

Rejoice!

March /April /May 2025



**The Magazine of the
West Norfolk Methodist Circuit**

Dear Friends,

I wonder if you've ever given something up for Lent. I did. Once. I know it is hard to believe, but when I was a teenager, I gave up chocolate for the entire Lenten period. It started off being a good challenge for me, as chocolate was – and still is – one of my most favourite things! It got harder as Lent progressed because I attended my school Spring Fair and, completely against my usual lack of winning anything at raffles and competitions, I won bags and bags of chocolate... Which I then had to store safely until Lent was over... Since then, I've decided that giving up chocolate was one of the worst things I've ever done, particularly as I made myself ill on Easter Sunday eating all the chocolate I'd won before starting on my Easter Eggs!!

So, I wonder if you've ever given up something – anything – for Lent or if you're intending to do so this year. However, Lent is traditionally a time when we focus on realigning our lives and focus towards God thus it is a time of discipline, of self-reflection and of repentance in order for that realignment to occur. So maybe it is about something more than giving up chocolate or any of our other favourite foods...

Maybe, in realigning ourselves to God and into the ways of God it is more about re-learning life in God's Kingdom and setting ourselves on the correct path if things have gone a little awry.

These words from Pope Francis may help us reflect more deeply on that very idea:

Give up saying hurtful words and say kind words,
Give up feeling sad and be filled with happiness,
Give up getting angry and be filled with patience,
Give up thinking you have failed and be filled with hope,
Give up worries and trust in God,
Give up complaining and live simply,
Give up feeling pressurised and be prayerful,
Give up selfishness and be loving to others,
Give up holding grudges and make peace,
Give up words and be silent so you can listen.

Isn't that quite a challenging list of items? I wonder how many you can identify with? 40 days seems like a long, long time, doesn't it? However, many of the books and course concerning well-being, dropping out of old, bad habits or picking up new habits, suggest that 40 days are all it takes to either break or create a habit – for us, as we approach Lent, that might ring true.

May we approach this Lenten season thinking more about realigning ourselves with the way of God's Kingdom – maybe thinking and acting upon those words from Pope Francis – rather than spend 40 days wishing we'd not given up on chocolate, caffeine or all those foods we enjoy. Maybe, just maybe, we might be transformed as we journey with Christ through the wilderness and emerge spiritually stronger as we celebrate Christ crucified, risen and glorified on Easter Sunday.

With much love and prayers,
Rev Paul, Jacob, Sam and Benji

Praying together in the Circuit

Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes
from the mouth of God. Matt 4:4

Jesus spoke the word of God to come against each temptation he experienced in the wilderness, faithful to God's purposes.

Father God, we journey through Lent with the desire to draw ever closer to you, to seek your kingdom, your righteousness your will, your glory, to be faithful to you and your purposes. Your Word is a lamp for my feet, and a light on my path
Ps.119:105 Spirit divine, move in power all over the world to reveal the truth of Jesus and prepare hearts to response to Him our Saviour, our Redeemer, our Lord. We pray for your church co-operating with the tri-une Godhead sharing the gospel in words and love. May this be a time when many will come to believe the good news of Jesus.

‘These things have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and so that by believing, you may have life in His Name’. John 20: 31

Words of Paul...

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So, I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die. Galatians 2:20-21

Paul had lots of explaining to do, after all he has changed his mind about what he once was totally against and now it's a completely different story. In fact, its Paul's testimony, his experience, his relationship with the living Christ and the new life he now lives.

‘Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see’.

[John Newton 1725-1807]

Words of Peter ...

‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God’ Matt 16: 16

One day Peter was walking with Jesus and the other disciples. A question Jesus asked caused him to express who he thought Jesus was. Jesus replied ‘You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. Divine revelation led Peter to express his belief in who Jesus was, he didn’t figure it out on his own. Peter knew the truth of who Jesus was because God revealed it to him.

Charles Wesley in his hymn ‘And can it be’ included a verse about divine revelation, enlightenment, understanding.

‘Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature’s night;

Thine eye diffused a quickening ray, I woke, the dungeon flamed with light: my chains fell off, my heart was free;

I rose, went forth and followed Thee’.

Lord we pray for divine revelation, let there be enlightenment, wonderful moments when the truth dawns.

‘God has called you out of darkness, into his most marvelous light;

Brought his truth to life within you, turned your blindness into sight.

Let your light so shine around you that God’s name is glorified; and all find fresh hope and purpose in Christ Jesus glorified’.

[James Seddon 1915-1983]

‘Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me, melt me, mould me, fill me, use me, Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me’.

[Daniel Iverson 1890-1977]

Lord God, you are the potter, we are the clay' have your way in our lives, Your Kingdom come, your will be done, your glory revealed in all the world.

Have reverence for Christ in your hearts and honour him as Lord. Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you. 1 Peter 3:15



Clenchwarton

Clenchwarton Methodist Church is still host to a number of events throughout the year involving not just chapel members but the whole community.

The talks take place on the third Saturday of the month starting at 2.30pm. They have covered a variety of topics, and I have found them all interesting and, in some cases, thought provoking. In March the talk is on the Battle of Waterloo and King's Lynn's involvement. Future talks are on New Zealand, South Africa and Nelson Mandela, and Horatio Nelson. All are welcome, just turn up and there will be room. A big thank you to those in the Circuit who have given talks, and I will be pleased to hear from anyone who would be interested in talking to us on any topic.

Coffee and Craft Afternoons take place on the first Saturday of the month between 3.00 and 5:00pm. You are invited to bring your own craft and meet others in a friendly environment.

The annual Plant Sale will be in May on a Saturday Afternoon starting at 1.00pm but the exact date has yet to be finalised.

We also have regular quizzes on a Friday evening on the first Friday of the month and there is a seasonal concert just before Christmas.

On a Tuesday Morning between 9.00 and 10.00am we have a Prayer Meeting which is attended and led by Rev Jackie Goddard. We also provide a Sunday Service which varies in style but is constant in its friendliness.

All the events at the Chapel have free entry with tea or coffee available. Please come along to any of the events and you can find out more details from ringing Joan Edwards on 01553 769819.

Dersingham

Our Christmas celebrations got off to a splendid start on 23 November with our well attended Christmas Fair/coffee morning which raised £550 for the King's Lynn Night Shelter. A little nearer to Christmas we sent 22 cards to MHA in response to their Christmas Friendship Appeal to bring joy to an older person and, as is our usual custom, we also distributed Christmas cards giving details of our Christmas services to everyone associated with Dersingham Methodist, including those who have attended various church activities during the year and hall hirers.

Our much-loved Carols by Candlelight service was held on Sunday 15 December led by Revd. Dr Rich Ncube. As usual, this was very well supported, and we were pleased to welcome several members of the local community who joined with us in singing some familiar carols. With the sparkling Christmas tree and colourful and beautifully decorated windowsills our chapel looked amazing embracing us all in the warmth and friendliness that seemed to surround us as we worshipped. The following Sunday was a Christmas Songs of Praise. On Christmas Day morning we were very pleased to welcome Sheila Johnson to our pulpit and we returned home afterwards suitably spiritually refreshed and ready for our Christmas fare.

Christmas collections amounted to £320.50 which was sent to Embrace the Middle East, an ecumenical Christian charity working with vulnerable communities in the area – this is particularly relevant bearing in mind the on-going conflict involving Israel, Gaza and Lebanon. We pray that the ceasefire, currently in place in Gaza, will hold.

Using some of the funds from the generous donation to the church by John Titcomb in his will we have purchased 50 Singing the Faith hymn books and replaced the flooring in the kitchen.

On Sunday 2nd March we will be welcoming Matthew Henderson to our pulpit for our 10.30am service. Matthew is Community Partnerships Manager, East of England, for The Leprosy Mission.

Our Good Friday service at 10.30am on 18 April will be led by Philip and Elizabeth Batstone.

Our regular weekly clubs and monthly coffee mornings continue to be very well supported. The coffee mornings in particular are an ideal opportunity for us to welcome visitors from the local community. Currently we are raising funds for various Christian charities as well as toward the costs of our forthcoming Flower Festival in May.

Our Flower Festival will be held between 22nd and 25th May. The theme this year is 'Biblical Occupations'. There is provision for 13 arrangements, and we are looking forward to some imaginative and colourful displays. Sunday 25th will be the 135th Anniversary of the Dersingham Chapel and our Songs of Praise at 3.00pm will be led by Revd. Jackie Goddard. John Davis

Downham Market

Our Christmas celebrations started on the 1st of December with a Memorial Service to help those who wanted to remember loved ones no longer with them.

We continued the celebrations with performances from our children's drama group which looked at the nativity from the point of view of the animals, particular a very spoilt donkey. The focus on the young people continued with not one but two baptisms and a children's disco.

The church building was full to the brim, in the run up to Christmas, with groups celebrating. Our marvellous social centre kitchen staff and volunteers must have made 100s of Christmas dinners over December. To top it off Rev Paul decided to put on a free dinner on Christmas Day for anyone on their own. We were all very nervous, as we pictured busloads of people turning up for a free lunch. In the end it was a great success. Morrisons, the local Artisan bakers and cheese shop all donated food. We even had The Cats band come to provide entertainment.

Of course, there was lots of carol singing and joyful worship as Christmas approached. Some people joined the Downham Churches together carol singing outside Tesco and at the Town hall carol singing. This was in addition to our own candlelight service.

Messy Church continues to meet on the second Friday of the month at 4:20pm. Our Junior Church also meets once a month at the same time as our morning worship.

Now we are starting to look forward to Easter. Our Lent course which starts on Tuesday 11th March is going to be based around the musical West Side Story. Holy week itself sees the solemn Ash Wednesday 2pm communion, a Maundy Thursday service, a Good Friday Walk and service all led by Paul. Last year's Good Friday service was moving and dramatic, with Paul making full use of his acting skills. We look forward to seeing how he will bring home the Good Friday message this year. Finally, we will have our joyous Easter Sunday Service led by Ralph, Jenny and John.

FenSong

FenSong is Downham Market Methodist Churches children's drama group Our Fensong family is growing, and this month sees us celebrate our first birthday since we took over from Cate who was Fensong's founder. 2024 was a busy year and 2025 will be even busier! We had new adventures where we took the children to sing Christmas songs to residents at High Haven and Diamond House. Both of these nursing homes welcomed us, and we sang to some lovely residents in their group sitting rooms, and then we went on to sing for any resident in their room who were unable to join us. Every resident was given a handmade gift from the children, and it was so nice to see our new elderly friends smile and thank the children. We promised that we would be back many times during 2025 and will be to the Diamond House residents this month as two residents have their birthdays. We will sing happy birthday for them and hope everyone will join in our sing along as we sing some popular songs from their era.

We are already in February and have been busy talking about our next performance which will be - The Iron Man - Adapted by Fensong. We will be performing it in the Church Hall this June.

We have spoken to the children about the original film, how we can perform it and make it our own. After talking with the children about the story behind the film they did some amazing picture, gave us some fantastic ideas and started designing costumes for each part.

These children all have their own struggles, and some do not cope well with change. Each one is an active member of Fensong and makes the team leads proud. We help our children all we can and show them that they are superheroes. The best part is that these children all teach us new things just by being themselves and being a part of our amazing Fensong Family.



Downham Market Methodist Church Easter Services

Tuesday 11 th March 10am	Lent course starts. Based around West Side Story. Continues every Tuesday at 10am until 15 th April
Sunday 13 th April 10am	Palm Sunday Service
Thursday 17 th April 7pm	Maundy Thursday Service Led by Rev Paul Critchley Includes Communion
Friday 18 th April 9am	Good Friday Walk of Witness Sets off from St Edmunds and follows a circular walk around town ending at the Methodist Church. Refreshments provided at the end of the walk.
Friday 18 th April 11am	Good Friday Led by Rev Paul Critchley
Sunday 20 th April 10am	Easter Sunday

FELTWELL METHODIST CHURCH, COMMUNITY HALL & GARDEN

Before Christmas we welcomed new villagers to Feltwell, moving from Scotland and the south of England. It is lovely to see some new faces. Christmas was a busy time in Feltwell trying to inspire the people of the village with the story of the Nativity as part of our Tunnel of Light. 25m long (27.5 yds for the old English among us!) if you would like to take a stroll through the tunnel, you can do so by visiting Feltwell Methodist Church's Facebook page. Participants of our Christmas Cream Teas had to enter via the tunnel. As well as taking two weeks to construct the tunnel took a week to disassemble. We had help from members of our weeknight groups. Our Carols by Candlelight was a cosy affair followed with a church tea.

In the new year we welcomed "The Village Players" from Foulton performing their version of "Cinderella, The Golden Years". The hall was packed for both the Saturday and



Sunday matinees, over 100 in the audience in total. Oh no there weren't..... oh yes there were!! The loudest responses from the smaller second audience, smaller in number and smaller in stature.....children.

The new year also tends to trigger our minds to think of new ideas, and without asking the question we have transformed some of our activities. The Table Tennis group which meets on Mondays 7-9pm and Tuesdays 1.45-3.45, are now Monday Club & Tuesday Club, both still playing table tennis, but also introducing pool, snooker, bagatelle and any other activity they choose. We have already welcomed 2 new members this year. Feltwellbeings, which has been running for 3-4 years, is also changing its image, with members coming up with a new title for the group and possibly new operating strategies. Its aim is still to provide warm space and support for people from all backgrounds, including social activities such as Scrabble, card games, snooker and group activities including, "Play Your Cards Right", Richard Osman's "House of Games" and "Countdown". We have been lunching as a church family every 6 weeks or so. The restaurant experiences vary and there are some to which we won't be returning. We have enjoyed eating as a family and sharing time with the singles among us.

We are analysing the history of Methodism in Feltwell and trying to verify the conflicts in the information. What we see at the moment is that the stone-laying ceremony took place in 1935, and the building was opened in 1936. We will get to the bottom of it all and let you all know when we should all celebrate!

And finally..... Could you answer random questions from the Highway Code. If not, do you know if you are safe on the road or pavement. For example, what do Rules 238 to 252 say, especially 244 and 248? I spoke to a delivery van driver about totally blocking the pavement in the village. He responded that he was a delivery van! Interesting response as there are NO EXCEPTIONS to these rules. Did you even know that driving on or along a 'footway' has been illegal since 1835 and in 1888 cycling on a footway was added to the offence. Well.... What d'ya know!! Does Matthew 22 v 21 apply to us in relation to the laws of this country, or is that a bit of a stretch?

St Faith's

We have much to be thankful for as we look back over 2024. Over the year our monthly retiring collections at our morning services have raised £1,452.88 for both local and international charities including both Methodist and Church of England charities.

Since January 2024 we have been celebrating 'St. Faith's Pots of Joy and Thanksgiving,' for time spent volunteering both in the local community and within St. Faith's church community. For every hour of volunteering offered by individual members of the congregation, a threadable bead has been dropped into a jar. At the end of the year there were 11,799 beads, representing nearly one thousand hours done in the name of Jesus every month during the past year. Our Squirrels and Beavers counted and then strung the beads which were then entwined around a Christmas tree for all to see.



Our Christmas Services were well attended by our local community which was a joy, as was our Christmas Lunch, which saw 51 folk attend, including referrals from both local agencies and other charities. Thanks have been extended to all who volunteered to help on the day and those who gave donations.

St. Faith's is now a Food Bank centre, a new venture which commenced on Wednesday 22nd January and operating from the St. Faith's Community Hub every Wednesday morning. If you should wish to volunteer to help, please contact St. Faith's Church Office.

We held a Confirmation Service on Sunday 12th February when Bishop Jane and Deacon Lynne Tonge confirmed and welcomed three young people into the Church of England and Methodist Church.

We now look forward to the season of Lent and Easter. During Lent, we are holding group sessions every Tuesday morning between 10.30 and 11.45 am in the St. Faith's Community Hub, led by Daphne Sampson, on the theme *Christ in the Wilderness*. The dates are 11th, 18th, 25th March, 1st and 8th of April. Why not come along and join us?

A variety of services take place at this season, including the Imposition of Ashes at 10 am and 6.30 pm on Ash Wednesday, 5th March, marking the beginning of Lent. Special services follow on Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and the Walk of Witness with Churches Together in Kings Lynn on Good Friday, not forgetting our Easter Day celebrations. We are also looking forward to Sunday 18th May at 9.45 am when Rev Helen Hollands, District Chair, will be leading our morning worship. A warm welcome awaits those who wish to join us at any of these services. For more information please see the Circuit Plan or contact me.

We are holding our Spring Fair on Saturday 15th March at 2 pm and our regular Coffee Mornings continue on the first Saturday of every month from 10am to 12noon; the Forget-me-Not Luncheon Club every Wednesday 12noon to 1.30pm in term time and the Friendship Café every Wednesday 2.30pm to 4pm for those with dementia accompanied by a family member, friend or carer. There is always a lot going on at St. Faith's!

Regular readers of Rejoice will remember that Richard Parr was St. Faith's correspondent for many years. Richard has now decided to relinquish this role owing to ill health. Our thanks go to Richard for his work in this regard and pray God's Blessings upon him.

Joan Greening

Heacham

It seems a long time ago that we were planning and taking part in Christmas activities, but the Advent Carol Service held at 2.00pm on 21st December, was very well attended and all enjoyed the mince pies and alcohol-free mulled wine that was served afterwards. Our annual Christmas three course lunch on 6th December was attended by 30+ friends – with a collection taken for our Christmas charity, was another successful event. At the end of last year, we started our Crafty Crowd meetings for our community who enjoy craft. People are invited to bring their own crafts and come along for refreshments and chatter, a great opportunity to meet new people. Also, Noah's Ark, our Mother and Toddler group goes from strength to strength.

In the coming few weeks, we are looking forward to celebrating a Centenary birthday, Ena Layton, is one of our most regular attendees and readers. We have Lent services and soup lunches planned on Thursdays in March – beginning on the 13th at Hunstanton Catholic Church and Hunstanton Churches together and the following week at St Mary's Church. These will continue alternately during Lent; 27th – Methodist, 3rd April St Mary's, 10th Methodist. Heacham

With the approach of spring, we look forward to the return of our friends who are regular summer visitors to Heacham and join our congregation during their stay. We are also considering a number of ways to extend our engagement with our wider Community – so watch this space for more information as our plans hopefully turn to action!

We add our thoughts and prayers to others in the Circuit for all in war zones around the world and count our blessings, knowing and trusting God has plans for us all.

Hilgay with Southery

Our repairs have now been completed, thanks to John Redcar who managed repairs to the kitchen ceiling without too much disruption to services and meetings being held whilst the work was going on.

The carol service on Christmas Eve was well attended, Rev. Paul led the service and included a Christmas Carol quiz which caused much amusement. Our Christmas card to each other raised £75 for New Dawn India.

During February our Guild meetings were 4th Feb, Rev, Paul Critchley talking about his walking trip of the Normandy beaches. Feb. 18th Scam Awareness by Police Officers.

In March we shall hold a pancake party on March 4th Shrove Tuesday. and March 18th a talk entitled My experience with the Opera, by Jean Hornbuckle.

April 1st meeting speaker Mrs Lesley Dent. and April 15th will be the AGM.

Our last meeting of 2024/25 will be a Good Friday Service which we hope will be led by Rev. Paul Critchley. April 18th at 2:30pm.

All meetings begin at 2:30pm and all are welcome.

On Easter Sunday Rev. Paul will conduct our worship at 10:30am.

Our bi-monthly coffee mornings continue to be successful. In January we did a Winter Warmer which included soup and a roll as well as coffee and cake.

As this article must be in before our Church Council meeting, please keep an eye on our notice board for events coming in March, April and May

Pauline Driver

Hunstanton

The Christmas season, so busy with all its carol services and readings, seems far behind us now and we look forward to our next festival of Easter. Already the supermarkets are selling Hot Cross buns, Easter Bunnies and Eggs. It would be wonderful to think that all the people purchasing them understood what they represent.

In Hunstanton all the churches are working together by arranging Lent lunches, which will be hosted by each church in turn during the six weeks of Lent. We will invite a speaker to take a service, to be followed by a soup lunch. On Good Friday, we will join together for a Walk of Faith through the town before having our own services in our churches. Early on Easter morning we are planning a Sunrise service on the Green.

During the spring, we are hoping to start a Toddlers Group as a result of the one run by Val Fisher, dressed in angelic costume with wings, at Christmas. Two families brought their toddlers along and were very encouraging, saying they would definitely support us and spread the word if we decided to continue. Maybe this is the opportunity we have been seeking to bring younger families into our church.

Val also made jams and chutneys to raise money for Guide Dogs, resulting in over £160, which, with a donation from the church meant that she was able to give them £200. A wonderful effort.

Sadly, in January one of our very much-loved members, Di Cosby, passed away. Over the years she was a member she contributed in many ways to the life of the church family, and she will be greatly missed. We know that she is now safe in the presence of the Lord.

We send peace and joy for Lent and Easter.





LENTEN LUNCHES TO BE HELD

All are welcome to our Lenten Services
Followed by a **SOUP LUNCH**

FRIDAY 7TH MARCH – 11am
HUNSTANTON METHODIST CHURCH
5 Austin Street, Hunstanton, PE36 6AL

THURSDAY 13TH MARCH – 11.30am
CATHOLIC CHURCH OF OUR LADY & ST EDMUND
30 Sandringham Road, Hunstanton PE36 5DR

FRIDAY 21ST MARCH – 11am
ST EDMUND'S CHURCH
Church Street, Hunstanton, PE36 5HD
Joint with St Andrew's, Ringstead

FRIDAY 28TH MARCH – 11am
THE WAY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
10 Downs Close, Hunstanton, PE36 5HU

FRIDAY 4TH APRIL – 11am
THE UNION CHURCH
2 Sandringham Road, Hunstanton, PE36 5BN

FRIDAY 11TH APRIL – 11am
ST EDMUND'S CHURCH
Church Street, Hunstanton, PE36 5HD
Joint with St Andrew's, Ringstead

London Road

Carol service

Our weeknight Carol service was a new venture for us and was a great success. We enjoyed a time of worship and fellowship afterwards, welcoming friends old and new. Let us hope that we can hold one again for this year.

Vestry

The bulk of the vestry work is completed and just a little drying out to complete. We are now looking at carpet, curtains and furniture with the aim of re-using and up-cycling where possible.

Back in church

We are back in the church after our winter accommodation in the hall. This has meant that the small band of folk who have been preparing the worship space throughout the winter can take a well-earned rest. We are very grateful to them!

Discipleship pathway

Back in the autumn Jackie preached at London Road and introduced us to the Discipleship Pathway. Over the last few weeks we have been praying and chatting about each 'station' in an effort to discern our priorities as a church family.

News from Pott Row

Looking back... our Christmas tree festival went well, and we did appreciate people who came and supported us from the Circuit, as well as seeing friends from our local villages. We were busy throughout the weekend and had a full house for our Carol Service on Sunday afternoon. Rev Richman led the service, and it was very much enjoyed and appreciated - we think there were about 70 people who attended. Readers were provided by various local groups, with a special shout out to the Beavers and Cubs for their reading which was done so well. Over £700 was raised for chapel funds.

Looking forwards, having benefitted ourselves from generosity at Christmas we are preparing for our annual coffee morning in aid of the Tapping House Hospice. It is Saturday 15th March, there will be cakes (of course!) and crafty bits available to buy... we hope to be able to raise a good amount to support this local charity. As we approach Easter, we also collect in our Action for Children boxes, and we now have a box in the chapel where we collect food donations for the King's Lynn Night Shelter. As we are supported by our local community, so do we seek to support others.

We always look forward to Easter, despite the current chilly winds we know Spring is on its way - snowdrops are out, and I noticed a crocus peeking out this morning, although admittedly it was looking rather sorry for itself! More old friends will appear in our gardens over the next few weeks. Over the Easter period we will have our regular services, some of us will join with the London Road House group for their Lent course, and we have a service in our chapel on Good Friday at 3 pm... then comes the joy of Easter Sunday morning, a celebration of light and new life: "our Christ who is arisen".

With love from us all at Pott Row Chapel



Stanhoe

Our Christmas services were held on 8th (2nd Sunday in Advent) when we welcomed Elizabeth Batstone as our preacher, and 22nd December, when we celebrated our Christmas Carol Service, led by Rev. Rich, supported by his whole family, and made all the more special with the presence of Judith and Tim's four young grandchildren. The church was packed – every seat filled – which, sadly, is a rare occurrence for us nowadays.

Our Covenant service, as I write, is planned for next Sunday, 2nd February, and will be led by Rev.Dr. Richman Ncube.

Already, we are making plans for the Easter period. On Good Friday morning, the pilgrims of the Midland leg of the Pilgrim Cross organisation will, as usual, be calling in for rest and refreshments and a short time of shared worship, before finishing their walk at Walsingham that evening. We look forward to welcoming many old friends and new, and always find their commitment and their faith inspirational. They will have set out from Leicester the previous Monday, and walked all week, carrying a heavy wooden cross, but still arrive cheerful and singing as they approach the church.

Our Easter morning service is to be led by Irene Garrard, Local Preacher. It is good that Irene is fit and able to lead worship again, after many months of ill health. We continue our association with the Kisumu Children's Trust, a charity in Kisumu, Kenya, which supports impoverished and needy local children. They are currently running a feeding programme

and providing 150 children with lunch 6 days a week, often the only meal they have each day. We support them financially, both individually and from church funds, and with prayer.

Members of our Prayer Chain (not just from our own congregation; some from other churches) continue to support people in our churches, our local villages and across the circuit, in times of bereavement and sickness, through a commitment to daily prayer.

Elizabeth MacLeod

Terrington St Clement

At Terrington we may be small number but have big hearts. We have a weekly coffee morning along-side the knit and natter group each Saturday. MWiB meets once a month, we have a monthly film and discussion group and Bible study group led by Rev Jackie. Once a month the Terrington Flower Club meet too. We have regular café services and services by our Worship Team.

In December we held our Christmas fair, where we raised about £200. A Nativity Festival and Blue Christmas service, We were quite late in organising this and only a couple of people came but for them it was just what they needed.

Looking forward to the next few months on Fri 7th March 2:30pm we will be holding the annual World Day of Prayer service. An Easter fair and Coffee morning Saturday 12th April. We will also have a service on Good Friday 18th April and Easter Celebration Service Easter Sunday. All are welcome.

Caroline Meaden

Methodist Women in Britain

We have continued to meet monthly over the winter months at Terrington St Clements and have enjoyed our Wednesday afternoons of fellowship and chat. It is not always easy to find a speaker for each meeting and so in November we enjoyed readings, hymns and poems chosen by our members.

In December we were invited to join with the folk at Clenchwarton for a Christmas party where we enjoyed a game of Guess the Quality Street and another one which was very much like Call My Bluff (you have to be of a certain age to remember that one!) This involved choosing the right meaning for some very unusual words. We then enjoyed a festive “bring and share” tea followed by singing some Carols. A good time was had by all and £70 was raised in donations for Action For Children. Also in December, three of us were able to visit Baby Basics at Dersingham Parish Church to deliver some knitted garments and blankets plus a donation to help them in their vital work.

Our January meeting was also a Member’s Afternoon, but in February we will be looking forward to the World Day of Prayer Service on March 7th by learning the songs and reading through the service. We are very much looking forward to having Jackie Goddard and Joella Nash as speakers for our next two meetings. If there is anyone in the Circuit who would like to come and talk to us about their life or work or anything – we would love to hear from you!

Please contact: Mary Houghton 01553 828003

Ruth Hannay ruthhannay@sky.com

Wimbotsham

Greetings and every blessing to you all from Wimbotsham as we go into the New Year.

Every third Saturday of the month we hold our coffee mornings – which are well attended with visitors from the village and further afield. Always a good supply of homemade cakes – enjoyed by all. All are welcome – we would love to see you between 10:15 and 12 noon.

We continue to meet each Sunday for worship. After the service most of us stay for coffee, biscuit and even cakes, if there are any left after the coffee mornings. A precious time of fellowship. It is good to see the evenings getting lighter and spring well on the way with snowdrops and daffodils appearing.
Denise Landymore

East Anglia Methodist Heritage Centre at Wighton (NR23 1PG)

Re-opening for 2025 on Saturday 19th and Monday 21st April from 11 am to 3 pm.

Thereafter on Tuesdays and Fridays from 11 am to 3 pm.

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Come and discover the history of the Methodist Church and its people in East Anglia over the past 200 years.

Fascinating themed displays chart the development of the church, children's and youth work, overseas missions, music – there is much to explore and learn.

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A Letter from Matjiinge, Zimbabwe

Dear Friends in Christ,

I hope this message finds you well and filled with the grace of God. As we approach our upcoming Prayer Day here in our Circuit, I wanted to reach out to you, our cherished partners in faith, and ask for your prayers.

On 1st of March, we will gather as a community to seek God's guidance, strength, and blessings. This day is a significant opportunity for us to come together in unity, lifting our voices in prayer for our circuit, our families, and the broader world. We deeply believe that prayer is a powerful tool that can bring about transformation and healing.

We would be incredibly grateful if you could join us in prayer during this time. Your support and spiritual presence, even from afar, mean so much to us. Please pray for Unity among our members as we seek to grow closer to God and to each other, secondly, wisdom and discernment for our leaders as they guide us in faith and lastly, strength and hope for our community, especially those in need.

Thank you for standing with us in prayer. We are blessed to have you as partners in our mission and ministry. May God's peace and love surround you and your congregation.

Blessings in Christ,

Rev Julius Muteve
Superintendent



The foreigner residing among you

“The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”

Leviticus 19:34

The 9th February was Racial Justice Sunday and in Downham Market we have become aware of a greater diversity of ethnic groups than ten years ago. In the town centre you can hear East European, Asian, African and Adriatic languages spoken. A while ago I even came across a man from Tadjikistan who was trying to get a taxi to somewhere in the middle of Southery fen! With the help of staff, in one of the Turkish owned restaurants, we were able to sort him out. Hopefully we treat all these people as native-born and love them as ourselves.

In Church we have folk from South Africa, India, Sri Lanka and America.

In Boys' Brigade we have a boy whose parents are from Latvia and two whose parents are Turkish. The Turkish parents are fully aware that we are a Christian organisation but this doesn't seem to worry them! They were happy for the boys to hear the Bible story of Joshua and the battle of Jericho and to do associated activities. Hopefully all the boys, through their experiences at school and Boys' Brigade, will come to appreciate and respect the cultural differences that may exist. Hopefully they become good friends and enjoy each other's company.

In these times of tension over immigration, hopefully, churches will remain places where all feel safe and loved whatever their age or ethnicity. Throughout the week we must work hard to make sure all who come into our building feel welcome.

Ralph Perkins

The Tempter Defeated

By John Miles

THE ONE was hungry, very hungry. For forty days he had deliberately sought the solitude of the desert. He remembered the story, passed down from generation to generation, of how his ancestors had also wandered in the desert for forty years. This re-enactment was a deliberate choice. He had to be certain that he was making the correct choice.

This was the ultimate test.

Only water had passed his lips during this self-imposed exile. Now the gnawing hunger in his stomach filled his every thought, his very being. Visions of the meal table wormed their way into the innermost parts of his mind.

Then it was that *the sly one* appeared. Where he came from, **THE ONE** could not tell – he was just there with his sly insinuations and his cynical smile. “After all this time, you must be very hungry. If you really are **THE ONE**,” he said in a whining, doubt-inducing voice, “you have the power to turn stones into bread, fresh bread, and relieve the hunger inside you.”

For a fraction of a second, **THE ONE** could smell the aroma of a freshly baked loaf. The thought of it, with its delicious taste and satisfaction, took control of his mind. But then he remembered how the two in the garden had given in to their bodily desires.

“You snake!” he exclaimed, “You know the scriptures as well as I do! It says, ‘he made you go hungry to teach you that you must

not depend on bread alone to sustain you, but on everything that the Lord says’.”

The sly one was not one to give up easily. Not without good reason was he called *the sly one*.

“Look around you,” he whispered. “How far can you see? One mile? Three? How many people out there will follow your teaching? A hundred? A thousand? No! the Romans control all this – or at least they think they do. I’m the one who’s really in control! Would *you* like all this power? You can have it – *if you accept my rule!*”

THE ONE was quick to reply this time. “Our scriptures say, ‘Worship God alone. Serve only him’. I will not let *you* rule me!”

Suddenly, how **THE ONE** did not know, he seemed to be on the highest point of the temple. Was he really there? Was this just an illusion? Was he hallucinating because of the lack of food? It didn’t really matter. *The sly one* was there – and he had changed his tactics.

“You were quite correct when you said that I know the scriptures.” he began. “If you really are **THE ONE**, you could quite easily prove it beyond all doubt. Jump off this temple. After all, *it says in the scriptures*, ‘God will order his angels to take good care of you. You know the scriptures as well as I do!’” he went on, using **THE ONE’S** own words. It says, too, ‘They will hold you up with their hands so that not even your feet will be hurt on the stones’.”

It was almost as if *the sly one* knew every thought that was going through his mind – knew that he had gone into the desert to be sure of his calling; knew that there was still a small doubt in his mind.

“My Father, help me!” he cried inwardly – and as he silently uttered those words he knew; knew beyond all doubt, what he was called to do. Calmness entered his heart.

“Scriptures also say, *sly one*, that you are not to put the Lord your God to the test. And in spite of what you say about the world belonging to you, a time *will* come when every knee will bow to the one *true* God.”

The *sly one* cringed, cowered almost, and turned away. He slunk off, knowing that, for the moment, he was defeated. But he would be back. There would be another place, another time.

JM 2005©

The Donkey

One day a farmer's donkey fell into a well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer tried to figure out what to do. Finally, he decided the animal was old and the well had to be covered up anyway; it just wasn't worth it to retrieve the donkey.

He invited all his neighbours to come over to help him. They all grabbed a shovel and started to shovel dirt into the well. When the donkey realised what was happening, he cried horribly. Then to everyone's amazement quietened down.

A few shovel loads later the farmer finally looked down the well. He was astonished at what he saw. With each shovel of dirt that hit his back the donkey was doing something surprising. He would shake it off and take a step up.

The farmer's neighbours continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal who would shake it off and take a step up. Pretty soon everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped over the edge of the well and happily trotted off!

Life is going to shovel dirt on you, all kinds of dirt. The trick to get out of the well is to shake it off and take a step up.

Each of our troubles is a stepping stone. We can get out of the deepest wells just by not stopping, never giving up! Shake it off and take a step up.

REMEMBER THE FIVE SIMPLE RULES TO BE HAPPY

Free your heart from hatred – forgive.

Free your mind from worries – most never happen.

Live simply and appreciate what you have.

Give more.

Expect less.

West Norfolk Methodist Circuit Diary

March 2025 onwards

Sat 1st Match Clenchwarton Coffee and Crafts @ 3pm
Sun 2nd March Dersingham Service led by Matthew Henderson from Leprosy Mission @ 10:30am
Tues 4th March Hilgay with Southery Guild Pancake Party @ 2:30pm
Wed 5th March Downham Ash Wednesday Service with Communion @ 2pm
Wed 5th March St Faith's Imposition of Ashes @ 10am & 6:30pm
Fri 7th March Hunstanton Methodist Church Lent Service and Lunch @ 11am
Fri 7th March Terrington Annual World Day of Prayer Service @ 2:30pm
Fr 7th March Clenchwarton Quiz night
Tues 11th March Downham Lent course starts – based around West Side Story @ 10am
Tues 11th March St Faith's Lent course starts 'Christ in the Wilderness' @10:30am
Wed 12th March Downham Ladies Friendship The R.N.L.I. a talk by Jackie Merrells @ 2:30pm
Wed 12th March Terrington Methodist Women in Britain @2pm
Thurs 13th March Hunstanton Catholic Church Lent Service and Lunch @ 11:30am
Fri 14th March Downham Messy Church @ 4:30pm
Sat 15th March Clenchwarton The Battle of Waterloo and King's Lynn's involvement @ 2:30pm
Sat 15th March St Faith's Spring Fair @ 2pm
Saturday 15th March Wimbotsham Coffee morning @ 10:15am
Tues 18th March Downham Lent course – based around West Side Story @ 10am
Tues 18th March St Faith's Lent course 'Christ in the Wilderness' @10:30am
Tues 18th March Hilgay with Southery Guild talk by Jean Hornbuckle 'My experience with opera'
Fri 21st March St Edmund's Hunstanton Lent Service and Lunch @ 11am
Tues 25th March Downham Lent course – based around West Side Story @ 10am
Tues 25th March St Faith's Lent course -1 'Christ in the Wilderness' @10:30am
Thurs 27th March Hunstanton Methodist Lent Service and Lunch
Sun 30th March Mothering Sunday Service 9:45am and 6:30pm
Wed 26th March Downham Ladies Friendship Games/Quiz afternoon @ 2:30pm
Fri 28th March Christian Fellowship Hunstanton Lent Service and Lunch @ 11am
Tues 1st April Downham Lent course – based around West Side Story @ 10am
Tues 8th April St Faith's Lent course 'Christ in the Wilderness' @10:30am
Tues 1st April Hilgay with Southery Guild talk by Mrs Lesley Dent @ 2:30pm
Fri 4th April The Union Church Hunstanton Lent Service and Lunch @ 11am
Fri 4th April Clenchwarton Quiz night
Sat 5th April Clenchwarton Coffee and Crafts @ 3pm
Tues 8th April St Faith's Lent course 'Christ in the Wilderness' @10:30am
Tues 8th April Downham Lent course – based around West Side Story @ 10am
Wed 9th April Downham Ladies Friendship Easter celebration @ 2:30pm
Wed 9th April Terrington Methodist Women in Britain @ 2pm
Fri 11th April St Edmunds Hunstanton Lent Service and Lunch @ 11am
Fri 11th April Downham Messy Church @ 4:30pm
Sat 12th April Terrington Easter Fair and Coffee morning
Sat 12th April Clenchwarton Talk topic to be confirmed @ 2:30pm
Sun 13th April Downham Palm All Age Sunday Service led by Revd Paul Critchley @ 10am
Tues 15th April Downham Lent course – based around West Side Story @ 10am
Tues 15th April Hilgay with Southery Guild AGM @ 2:30pm
Thurs 17th April Downham Maundy Thursday Service led by Revd Paul Critchley @ 7pm

Thurs 17th April St Faith's Maundy Thursday Service @ 6:30pm
 Fri 18th April Dersingham Good Friday Service led by Philip and Elizabeth Batstone @ 10:30am
 Fri 18th April Downham Good Friday Walk of Witness from St Edmunds @ 9am
 Fri 18th April Downham Good Friday Service @ 11am
 Fri 18th April Pott Row Good Friday Service @ 3pm
 Fri 18th April Highgate Good Friday Service @ 10:20am
 Fri 18th April London Road Good Friday Service @ 3pm
 Fri 18th April Terrington Good Friday Service @ 10:30am
 Fri 18th April Stanhoe Good Friday Service including members of the Pilgrim Cross @ 10am
 Fri 18th April Hilgay with Southery Good Friday Service @ 2:30pm
 Fri 18th April St Faith's Walk of Witness and Services @ 10am, 2pm and 6:30pm
 Fri 18th April Hunstanton Walk of Witness and Services @ 2:45pm
 Saturday 19th April Wimbotsham Coffee morning @ 10:15am
 Saturday 19th April East Anglia Methodist Heritage Centre at Wighton reopens @ 11am
 Sun 20th April St Faith's Rectory Garden Easter Morning Sunrise Service @ 5:30am
 Sun 20th April Dersingham Easter Sunday Service 10:30am
 Sun 20th April Downham Easter Sunday Service @ 10am
 Sun 20th April Feltwell Easter Sunday Service @ 11am
 Sun 20th April Heacham Easter Sunday Service @ 10:30am
 Sun 20th April Highgate Easter Sunday Service @ 3pm
 Sun 20th April Hilgay with Southery Easter Service @ 10:30am
 Sun 20th April Hunstanton Easter Sunday Service @ 10:30am
 Sun 20th April London Road Easter Sunday Service @ 10:30am
 Sun 20th April The Beacon Easter Sunday Service @ 10:30am
 Sun 20th April Pott Row Easter Service @ 3pm
 Sun 20th April St Faith's Easter Sunday Services @ 8:30am & 9:45am
 Sun 20th April Stanhoe Easter Sunday Service @ 11am
 Sun 20th April Terrington Easter Sunday Service @ 10:30am
 Sun 20th April Wimbotsham Easter Sunday Service @ 11am
 Fri 2nd May Clenchwarton Quiz night
 Sat 3rd May Clenchwarton Coffee and Crafts @ 3pm
 Fri 9th May Downham Messy Church @ 4:30pm
 Sat 10th May Clenchwarton Talk topic to be confirmed @ 2:30pm
 Wed 14th May Terrington Methodist Women in Britain @ 2pm
 Sun 18th May St Faith's Service led by Rev Helen Hollands (District Chair) @ 9:45am
 Saturday 17th May Wimbotsham Coffee morning @ 10:15am
 Thurs 22nd- Sat 24th May Dersingham Flower Festival 'Biblical Occupations'
 Sun 25th May Dersingham 135th Anniversary Songs of Praise led by Revd Jackie Goddard @ 3pm
 Saturday 21st June Wimbotsham Coffee morning @ 10:15am

Thank you to everyone who sent in copy. Start thinking what you can write for the next edition. The deadline for articles is 10th May, so we can get the magazine out by 1st June.