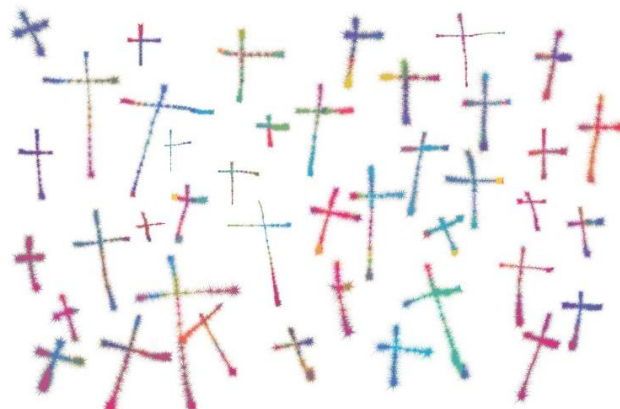
(Refreshments for 18:30)

@ Evolve Cake Co. 92 Hamilton Road

Wednesday 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th March & 2nd, 9th April

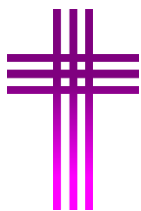
"Lent is a new beginning, a path leading to the certain Goal of Easter; Christ's victory over death."

Pope Francis



LSUC @ Saxmundham Chapel “Lent Link & Bacon Butties!”

During Lent, we are holding two thinking, discussing and creating sessions. Each session will last about an hour and will include readings and reflection on passages from the Bible aided by artwork, music and poetry and other materials. There will also be an opportunity to join in some simple creative activities.



As part of each session, we will share bacon butties (or vegetarian equivalent), fruit and other refreshments. The dates and times for Lent links will be:

12:30 Monday 17th March

12:30 Monday 7th April



Holy Week & Easter 2025

There are many opportunities to gather, remember and celebrate the events and accomplishments of Holy Week and Easter across the pastorate. Please do come and share the festival with us.

Palm Sunday
Sunday 13th April



Castle Hill URC (Ipswich)
10:30 Café Style Worship
Led by Revd Adam Earle

St. Johns URC (Ipswich)

10:45 Sunday Worship
Led by William Glasse

Felixstowe URC

10:30 Sunday Worship
Led by David Stone

Hadleigh URC

10:30 Sunday Worship
Led by Revd Jim Dagleesh

LSUC @ Saxmundham Chapel

10:45 Sunday Worship
Led by Revd David Rees

LSUC @ Leiston Church

14:00 Afternoon Worship
Led by Revd David Rees

Maundy Thursday
Thursday 17th April



Felixstowe URC

12:00 Lunch Communion
United with FMC Trinity
Led by Revd David Rees

LSUC @ Saxmundham Chapel

12:30 Last Supper Lunch
Led by Revd Adam Earle

Castle Hill URC

19:00 Communion & Reflection
Led by Revd Adam Earle

Hadleigh URC

19:00 Iona Communion
Led by Revd Michael Tillet
& Revd David Rees

Good Friday Friday 18th April

Castle Hill URC

10:30 Reflection at the Cross
Led by Revd Adam Earle

St John's URC

10:30 United Worship
@ St John's CofE
Caldwell Hall Road

Felixstowe URC

14:00 Reflection at the Cross
Led by Revd David Rees

Hadleigh URC

14:00 Reflection at the Cross
Led by Revd Michael Tillett

LSUC @ Leiston Church

14:00 Reflection at the Cross
Led by Sue Liddell

Easter Sunday Sunday 20th April

Castle Hill URC

10:30 Celebration Worship
with Holy Communion
Led by Revd David Rees

St John's URC

10:45 Celebration Worship
with Holy Communion
Led by Peter Dawson

Felixstowe URC

10:30 Celebration Worship
with Holy Communion
Led by Revd John Cook



Hadleigh URC

10:30 Celebration Worship
with Holy Communion
Led by Revd Michael Tillett

LSUC @ Leiston Church

10:30 Celebration Worship
With Holy Communion
Led by Revd Adam Earle

Caring for Creation – Eco Church

Caring for Creation (C4C) Sunday(s)

As part of our ongoing commitment to Caring for Creation and working within the Eco Church framework are our regular opportunities to consider and reflect on the theme within worship. Across the pastorate we have at least two C4C focused Sundays each year.

In the Spring we have one Sunday when all the churches are invited to focus on a particular theme with resources provided by the ministers. In the Autumn, following on from our Harvest celebrations, the ministers will bring a particular C4C theme, as they visit the different churches in turn.



Our next **Caring for Creation** themed worship opportunity will be on **Sunday 27th April**. The focus will be “Food for Thought” as we will reflect on what we read about food in Scripture and how we might make a difference through the choices we make.

Here are some thoughts and some information to whet our appetites and help us reflect on the theme. The first part is drawn from the Eco-Church website.

Sustainable Food Provision

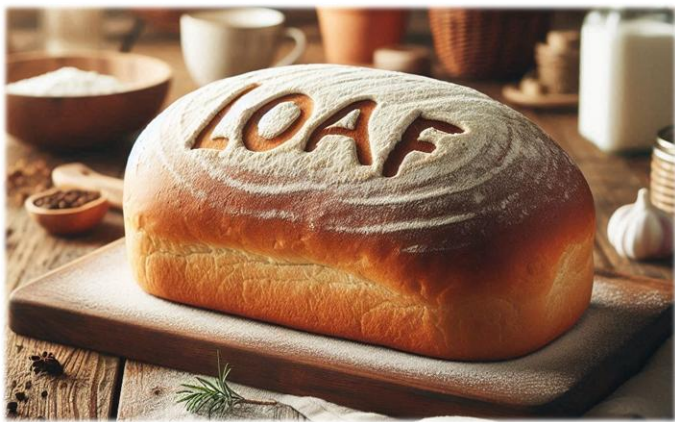
Why?

As God's representatives, we contribute to the flourishing of the whole earth community, so will want to think carefully about what we consume. This is not just about the nutritional value of food but also the ethics of production and the carbon footprint involved in its delivery.

Jesus often shared meals with his followers. As Christians we are encouraged to offer hospitality and to find joy in doing that. This may be to our friends and family or as a demonstration of God's care for the homeless or to host a community celebration.

Food production and its preparation are basic human activities since we all require daily nourishment. Thinking about how we produce and prepare food to glorify God and nourish us, whilst leaving a sustainable legacy for future generations, is high on the agenda for Christians who care about the planet.

How?



The organisation **Green Christian** devised a handy acronym, LOAF, to highlight some of the aspects of food we should consider:

L = Locally produced

O = Organic

A = Animal Friendly

F = Fairly traded.

Locally Produced

One of the most helpful ways to keep us connected with our food and understand what goes into its production is to buy food produced locally (Green Christian calls this 'The Proximity Principle'). By seeking to support and learn from those who produce our food locally, we reduce food miles and understand more about seasonal production patterns of fruit, vegetables, fish and meat. We can share some of the producers' joys and challenges of producing food. It's harder to do this in urban environments but consider finding Farmers' Markets or locally produced veg box schemes.



Some churches now grow their own fruit and vegetables, partly to increase community involvement, but also to provide local fresh produce for hospitality.

Organically Grown

Organic food is the product of a farming system which avoids the use of man-made fertilisers, pesticides, growth regulators and livestock feed additives. Organic farmers aim to produce high quality food, using methods that benefit our whole food system, from people to planet, plant health to animal welfare. The Soil Association sets strict widely used standards, to ensure that farms sustain the health of soils, ecosystems, animals and people.



The Soil Association also runs certification schemes across food, farming, catering, health and beauty, textiles and forestry, so you can be confident in the credentials of products you buy which are accredited by them.

It can be challenging to balance 'Organic' with 'Local'. Green Christian recommends taking the 'proximity' route, for example, by choosing apples from the UK rather than imported organic apples. Do also tell the shop's customer representative that you would like local organic food, to encourage them to stock it in future.

Animal Friendly

Animals are sensitive creatures and are particularly vulnerable to human actions.

Seek out meat and fish that have been humanely reared and slaughtered. The Sustainable Food Trust, suggests some questions to ask about the ethics of the meat you are buying:



- Where did it come from? Is it local?
- Is it free range?
- Is the beef from grass fed animals?
- Do you make your own sausages, burgers and bacon?

In general, the UK has higher standards of animal welfare than many countries around the world. Examples include housing, allowing the animal freedom of movement, the restricted use of growth promoters and the treatment of live animals on long-distance transport.



Fairly & Ethically Traded

There will always be food that cannot be produced, in quantity, in the part of the world in which we live such as bananas, citrus fruits, tea, and coffee. Some developing countries need currency to purchase pharmaceutical products, medical equipment, alternative energy technologies, and laboratory equipment. And we need food which only they can supply.



Following the proximity principle, source only sustainably grown imported food, where just wages are paid. The Fairtrade Foundation certifies food, and other products, to indicate that the pay to workers is fair, and enough power has been put into the hands of farmers. In return, these farmers invest in climate-friendly farming techniques, clean water for their community, nurturing women leaders and making sure children get an education.

Food Miles



How often do we check the source of the different food

products that we purchase? It can be quite astounding just how far our food has travelled (and therefore the impact it has had on the environment due to fuel consumption for transport). This can be especially relevant when we purchase foods that our "out of season" e.g. strawberries in the middle of winter.

The website www.foodmiles.com offers a food miles calculator. Perhaps you could try it out for some of the items you regularly

purchase or see how far the ingredients for a particular meal have travelled.

Of course the place of manufacture may not be the same as the source of the ingredients so many products will have additional food miles. The estimated total food miles for a number of popular items include:

- A Mars Snickers bar – 50,791 miles.
- A jar of Nutella Spread – 28,731 miles.
- A can of Classic Coca Cola – 17,195 miles.
- A bottle of Heinz Ketchup – 18,804 miles
- A McDonald's Big Mac – 8,050 miles.
- A cup of Starbucks Coffee – 5,427 miles

This is certainly food for thought.

Make Time to Prayer

Inspiration for Praying



“Never stop praying, especially for others. Always pray by the power of the Spirit. Stay alert and keep praying for God's people.”

Ephesians 6:18

There is so much going on in the world today and so much news which might cause us to fear and lose hope. God invites us to trust and to pray. Here are some useful places to visit for information and focus for our prayers.

Commitment
for **Life**

www.urchurch.org.uk/your-church/church-local-and-global/commitment-for-life/

This the URC's global justice programme. It offers resources to facilitate prayer, advocacy, and effective action for the most vulnerable people in the world. The project particularly focuses on Israel and occupied Palestinian Territory, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe.



**Churches for
Middle East Peace**
www.cmep.org

Based in the USA, CMEP seeks to encourage Christians to advocate for equality, human rights, security, and justice for Israelis, Palestinians, and all people of the Middle East. They offer a regularly updated prayer blog, a broad range of information and by visiting this page: www.cmep.org/resources/bulletins/ you can access their weekly Bulletins and, if you would like, sign up to have it sent by email.



OpenDoors www.opendoors.org

Open doors international originated in 1955 with the man who came to be known as Brother Andrew (God's Smuggler). If you want to find out about specific need and pray for our fellow Christians throughout the world, facing persecution then you can find out more about how you can make a difference here.



www.christiansinpolitics.org.uk

In these challenging times serving in politics with Christian integrity is a challenge. There are many Christian folk involved in politics in our nation. CiP offers a range of information, ways to get involved, articles and updates to guide us in praying for Christians engaged in politics today. You can sign up for a regular newsletter and even find more local groups and projects to support.

If you make use of a particular internet resource, newsletter or support a particular mission organisation that would help guide others in their prayers, please do let Revd Adam know and he will aim to include details in future editions of Connect.