

The Drive Methodist Church
Eastern Avenue, Ilford, Essex, IG1 3PP

NEWSLETTER

March 2025



Minister: Revd Jacqueline Jones
Email: rev.jacquelinejones@outlook.com

<https://www.drive-methodist.church>

**Church Mission Statement
of
The Drive Methodist Church**

The Drive Methodist Church aims to be faithful to the commandments of Jesus, and the calling of the Methodist Church.

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission, and to fulfil the promises detailed in the Methodist worship book.

Provide a weekly opportunity for all people to worship God in Christ, here at The Drive Methodist Church.

Enable people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care.

Be a good neighbour to the immediate and wider community. Sharing our faith with others through pastoral care, church activities and communication.

MINISTER'S LETTER

There's a lovely poem/ reflection on time written by Henry van Dyke:

Time is

Too Slow for those who Wait,
Too Swift for those who Fear,
Too Long for those who Grieve,
Too Short for those who Rejoice;
But for those who Love,
Time is not. (i.e. Eternity)

This poem delves into the subjective perception of time, contrasting its fluidity with human emotions and for all of us who echo that regular question of, "wow, where did February go?" – I fully agree! However, there may be a few others for whom February has been a long, hard struggle.

I admit that I am someone who is good at filling my time with 'things' rather than just sitting and 'being'. Recently I took our car to the garage and had to wait an unexpected two hours for the diagnostic to take place. I did sit and drink their tea but also filled that time with catching up on emails and doing whatever I could on my phone.

Similarly, in mid-February I had a two hour train journey to Cliff College for the Connexional Ministries Committee. It was another chance to chill out and 'be' but I took the opportunity to write this letter/ reflection. (I hope you think it was worth it!).

Another quote that I remember from many years ago which appeared in our staff 'canteen' when I worked for 'Grahams Builders Merchants' was:

'Sometimes I sit and think; Sometimes I just sit.' I Googled that quote so I could acknowledge which wise and learned person first used it, only to discover it was Winnie the Pooh! It was also the title of the first music album by Australian indie rock musician Courtney Barnett in March 2015.

Sometimes it is good to put positive effort into taking time to stop and just 'Be', and when we (I) do, it is really worth the effort. This may mean attending a retreat or quiet day which encourages – even forces – us to slow down, stop, reflect and 'sit at the feet of Jesus'. This is something which Lent challenges us to do. The reason we give up something for Lent is not just a good exercise in discipline but to give us more time for prayer, time out and space to reflect on our Christian journey and our relationship with our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

In Luke 10 there is the lovely story of Martha and Mary. Martha (like me) is busy with many things and rushing around to ensure her guest – Jesus - has the very best hospitality that she can offer. On the contrary, her sister Mary is sat at the feet of Jesus listening to his every word. When Martha has a moan about the lack of help she is getting from Mary, Jesus very graciously explains to Martha: "There is a time for everything and we must get our priorities right".

At the recent funeral for one of our dear members at Old Dagenham the chosen reading was from Ecclesiastes 3 – 'There is a time for everything under heaven' and as verse 7 says, 'a time to be silent and a time to speak'. There is a time for everything, and our challenge is to discern what God is prompting us to do or not to do, both as His church and as individuals. When to listen and when to get on with it – whatever it may be.

Jesus was very aware that the timings within his own life and ministry were guided by his Father. A few weeks back the lectionary was the story of Jesus turning water into wine and his initial response to his mother was, "My hour has not yet come." (John 2:4)

When he is ready to start in ministry he announces, "The time has come," (Mark 1:15) and as his ministry nears its ending he proclaims, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." (John 12: 23) We know from experience that God's timing is always perfect because our God is always faithful and wants the best for each one of us.

The Circuit weekly Lent Study will be starting on Thursday 13th March (on Zoom) and is called 'Soul Food'. It is a reminder that we need to feed our soul and spirit as well as our physical bodies. Maybe you could commit to these studies as a time when you can pause and 'be'? Or even take a day out, attend a retreat or find a quiet place where you and God can just 'be' together, as you listen, pray and rest in God's loving presence.

Lent is an ideal period when we can challenge ourselves to take (make?) time for God, refresh our souls and 'sit at His feet' as you discover more of his love and purpose for you.

There *is* a time for everything: Take it, value it and enjoy 'Being' with your God.

With richest blessings for Lent
Andy

EDITOR'S NOTE

Hello and welcome to this March issue of the Newsletter and with almost a quarter of the year gone, I don't think we can say Happy New Year anymore!

At the beginning of February the church was taken over by 120 children when the church hosted four classes from Cranbrook Primary School. Our TDY Team leader, Jo and our organist Andrew led sessions with the children. Read Jo's report on page 10.

2028 marks a 100 years of worship at The Drive. The Finance and Property Committee are presenting its proposals as part of its Centenary Development Project. See more details on page 15.

Beetle is almost here! A fun afternoon for all ages. If you've never been before and have no idea how to play the game don't worry. All will be explained on the day. After the game you can enjoy afternoon tea. Details on page 20. Let me know how many tickets you would like!

Come and have a cuppa with a copper! – details on page 22. Read about Brian's hotel on page 25, and the first of Anne's Church Tales on page 29.

Also included is Jeremy's book choice review on page 27. Do let me know about an interesting book you have read.

Have a good month and happy reading!

Diane Foster





WE ASK FOR GOD'S BLESSING on all those who are unwell and that we have concerns for at this time. Our thoughts are with those who are unable to come to church because of ongoing illnesses. We remember them all in our prayers.

Janet Brunnen's daughter, Christine, is undergoing investigations into a lump in her lung. She had previously been told the lump had gone but a recent scan showed it was still there. We hold Christine, Janet and all her family in our prayers at this worrying time.

Brian Grinham would be grateful for our prayers for his youngest daughter, Mary who has just started treatment for lung cancer. It will be some weeks before it is known how the treatment is working and how it affects Mary. Our prayers are with Mary, Brian and all the family.



Father, we think now of those who find it hard to praise you today because of the pain of their bodies, the anxiety of their minds or the anguish of their souls. We come seeking for a moment to share their sufferings in the belief that you will lighten them through our prayers.

Amen

Hilary Stevens, former member of The Drive

MY MUM

So many of you have offered prayers and support for my mum and our family. I am very grateful for your interest in her wellbeing. As you may have gathered, at 98 she is quite a character. Recently as her health deteriorated, she was moved to St Michaels Hospice in Bexhill where their loving care stabilised her condition sufficiently enough for her to move into nursing care. Disappointingly, she could not return to her home as she needs 24hr medical support.

As I write, mum has been in the nursing home for less than a week and while she isn't overjoyed, she does appear to be settling quite well. Her main complaint is that they dare not serve oven chips!

Thank you

Lorraine Bendon

She sounds an amazing lady Lorraine and so good she is comfortable in the nursing home - Diane



Too often we underestimate
the power of a touch, smile,
a kind word, a listening ear,
an honest compliment or the
smallest act of caring,
all of which have the potential
to turn life around.

HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAY to:

Brian Grinham on the 2nd
Amy Gabbidon on the 3rd
Lorna Wright on the 5th
David Wright on the 16th
Revd Mmasape Thathane-Tyolweni on the 20th
Iris Wright, Andrew Taylor on the 23rd
Tunrayo Fadina on the 24th
Imanri Gabbidon on the 25th
and to everyone celebrating a birthday this month.
Have a lovely day!



CONGRATULATIONS to...



Revd Jacqui Jones on the birth of her grandson, Rhys-Samson. We wish God's blessing and every happiness to the proud parents, Rebecca and Chris, and all the family.



Sanjay Marreddi on his new job as a software engineer in Singapore. Although Sanjay now lives in Cambridge we have enjoyed his visits to The Drive particularly at Christmas when he has been our Joseph in the Nativity presentation. We shall miss you Sanjay as we appreciate Singapore is a lot further than Cambridge but we hope you will be able to visit us some time. God bless.



ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY CHILDREN!

During a couple of mornings in February, our church was filled with children from Cranbrook Primary School. This is the school near the PLA ground, in between us and St. Andrew's church.

The children in year one, aged between 5 and 6, were learning about Christianity in their RE lessons and wanted to experience being in a church and learning about important items in a church.

Carol Dawson used to be the religious education teacher working in schools through our circuit and the Methodist church. Sadly, Carol's role does not exist anymore, but Carol had made some wonderful resources that we were able to use during the school visit.

The children took part in a search to locate various items around the church including the organ, stained glass windows and the christening font, to name but a few.

The children, teachers and accompanying adults were very interested in our church and said how beautiful it is. There were also many questions from the children, who were all keen to learn more about our church and Christian beliefs.

One of the highlights was when Andrew spoke to them about the organ, showed them some pipes and played some gentle, calm music and then some wonderful, rousing, loud music. Such a wonderful experience for the children and adults who may not have heard live organ music before.

Thanks go to Andrew, Diane, Ruth and Jeremy, who all supported the visits.

Here is the letter from Jasmina Delkic, who is the teacher who arranged the visit to our church.

"I just wanted to say a big thank you on behalf of all the children for our amazing and informative trip to the church. The children learned a lot, and this first-hand experience is something that will stay with them for a long time. Your hospitality, as well as the interactive and informative approach, was very much appreciated. Please also extend our thanks to the other church members who contributed to making the visit so special."

Jo Wright

Thanks to you as well Jo. I really enjoyed helping out. It was great to see the children's enthusiasm – Diane



SHROVE TUESDAY (PANCAKE DAY)– 4TH MARCH

Shrove Tuesday is a celebration of Christian origin, taking place the day before Lent starts on Ash Wednesday. It has come to be seen as something of a festive day, before the season of reflection and penitence of Lent. The date changes every year, but it is always 47 days before Easter Sunday. The name originates from the Anglo-Saxon word “shrive”, which means to hear confession and absolve someone. A bell would be rung to call people to confession.

To observe Lenten practices people would avoid indulging in rich foods such as eggs, sugar and dairy. In order to use them up, pancakes were made.



The pancake has a very long history and featured in cookery books as far back as 1439.

In the UK, pancake races form an important part of the Shrove Tuesday celebrations. The object of the race is to get to the finishing line first, carrying a frying pan with a cooked pancake in it and flipping the pancake as you run.

The most famous pancake race takes place at Olney in Buckinghamshire. According to tradition, in 1445 a woman of Olney heard the shriving bell while she was making pancakes and ran to the church in her apron, still clutching her frying pan.

A Prayer for Shrove Tuesday

Lord help us to enjoy and give thanks to you for the bounty you provide for us and remind us to share your gifts with others. And as Lent begins, prepare our hearts and minds to reflect upon the temptation of Jesus for 40 days and nights and what that means for us. Amen

Text taken from various websites.

ASH WEDNESDAY – 5th MARCH

In the Methodist tradition, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a period of reflection and repentance leading up to Easter, where the placement of ashes on the forehead symbolizes a recognition of human mortality and a call to turn away from sin, signifying a commitment to spiritual renewal through fasting and prayer; essentially, it's a day to remember that "you are dust, and to dust you shall return" as stated in the Bible, prompting introspection and a focus on personal transformation.

The ashes, usually made from burned palm leaves from the previous Palm Sunday, represent the act of repentance and humility, signifying a turning towards God. During Ash Wednesday services, a minister will mark a cross on the forehead of worshipers with ashes, accompanied by a phrase such as "Repent, and believe in the Gospel" or "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return".



Ash Wednesday initiates the Lenten season, a time for increased prayer, fasting, and acts of charity as a way to prepare for the celebration of Easter. Methodists use Ash Wednesday as a day to examine their lives, confess their sins, and commit to personal growth throughout Lent.

A Prayer for Ash Wednesday

Almighty God, you have created us from the dust of the earth: Grant that the ashes may be for us a symbol of our mortality and a sign of our penitence, that we may remember that it is by your grace alone that we receive the gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Text taken from various websites.

PANCAKE DAY WORDSEARCH

U S P A P N P M R F
N U L E A S T E R R
B G E A N M V H A Y
F A N V C E A C C I
A R T C A G P R E N
O F R T K G P E F G
C V T U E S D A Y C
E F L O U R F M N M
S H R O V E C T I E
L E M O N I C C E M

BATTER
CREAM
EASTER
EGGS
FLOUR

FRYING
LEMON
LENT
PAN
PANCAKE

RACE
SHROVE
SUGAR
TUESDAY

SATURDAY LUNCH – 15th MARCH – 1PM



The Drive Church Parlour Serving Beef or Veggie Lasagne and Salad

Please add your name to the list at the back of the church and your choice of menu. Please note the final day for registering interest is Thursday 13th March.

Come along and share the good food and company.

CENTENARY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT PRESENTATION OF PROPOSALS – 16TH MARCH

Over the last few months the Finance & Property Committee have been working closely with the architect to bring together the ideas, plans and costs for the various items of work we hope to deliver through our Centenary Development Project.

We are now looking forward to sharing these plans with our church family. So as part of the service on Sunday 16 March there will be a presentation of the proposals and the plans will be on display.

This will be the start of a conversation regarding not only the development plans, but also our church mission and how we are going to celebrate our church centenary in 2028. We are therefore inviting the whole church to an open meeting on Wednesday 23 April at 7.30 pm in the Parlour to progress these discussions.

We hope that you will be able to join the service on 16 March and to come along to the meeting on 23 April.

Jeremy Foster

THE DRIVE TOGETHER WHATSAPP

Little did we know back in March 2020, in the midst of Covid, that setting up this group to keep our church family in contact with one another would prove to be so useful. Alongside our general group, The Drive also has many smaller specific WhatsApp groups i.e TDY, Choir, Prayers etc.

While we have jogged along pretty well, without too many mishaps, the use of any social media can have difficulties, such as personal phone numbers being visible. Initially, we assumed that out of respect for one another we would avoid this being an issue. However this has been breached and so in line with our Safeguarding Policy, Michelle and I have developed a guideline document for those already using the church WhatsApp group and for those who join in the future.

The Drive does adhere to the Methodist Church Social Media Policy but we felt we also needed some guidance specifically for the WhatsApp Groups.

I will send the guidance out by email, and it will also be available in church. We value any comments as this will be a document that will need to change over time.

Lorraine Bendon, Safeguarding
Michelle Garner, Senior Steward



MARCH PATRON SAINT DAYS

ST. DAVID – 1ST MARCH



St David is the patron saint of Wales and is thought to have been born around 520 AD although the exact date is not known. Whenever it was, legend says his mother Non gave birth to him on a cliff-top in Pembrokeshire - during a fierce storm. The spot of David's birth is marked by the ruins of Non's Chapel.

David became a monk at a young age and is said to have founded a monastery around the year 560AD. St David's, in Pembrokeshire, is home to the iconic St David's Cathedral, making it Britain's smallest city. It is believed that the cathedral is built on the site of the original monastery.

He and his monks led a very simple and austere life living off only leeks and water. He is said to have cured his tutor of blindness with the sign of the cross. His last words to his followers came from a sermon he gave on the previous Sunday: 'Be joyful, keep the faith, and do the little things that you have heard and seen me do.'

The phrase 'Gwnewch y pethau bychain' - 'Do the little things' - is still well-known in Wales.

St David's Day, 1st March, marks the assumed date of his death, and has been an official celebration in Wales since the 18th century but has been celebrated for much longer.

Daffodils are associated with St David's Day because they bloom around the same time. To mark the day people from all over the world proudly wear a daffodil or leek - Wales's national emblems.

Text taken from various websites

ST. PATRICK'S DAY – 17TH MARCH

St. Patrick was born in Roman Britain in the late 4th century. As a teen, St Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland where he was put to work as a shepherd. After six years of slavery, he managed to escape and return to his family.

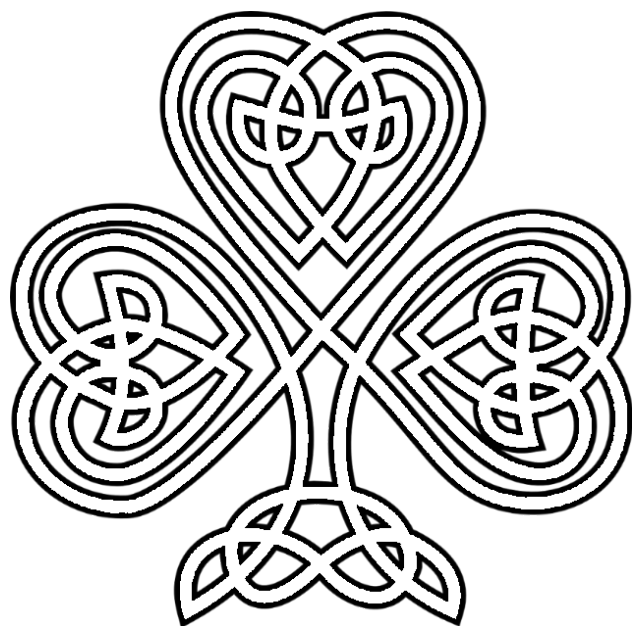
When Patrick grew up, he became a priest. He was said to have had a dream wherein the people of Ireland called him back to walk among them again. Eventually, Patrick went back to Ireland as a missionary to spread Christianity to the pagan Irish people. He faced many challenges during his mission, including opposition from the pagan priests. However, he persevered and is credited with converting the majority of the Irish people to Christianity.

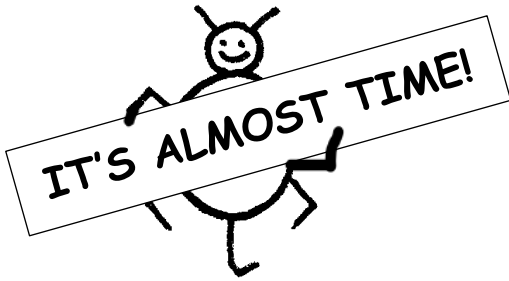
According to legend, St. Patrick used the shamrock to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity to the Irish people. He pointed to the three leaves of the shamrock and explained that, like the three leaves, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct entities but are also One, just as the three leaves are part of the same plant. This simple illustration helped the Irish people understand the complex concept of the Holy Trinity, which became a cornerstone of Christian theology. Today, the shamrock is still used as a symbol of St. Patrick and is closely associated with Ireland and its culture.

John Wesley was influenced by St. Patrick's representation of a dedicated Christian missionary who spread the Gospel to a new population, demonstrating the importance of personal evangelism and reaching the "unreached".

March 17th is observed as St Patrick's Day, the day of his death in the late 5th century. Celebrations are held in Ireland and many countries throughout the world.

Text taken from various websites





**JMA FAMILY BEETLE DRIVE
AND TEA (and raffle)**

**SATURDAY 29th MARCH 2025
THE DRIVE METHODIST CHURCH HALL**

2.30pm for 3pm start

**Tickets are now available
from Diane Foster**

jma@drive-methodist.church

07903 560534

Adults £5; Young people under 16 £2.50

**An afternoon of fellowship, food and fun for all the
family to support Junior Mission for All raising money for
the Methodist Mission in Britain and World Mission Funds.**

Watch out - there's a BEETLE about!!



MOTHERING SUNDAY – 30TH MARCH

Mothering Sunday, or Mother's Day as it is more commonly known today, has been celebrated on the fourth Sunday in Lent, in the UK and Ireland, since the 16th century. The date varies in other parts of the world.

Like many traditions and festivities, Mothering Sunday began with a religious purpose. It was originally a day to honour and give thanks to the Virgin Mary, also known as Mother Mary. Such celebrations required people to visit their 'mother' church, where they were baptised or attended as children.

The spread of Christianity throughout Europe in the 16th century increased the celebrations and firmly put Mothering Sunday on the calendar. Servants working in large houses were given a holiday on Mothering Sunday. They could use this day to visit their mother with a gift.

Simnel cake is traditionally eaten on Mothering Sunday. It's a fruitcake with 11 marzipan balls on top representing the apostles excluding Judas, and is often associated with Easter. The cake was traditionally given by servant girls to their mothers on Mothering Sunday.



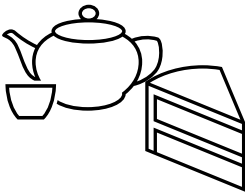
CUPPA WITH A COPPER



When: 10.30am, Wednesday 2nd April

Where: In the Church Parlour

For how long: approx 1 hour



Tea, coffee and cake will be available.

Why not come along for a relaxed informal chat with officers from our local neighbourhood policing team.

It really is a social chat and not intended as a meeting.

Please share the details with your local friends and neighbours.

We hope to make this a regular event.

**ADVANCED
NOTICE!**



**EASTER EGG HUNT
SATURDAY 19TH APRIL
10.30AM -12.30PM**



**THE DRIVE CHURCH HALL
COME AND JOIN US FOR
HOT CROSS BUNS, CRAFTS,
FELLOWSHIP AND FUN!**

**ADMISSION:
ADULTS FREE, CHILDREN £1**

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPONSOR AN EASTER EGG?



If you can, please donate a small amount of money and sponsor an Easter Egg.

In the next few weeks, there will be Easter branches at the back of the church and gift tags for you to write an Easter message on. A donation box will be there too.

All the money will be used to buy Easter Eggs for the annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday 19th April, which you are all very welcome to attend.

Many thanks
Team TDY

365 - AN EXHIBITION THROUGHOUT APRIL BY LOCAL ARTIST ANDREW WRIGHT

A year in the life of Valentines Park, captured by local artist Andrew Wright.

This intriguing display features a kaleidoscopic image for each day, Creepy CrawLies emerging from items gathered and a trio of trees. Using a variety of traditional and contemporary image making processes, the artist entices and challenges the viewer to observe, explore and decipher his various creations - but be aware, all is not as it might seem at first glance.

You will be able to view the exhibition during the month of April. The mansion is open Sunday and Monday 12-5pm. See the mansion website for more details.

Valentinesmansion.com



HOTEL BRIAN

Many of you may know I jokingly say that I run an hotel. It certainly seemed like that over Christmas and the New Year.

Susan and Jonathan arrived in the UK on 9th December but were not staying at 'The Hotel' as they had managed to rent a "Missionary house" in Seven Kings, where they stayed last year. They did, however spend, a fair amount of time "popping in". Susan & Jonathan were treated to a hire car for the time they were in London, and Jonathan had gone to Manchester to collect the car and came back with Talia, their youngest daughter who had a couple of days off work and stayed with Sue & Jonathan in Seven Kings.

The next day they went to Heathrow to collect Janet, but Talia stayed with me. That was the day I had a fall in the front garden and couldn't get up until I managed to contact a neighbour who came over, who with Talia's help managed to stand me up.

After a couple of days of Janet arriving she unfortunately went down with Covid and virtually spent three days in bed. Fortunately she recovered in time to come to the Carol Service and sat out of the way at the back of the Church.

Mary, another hotel guest, arrived on 23rd December from Birmingham. Then Peter's children arrived about 8.00pm on Christmas Day and stayed until the evening of the 28th.

On Christmas day itself, the hotel kitchen was very busy! Tiffany and Talia had organised the meal, and I was surplus to requirements so was able to go to Church which was a

lovely service. After all, with so many members of the family all anxious to be involved with the dinner, I would only get in the way!

The rest of Christmas week I had people coming and going every day, and then on New Years Eve, because her birthday is on New Years Day, Janet treated eight of us for a trip on the steam train from Ongar to Epping and back. A special train is run that is all lit up and as it travels all the trees by the side are also lit up. We all thoroughly enjoyed it.

After Janet's Birthday, things quietened down a bit - Mary had to go back to Birmingham, Susan and Jonathan went back to Manchester in early January, as did their family as they had work to do. Janet returned to America mid-January. I miss them all but it is nice to have some peace and quiet and watch what I like on the TV!

Brian Grinham

I think you ought to put your rates up Brian! – Diane



A BOOK REVIEW

Silas Marner (The Weaver of Raveloe)
by George Eliot



When Louise and Matthew were children we had a video recording of the film adaptation of George Eliot's novel, *Silas Marner*. Although there was nothing unsuitable in the content it certainly isn't a children's story, but to my surprise it was one of their favourite films.

I was given the novel as a Christmas present last year. It was written by Mary Ann Evans in 1861 and because at that time it was difficult for female authors to get published, she adopted the pen name of George Eliot.

The novel is an account of Silas Marner's adult life. As a young man he is a devout member of a Christian Calvinist church, but is falsely accused of stealing the church collection. The church members draw lots to establish his guilt and he is banished from the congregation.

He moves away to a remote cottage in Raveloe where he becomes a recluse spending all his time working at his hand loom weaving fine cloth. He is well paid for the cloth and begins to hoard his gold sovereigns, which he hides under the floor. He is described as a miser and spends his evenings counting the gold which he cherishes. However the gold is stolen and Silas is distraught at his loss.

During a snow storm a toddler walks into his cottage after her poverty stricken mother perishes in the snow a short distance away. There is a very poignant passage, where, due to his failing eyesight, Silas sees the blond curls of the little girl but believes it is his gold miraculously returned.

He reaches out to touch the gold but feels the soft hair and in that moment his love of the gold is transferred to love for the child. There is a happy ending with the young girl known as Eppy grown up and happily married.

The moral here is that human relationships are more valuable than material possessions.

Jeremy Foster



A TALE OF FIVE CHURCHES

Some of you may recall reading my article in the previous edition of our church newsletter, the title of which was 'A Tale Of Two Churches.'

Since promising to write a longer story about St Edmunds Church, my Libran trait of procrastination has taken over and as I sit here typing, I truly do not know how the myriad of tales in my head will find their way onto this page and make sense but hopefully if I can retain your interest with church number one, you may be introduced to the other four churches in future issues.

St. Barnabas Church, Homerton, Hackney E9.

Listed building Grade 11; Built 1845 – 47;
Architect Arthur Ashpitel 1807 – 69, born in Hackney;
Early Victorian Gothic Church. Cost of build £3000.
Built to serve the expanding population of early Victorian Hackney.

The Hackney Hospital was adjacent to St Barnabas Church and in September 1945 Chaplain Alford was called upon to baptise a newborn baby. World War 11 had ended a few months before and times were difficult. My mum and I passed the church on numerous occasions in the year after my birth but it would be twenty years before I went inside St Barnabas. In later years I passed it every day on my way to work, it was a landmark and in December 1962 when a thick smog enveloped London, I could just about see the outline of the church peering through the dark layer of fog that almost choked me as I slowly made my way home. This smog continued for five days but every day we managed to get into

work, people clung onto one another, their faces covered in scarves. I remember the smell and the taste of sulphur.

In 1966 I was married in St Barnabas, the rain that day was torrential and never ceased, the elderly vicar had to sweep the rainwater from the door of the church in order for us to get inside! In 1969 my first child was baptised in the church and once again the rain fell in torrents, I remember thinking how the church needed some TLC.

I moved away from Hackney a long time ago but recently googled 'St Barnabas' and was delighted to see that the church is now 'A church for all ages'. They have a vibrant congregation and offer a Food Pantry and Barneys Cafe for the community. I was pleased to find that St Barnabas was given some TLC and is thriving in the year 2025.

Anne Dellow



HELPLINES

SAMARITANS

Available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress, despair or suicidal thoughts. www.samaritans.org 116 123 (free to call from within the UK and Ireland), 24 hours Email: jo@samaritans.org

MIND

Mind offers advice, support and information to people experiencing a mental health difficulty and their family and friends. Mon to Fri 9am to 6pm (except bank holidays). www.mind.org.uk InfoLine: 0300 123 3393 to call, or text 86463 Email info@mind.org.uk

PAPYRUS UK

Papyrus is the national charity dedicated to the prevention of young suicide. They support young people under 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide, as well as people concerned about someone else. Their HopelineUK service is open 9am - midnight every day of the year (including weekends and bank holidays). www.papyrusuk.org Helpline: 0800 068 4141 Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

YOUNGMINDS

www.youngminds.org.uk Parents helpline: 0808 802 5544 (Mon-Fri from 9.30am - 4pm, excluding bank holidays)

CAMPAIGN AGAINST LIVING MISERABLY (CALM)

A helpline for people in the UK who are down or have hit a wall for any reason, who need to talk or find information and support. thecalmzone.net Helpline: 0800 58 58 58 thecalmzone.net/help/webchat/ 5pm—midnight, every day of the year.

BROOK YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICE

Information, support and signposting service for young people under 25 on sexual health. Local services available viatext message offering free contraception, pregnancy testing, counselling. brook.org.uk 29

CHILDLINE

Emotional support for children and young people on issues relating to child abuse, bullying etc. 0800 1111

FORCED MARRIAGES

Enter Forced Marriages into search bar at top of site - Service provided by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office to protect young people from forced marriages abroad. Service offers help to young people in these circumstances to help get them back to the UK. 020 7008 0151 gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage

NSPCC CHILD PROTECTION

0808 800 5000 email: help@nspcc.org.uk www.nspcc.org.uk
For anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse.

FREEPHONE 24 HR NATIONAL DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE

0808 2000 247 www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/

Run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge, this is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf.

NATIONAL LGBT DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE

0800 999 5428 galop.org.uk/get-help/helplines/

Emotional, practical support for LGBT people experiencing domestic abuse.

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS

Helpline providing support for families and friends of problem drinkers, whether the person is still drinking or not.

0800 0086 811 www.al-anonuk.org.uk

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY

<https://capuk.org/> Free help getting out of debt, budgeting and making your money go further.

AGE UK ADVICE

0800 678 1602 www.ageuk.org.uk Information and advice for older people.

DIARY

MARCH

Sun 2nd	11.15am	Morning Service with Holy Communion led by The Revd Jacqui Jones
Tues 4th	7.45pm	Choir Practice Church Parlour
Wed 5th	7.30pm	Ash Wednesday Service at Gantshill MC
Sun 9th	11.15am	1st Sunday in Lent Morning Service led by Dr Anthony Russell
Tues 11th	7.45pm	Choir Practice Church Parlour
Wed 12th	7.30pm	Circuit Meeting at TBC
Thur 13th	7.30pm	Circuit Lent Study Course Week 1 on Zoom
Sat 15th	1pm	Church Lunch Church Parlour see page 15
Sun 16th	11.15am	2nd Sunday in Lent All Age Service led by The Revd Jacqui Jones including Centenary Development Project presentation see page 15
Sun 16th	After service	Church Council Meeting Church Parlour
Tues 18th	7.45pm	Choir Practice Church Parlour
Thurs 20th	7.30pm	Circuit Lent Study Course Week 2 on Zoom

DIARY contd.

Sun 23rd	11.15am	3rd Sunday in Lent Morning Service led by Mr Matthew Thorne
Tues 25th	7.45pm	Choir Practice Church Parlour
Thurs 27th	7.30pm	Circuit Lent Study Course Week 3 on Zoom
Sat 29th	2.30pm for 3pm	JMA Beetle Drive and Tea Church Hall see page 20
Sun 30th	11.15am	Mothering Sunday Morning Service led by Members of the Congregation
APRIL		
Wed 2nd	10.30am	Cuppa with a Copper Church Parlour see page 22
Thurs 3rd	7.30pm	Circuit Lent Study Course Week 4 on Zoom
Sun 6th	11.15am	Passion Sunday Morning Service led by Miss Janet Tweedale



A Prayer for March

Loving God,

As we step into this new month, we thank you for the gift of life and for the opportunity to experience your love and grace.

Amen

from Manchester Methodists.org.uk

***Deadline for April Newsletter items:
Sunday 23rd March 2025***