

Connect

Summer Edition

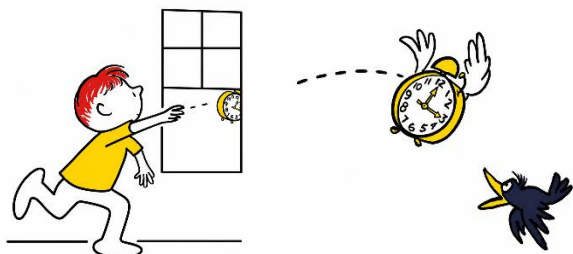
June to August 2026



Editor's Greeting

When I was a little boy in what was then known as the middle infants, with Mrs Hawkins as my teacher, I remember reading a book of jokes. I read it over and over again, partly because I was still learning to read and I had pretty much learned the book by heart. I recently managed to acquire a copy for old time's sake.

There were a number of jokes that I still remember but one in particular springs to mind today:



Why did the boy throw his clock out the window?

Because he wanted to see time fly.

Okay, so it's not going to win any awards for comedy (and might explain my sense of humour) but time certainly does seem to fly. We have arrived at the fifteenth edition of Connect – and the Summer is on the horizon.

There's plenty of news to share and some future dates and events to add to the diary. Enjoy.

Revd Adam Earle

News from the Churches



Eco Church Silver



In March Castle Hill URC were pleased to achieve the Silver Eco-Church Award. This is a significant achievement especially as the criteria

for each level have been increased. We celebrated the award at our service and Church (Fellowship) Meeting on 22nd March. Huge thanks to our Eco Team who have been encouraging us on the way and all who have contributed in different ways.

We now have the Silver Award "Plaque", which are individually made to order, on display in the vestibule. We now have the challenge of working towards Gold which is an even greater step and has an even more rigorous assessment procedure.

In My Easter Bonnet

The meeting of Fun, Fish & Film Friday on 27th March had a distinctive Easter flavour with creative crafts enjoyed by many. There were Easter bonnets to decorate and Easter Egg holders to construct. As usual, we enjoyed our Fish & Chip lunch and our film

for the day was “The Plank”, the television version, starring Eric Sykes and Arthur Lowe.



Fish, Fun and Film Fridays (4F) is open to all. If folk from other churches would like to join in they would be most welcome. We meet on the fourth Friday of each month, beginning at 11:30am. You can check the Castle Hill website for dates.

Good Friday Walk

It is a long-standing tradition (over 50 years in fact) for folk from Castle Hill to join in a walk together on Good Friday afternoon (3rd April). Arranged and led by Mark Ward, the group set off, at 2:15pm from Woodbridge station car park and walked (as far folk were able) to Whisstock’s Place. This is sited by the waterside of the river Deben and is home, in the long shed, to the replica of the Sutton Hoo ship. Thankfully the weather behaved itself well.



Happy Anniversary

Castle Hill URC (originally Castle Hill Congregational Church) was officially opened in May 1957 when the first church meeting was held. Each year we celebrate the church anniversary with a special Sunday service. This year Revd David led our worship during which we welcomed Jonathan into membership and shared a magnificent cake created by Ann Watson – Jonathan cut the cake on our behalf.



Next year we will be celebrating our 70th Anniversary with a number of special activities and events. We will share details nearer the time and hope that folk from across the pastorate will be able to come and join us.

Christian Aid Service

Our worship on the 10th May was prepared by Revd Adam but led by Elaine Thomas who has been the coordinator and advocate for Christian Aid at Castle Hill for many years. The service was followed by a shared lunch, with folk bringing their own savoury elements, and a cake sale to raise further funds for Christian Aid.



Elaine writes (in our June Newsletter): “Very many thanks to all who contributed to Christian Aid Week at Castle Hill by filling an Envelope, providing or buying Cakes at our Cake Sale. The total raised was £419 of which £297 was given in the Envelopes and £122 was raised at the Cake Sale. A very good result.”

Sporting Success



On Tuesday 12th May our Girls' Brigade took part in the gathering of the local Ipswich brigades for their annual Sports Competition. This was

held at Bramford Road Methodist Church and representative of the three groups participated. Our girls had a very successful evening winning four trophies. The shields are for individual age categories as overall or joint winners and the cup is for winning the "Creative" element of the evening, with the girls designing "Get Well Soon" cards. Congratulations to the girls and the leaders for their success and ongoing work.

Mussbach Visit

Since 1985 Castle Hill United Reformed Church has been joined in twinship with the Protestantische Johannes-Kirche (St John's Church) in Mussbach, Germany.



From May 23rd to 28th May thirteen of our members, including Revd David, took part in the Mussbach Twinning visit (our turn to visit Mussbach). This was fewer than usual but some of our folk were unable to participate this year. We will share more about the various events and activities we shared with our Mussbach friends in the next issue of Connect.

Art Exhibition

Something new for Castle Hill is taking place on Saturday 4th July from 14:00 to 17:00. An exhibition and sale of work by local artists. All the places for exhibitors are now booked. Why not come along and share some of the creativity from the local community.



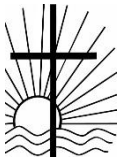
Holiday @ Home

Looking ahead we are organising our annual, two day, Holiday @ Home for the senior members of the church and community. Our chosen "destination" this year will be Ireland (Eire) which will be the theme of our activities. The number of places are limited (by the number of helpers we have available) but all are welcome to apply.



**Wednesday 29th July
& Thursday 30th July**

Two days of activities, entertainment, food, drink and good company for Senior Folk.



St John's United Reformed Church

Together Worship & Lunch

Following our regular review of the Worship section of the Mission Action Plan we have made a number of decisions and plans on how we might progress some of our aims and objectives. We are currently trying out a new initiative, on the first Wednesday of each month, from 13:00 to 14:00, we are holding a short time of reflective, interactive worship followed by lunch.

Our first such gathering took place on Wednesday 6th May. Our theme was Wisdom as reflected in the Bible and we explored an image related to this theme as well as discussing some passages from the book of Proverbs. After worship we enjoyed a tasty lunch of bacon rolls (or vegetarian sausages for those who preferred), mini apple pies and fruit. There were a goodly number of folk present and we would encourage others to come and give it a try.



Our second gathering on 3rd June (which by the time you read this will have happened) we will focus on the theme of the Holy Trinity and share a ploughman's style lunch.

Future dates will be: Wednesday 1st July, Wednesday 5th August and Wednesday 2nd September.

Just 4 Fun

We continue with our twice monthly Just for Fun Meetings on the first and third

Wednesdays of each month. The first Wednesday follows on from the Together Worship and Lunch. Each time we have a particular theme and it can be most entertaining. As well as having a good chat, we enjoy quizzes, games, craft and art activities and a sing-a-long on most occasions.

In May our theme was "Mini-beasts", a subject familiar to many a teacher. We created painted stones in the style of bees and beetles (including a few Ladybirds) and some of us used the prepared elements to create a flower and ladybird brooch or fridge magnet.



Our songs included Wiggly Wooh (the worm at the bottom of the garden), The Bee Song (made famous by Arthur Askey) and Love is Like A Butterfly (written and originally performed by Dolly Parton).

On May 20th our theme was Little Boxes – Holidays and Homes. We enjoyed an "object quiz" of household objects and enjoyed a nostalgic chat about them. We also had the opportunity to create gift boxes, using a surprisingly straightforward origami method beginning with two squares of paper and little houses, made from a card template, to cover an electric tealight.



Our songs, perhaps inevitably, including the protest song “Little Boxes” and, on a lighter note “A Mouse Lived In A Windmill” and “When Father Papered the Parlour”.

If you would like to come and join us you would be most welcome.

Christian Aid



As with many of the churches in the pastorate (and wider area) we continue to

support Christian Aid as part of our annual cycle.

On Saturday 9th May, as part of our regular monthly Community Coffee, we had a special fundraiser. This included “a lovely selection of books, cakes, cards, gifts, jigsaws and plants as well as the usual breakfast goodies” provided by Leslie and Brian. In our June “Advance” newsletter we were pleased to report that the event raised £213.11 which is most encouraging. This will be added to the envelopes returned.

Thanks are due to everyone who organised and supported the event and to our Christian Aid Treasurers, David and Jane, who continue fulfil this roll.

Prayer for Healing

Another of the worship aims outlined in our Mission Action Plan is to explore ways to

make worship more pastoral. On Sunday 17th May, led by Revd Adam, our morning worship included Prayer for Healing.



We have done this before but not for some time so the elders decided to offer this opportunity again. Healing can be a tricky subject and one which challenges our understanding and faith. The theme linked in with the account of the Ascension in Luke’s gospel which gave us some encouraging thoughts. It was a simple and gentle service and we hope to offer similar opportunities in future.



Leiston & Saxmundham United Church

World Day of Prayer



World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. This year, on Friday the 6th March, it was LSUC’s turn to host the World Day of Prayer service for Leiston.

This year the worship material was prepared by Christian women from Nigeria. The theme was “I Will Give You Rest: Come” based on Matthew 11:28–30. Our worship

was led by representatives of a number of local congregations and was well attended. Music was provided by Revd Adam at the piano (the organ was still misbehaving).



The World Day of Prayer used to be known as the “Women’s World Day of Prayer” as it is planned by women from different countries each year. Men have always been welcome to join the worship and we would encourage more to get involved.

Next year the World Day of Prayer will be celebrating its centenary – a significant milestone for a remarkable global movement that has united Christians in worship, prayer, and action across cultures and denominations. The World Day of Prayer has fostered understanding, solidarity, and a shared commitment to justice and peace since 1927.

Lent Link Lunches

We have established a bit of a new tradition at LSUC. Rather than having a Lent Course which can prove impractical, we instead have a series of Lent Lunches & Reflections. This year we commenced with our Ash Wednesday gathering at Saxmundham Chapel. Revd Adam led us in a short time of reflective worship based around verses from Matthew 6, drawing out three Lent themes of giving,



praying and fasting. We considered how these would be reflected in our everyday life. Lunch followed.

On Wednesday 2nd March our reflection focused on Psalm 139 and we made use of some interesting artwork which was inspired by the different sections of the psalm. On 23rd March we explored Psalm 121 – a psalm which reflects hope and expectation.

The sequence concluded with our Maundy Thursday worship and lunch led by Revd David, during which we shared communion.

Spring Mini Concert



As advertised in the last edition of Connect, we held our Spring Mini

Concert on Saturday 9th May. The title, “A Handful of Songs” was reflected in a fun and varied programme presented by Gillian and Adam Earle.

Unsurprisingly the programme began with “Handful of Songs” by Lionel Bart, Michael Pratt & Tommy Steele. We then journeyed through musicals, psalms, a beautiful setting of “Panis Angelicus” sung by Gillian and joined in a rousing sing-a-long. The concert concluded with the song “Thank you for the music” by Abba with everyone joining in with the chorus which was, mercifully, at a lower pitch than the verses.

After the concert we retired to the hall to enjoy a tasty tea of sandwiches and homemade cakes. With seventeen folk attending, we raised £120 towards the work of the church.

Our next Mini Concert, held at Leiston Church, will take place on **Saturday 17th**

October at 14:00 entitled “Goggle-Box” with a TV theme. Again we will share in a tasty tea in the hall afterwards.

Film Lunches

Our April film lunch had a building and house theme. The lunch included cheese “planks” (rather wider than usual cheese straws), packed lunch sandwiches, tea loaf and a wall built from brownie bricks! There were not as many people present so we had rather a lot to get through!

We watched two short films, “The Plank” and “It’s Your Move” – both performed by some wonderful favourite actors and comedians in the style of silent movies. We had a good laugh.

By the time you read this we will have also shared out June film lunch which has a French/English theme. Lunch will have a French flavour.

Our next Film Lunch will take place as shown in the “poster” below:



Sat 12th September
13:00 Saxmundham Chapel

Gospel-A-Thon

In July 2024 we held a Psalm-A-Thon in Church Square in Leiston. We read a series of praise psalms (about 40) interspersed with worship songs.

This year on **Saturday 1st August** we are planning a similar event, a **Gospel-A-Thon**. Over a two-hour period, we plan to read aloud the sixteen chapters of the Gospel According to Mark. This too will be interspersed with hymns and songs which reflect the different elements of the Gospel account. In 2024 we aimed to raise money for the Bible Society, this year we will be raising money for local charities.

**Leiston and Saxmundham
Christians Together**



Saturday 1st August
10:30am to 12:30am
Church Square - Leiston

**We will be reading all 16 chapters of
the Gospel According to Mark,
interspersed with music and song.**



**Felixstowe United
Reformed Church**

Taking Root

In previous editions of Connect we have spoken about Felixstowe United Reformed Church’s association with Ukraine 2 Felixstowe (U2F), the local organisation that was established to support Ukrainian guests escaping the war in Eastern Ukraine. The project continues. The Ukrainian guests have worked hard to assimilate and find ways to support themselves through work,

learning English and engaging in the community.

You will recall that FURC refurbished and made our former choir vestry, known now as The Hub, as a space for meeting and learning for U2F activities. There is also a monthly Sunday gathering making use of more of the space for activities.



On Sunday 22nd March Revd Adam led the Pastorate Lent Service followed by tea and cake. We were then joined by our Ukrainian friends and U2F representatives for a special tree planting ceremony. An apple tree was planted, fed and watered, with the help of some of the children. The tree is a symbol of hope and unity, planting of roots and bearing fruit in celebration of the work of U2F and the partnership with FURC.

Christian Aid



Felixstowe has also, over the years, been highly supportive of Christian Aid. On

Sunday 10th May Revd Adam led our morning service which included this year's video from Christian Aid focussing on Nairobi and the small vegetable gardens that some of the local folk are developing in unlikely places – providing healthy food for families and surplus produce to sell at market to cover necessary expenses such as rent, school fees and health care.

If you would like to view the video it is still available on YouTube. There is also a very encouraging thankyou and update video.

On Saturday 16th May, the conclusion of Christian Aid Week, we joined our friends from Felixstowe Methodist Church in organising and running a special Coffee Morning for Christian Aid at FMC Trinity.

There were refreshments, including a wonderful array of cakes. Stalls included books, jigsaws and cards.

The highlight for many was the wonderful live folk music provided by The Brawlers, a fantastic group of singers and players. There were a great many toes tapping and voices joining in.



The event proved very successful. Overall £450 was raised. Thanks to everyone who helped with the event and all who attended.

Summer Praise

On Sunday 14th June, at 15:00, we will be holding a service of "Summer Praise". The service will be led by Revd David, with Revd Adam providing music on the organ and piano. The hymns and songs have all been requested by members of our church family, some giving particular reasons for their choice. The service will include Bible Readings, introductions to the songs and

prayer as well, of course, as singing the hymns.

We are inviting folk from across the pastorate (and the churches in Felixstowe) to come and join us. Afterwards we will share tea, cake and conversation.



Felixstowe United Reformed Church
Orwell Road, Ipswich IP11 7NZ

Sunday 14th June
@ 3:00pm

**Worship including favourite hymns,
prayers and readings followed by
Afternoon Tea. All are welcome.**



**Hadleigh United
Reformed Church
Great Meeting**

Happy Easter



As in all our churches, Easter is a special celebration marked with joy and celebration. This year our Easter Sunday service was led by Revd Janice White.

A wonderful tradition included in our service is known as the "Greening of the Cross". The stark wooden form is transformed by the addition of flowers and greenery as a symbol of new life blooming from Christ's death and resurrection.

Blooming Marvelous(ly)

Talking of stunning floral displays, the front cover of our June Newsletter featured a magnificent photograph of the Wisteria in our sensory garden, next to the Ansell Centre, in full bloom. What a wonderful display – a celebration of God's creation.



Congratulations

On Monday 27th April one of our church members, Eve, was very surprised to find that all her many years of service to the community had been



recognised. She was presented with the Mayor's Award at the Annual Town Meeting held in St Mary's Church! Although the award was mainly in recognition of all her work at the Memories Café, it was also an acknowledgement of the many years she has dedicated to the Ansell Centre Charity. Well done, Eve. Congratulations.

Monk's Eleigh URC



On the afternoon of Sunday May 10th this year, a service was held at Monks Eleigh to celebrate the many years of Congregational and United Reformed Church witness in the village. The service was led by the Eastern Synod Moderator, Revd Lythan Nevard and Revd David with music by Revd Adam.



During the service Nigel gave an engaging presentation about the history, life and witness of the church. For the moment the original chapel remains for occasional worship and day retreat. And the brick-built chapel remains in use as a museum of old technology.

Café Worship

Café style worship, usually held in the Ansell Centre, is a regular feature of our programme of services throughout the year. We usually hold these services in the Ansell Centre and enjoy a tasty breakfast items.



In March we held a Café Style Service on Palm Sunday, led by Revd Adam. We explored the story and got creative in various ways. One of our younger friends also mastered the art of creating Palm Crosses from a single strip of green card. The young folk also created a magnificent Hosanna Banner which we subsequently displayed in the church.



On Sunday 31st May we celebrated Trinity Sunday, exploring the “mystery” of the Trinity. One activity involved trying to determine the contents of a sealed box without be able to open it up.



Did you know that Pretzels were originally create as a symbol of the Trinity.

Hadleigh Show

The Hadleigh Show is one of Suffolk's oldest and most cherished agricultural events, it has been running since 1840. It brings together the farming community and the wider public for a celebration of rural life.

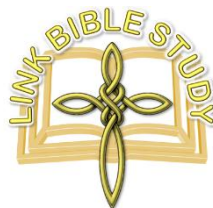
Held annually at Holbecks Park near Hadleigh, the show features livestock and equine competitions, local food and craft exhibitors, countryside displays, family entertainment, and educational activities. Organised by the Hadleigh Farmers' Agricultural Association, it showcases the rich agricultural heritage of Suffolk while providing an enjoyable day out for visitors of all ages.



For many years Hadleigh URC have been present at the show, offering refreshments and activities, without charge, to the many folk who visit the show. This year was no exception. Well done to everyone who helped organise the HURC marquee, refreshments and activities and all those who greeted the visitors on the day – what a wonderful witness to God's love and welcome.

Pastorate and Other News

Pastorate (Online) Link Bible Study



Our monthly online gathering take place on the on 1st Thursday @ 10:00 via Zoom. Sessions last about 40 minutes. As well as joining on Zoom via computer or smart phone it is also possible to join using a standard landline telephone. We use the Castle Hill Zoom Account – ID 889 953 6542, to join by telephone you can call 0208 0806592.

This year (Year A) the lectionary gives particular attention to the Gospel According to Matthew. For the second half of 2026 we will therefore be exploring the Gospel account as Matthew presents it. The forthcoming dates and themes are as follows:

2nd Jul: Faithful Israel & the New Moses
Matthew 1:1 and Matthew 2:13-16

3rd Sep: The Teacher of Righteousness
Matthew 3:13-15, Matthew 5:6,
Matthew 5:20, Matthew 6:33,
Matthew 7:28-29, Matthew 25:46

1st Oct: The Holy Mountain
Matthew 4:8, Matthew 5:1-2,
Matthew 14:23, Matthew 15:29-30,
Matthew 24:3, Matthew 28:16-17

5th Nov: The Fulfilment of the Law
Matthew 5:17-20, Matthew 5:43-45,48
Matthew 8:10-12, Matthew 9:13,
Matthew 12:6, Matthew 13:17

3rd Dec: The Zoroastrians
Matthew 2:1-2,7-12, Matthew 7:13-14,
Matthew 21:21

Pastorate Away-Day



Saturday 27th June
10:00 – 16:00

If you have not yet signed up and would like to take part please ask your church secretary for a flier. The deadline is Sunday 14th June so that we can make the necessary arrangements and share the programme and details with all who are participating.

Eco Church

The Eco-Church Website has made available the "A Rocha Easy Eco Tips Calendar". You can download this from their website but here are the tips for June, July and August:



Take part in citizen science or a local nature

event. Citizen science is a way for ordinary people to get involved in scientific research or data collection. There are many projects to choose from and it's easy to make a contribution. Invite others to get involved with you too. Here are some projects that you could help with:

- Search your local beach with a shore survey: wildlifetrusts.org/shoresearch
- Spend ten minutes counting pollinators: ukpoms.org.uk
- Join in with Churches Count on Nature (6- 14 June): arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/churches-count-on-nature/

- Do a Bee Walk: beewalk.org.uk
- Join Great Big Green Week (6-14 June): greatbiggreenweek.com



It's Plastic Free July and this year we're thinking about

laundry, a top source of microplastic pollution. Fibres from synthetic clothes (polyester, nylon, and acrylic for example) shed tiny fibres during washing and drying. These enter the sewage systems and are hard to filter out. Use a microfibre bag or ball to catch the fibres. Learn more about reducing plastic pollution in the laundry process at plasticfreejuly.org/get-involved/what-you-can-do/plastic-free-laundry/ and more about this year's campaign at plasticfreejuly.org



Looking after wildlife in the heat. Times of

drought and dryness can be dangerous for wildlife. Provide water for birds and insects - put a dish of water out to help wildlife stay hydrated. Insects, small mammals, birds, and even badgers, foxes, and deer could benefit. A stone in a plant saucer helps bees to perch and drink without drowning. These small actions make a big difference and are just some of the ways we can live out our calling to care for God's creation. See our blog on looking after wildlife in the heat for more warm weather eco tips: arocha.org.uk/looking-afterwildlife-in-the-heat/

The **Autumn Edition** of Connect is due to be published at the beginning of September. If you have any items for inclusion please let Revd Adam have them by Sunday 16th August. Photographs are particularly appreciated.