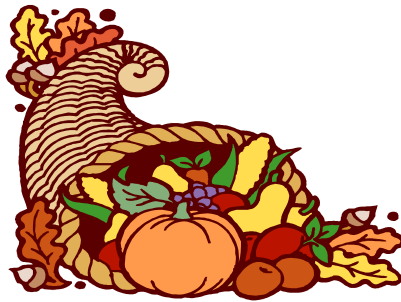


The Church in Great Notley

All ages welcome

Come and join us as we praise God together



September - November 2010

We are five denominations working together:
Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic
and United Reformed Church

Ministers

Revd Mike Shrubsole
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Revd Beth Bendrey
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Mission statement

The aim of this church is:-

*To show the love of Jesus in word and action
so that others may come to know him as
Lord and Saviour.*

Sunday Services Sept to Nov 2010

All are welcome to our Sunday morning services at **11am**, with tea & coffee and time for fellowship after the service.

We have All Age Worship on the 4th Sunday and Holy Communion (HC) as indicated.

5 Sept	11am Revd Beth Bendrey 6pm Marion Rollins
12 Sept	Revd Mike Shrubsole HC
19 Sept	Revd Michael Child
26 Sept	Revd Mike Shrubsole AAW Harvest Festival
3 Oct	11am Revd Viv Gasteen 6pm Revd Beth Bendrey
10 Oct	Revd Mike Shrubsole
17 Oct	11am Revd Beth Bendrey 3.30pm Church Opening Ceremony
24 Oct	Revd Mike Shrubsole AAW
31 Oct	David Carter
7 Nov	11am Val Spouge 6pm Revd Mike Shrubsole
14 Nov	10.30am Revd Mike Shrubsole HC
21 Nov	Revd Beth Bendrey
28 Nov	Revd Mike Shrubsole AAW

Letter from Revd Beth Bendrey

Dear Friends

I can't count the number of times I have heard the following sentence: 'when we have our new building, then we will...' The sentence ends in any number of different ways as each person dreams their dreams about the children's work or the kitchen or the links with the community. After all the praying and the fundraising, the longed-for building is finally here and it's finally time to begin the process of bringing those dreams into reality - we're exchanging one kind of building project for another.

Our dream is a church which is a place that is a sacred space for the community, a place to worship and pray, a place to wander into and find the quiet presence of God, a place for the community to meet for activities, fun, coffee, chat, a place to encounter opportunities for faith in God to grow and blossom, a place for people of all ages, a place of help and support, a place of welcome, a place that is open 7 days a week. With God's help we will be able to grow our church centre into such a place but like any building project it will take its own time.

It has been fascinating to watch the physical building grow from the foundations to the fittings. There were times when things happened surprisingly quickly, like the fitting of the steel structure which was up in just a couple of days it seemed. And there were times when to the untrained eye, it didn't seem like anything had progressed, like the time spent digging out space for the drainage system – vital but unexciting work!

(continued)

Letter from Revd Beth Bendrey (continued)

As we begin to inhabit our new building, we need the same patience, the same attention to detail and the same steady, diligent effort. It won't all happen in the first month or the first year, but if we walk with God and with each other, we will see it take shape, brick by brick, person by person.

In the book of Deuteronomy, the people of Israel are on the brink on entering the promised land. The long forty years in the desert are over and they stand on the bank of the river Jordan ready to begin their new life. Before they cross over, Moses calls them to make a choice. 'Choose life!' he says, 'Choose to love God with all your heart and with all your soul and to follow his ways.' These are our foundations - loving God, following Jesus, loving our neighbour. As long as we hold fast to these then we shall not fail.

May God bless us & our church as we seek to follow him.

A PRAYER TO GOD

Dear Lord

So far today, God, I've done all right. I haven't gossiped, haven't lost my temper, haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or even indulgent.

*I'm very thankful for that - but in a very short time, God, I'm going to get out of bed, and from that moment on I'm going to need a lot of help! **Amen***

A Testimony to God's Faithfulness

I once read in *Our Daily Bread* that “in New York City there is a Good Riddance Day at the end of the year in which people are encouraged to write down their bad memories and sufferings of that year and bring them to Times Square to feed them into an industrial-strength shredder or throw them into an extra-large rubbish skip. We all want to leave our bad memories behind. In the Bible, Paul wanted relief from an infirmity that made him feel weak, but God said to him “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness”. God didn't take away the problem but gave Paul the grace to live with it (RBC Resource Centre 2010). My family discovered this same grace and strength during a period of five months in which we experienced events that deeply affected our family life.

In the Autumn of 2004, our daughter and eighteen month old granddaughter had to suddenly leave their home and move into a Women's Refuge for their safety and wellbeing. Three weeks later, I was diagnosed with cancer; I had a rare malignant tumour in my foot which resulted in having part of my foot amputated. I then began six weeks of commuting daily to London for radiotherapy. At the beginning of my radiotherapy treatment, I was due to celebrate my 60th birthday, and the night before my birthday my husband Paul had arranged to meet up with our 27 year old son, Peter, to plan a celebration family meal out. However, Paul was unable to make contact with Peter all evening which was very unusual and we spent a restless night extremely anxious about his whereabouts. Tragically, when Paul and the police broke into Peter's bungalow the next morning, they found him dead. He had died from an accidental overdose of his prescribed medication. (continued)

A Testimony to God's Faithfulness (continued)

So, it was my 60th birthday, our daughter and granddaughter were living in a refuge, our son had suddenly died and I was due in London for radiotherapy. However, during the weeks that followed, what made the difference to us in the depth of our anxiety and sadness was our awareness that God was with us in all of it.

Firstly, God was with us through prayer – the prayers of our church, our family and our friends. Soon the condolence cards began to arrive and they were put up alongside my birthday cards. They made me realise that in life we cannot always separate the happy times from the difficult times, life is a tapestry of both, but God can be the thread weaving in and out of the good and bad experiences holding us together.

Secondly, we experienced God through the Bible. For Peter's Funeral Service our Vicar had chosen the words from Romans ch.8, v.38, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

On the morning of Peter's funeral I found that in my bible reading notes the reading for that day included this same verse from Romans 8. Ten months later we were due to attend the inquest into Peter's death and the day before I spent a few hours at the Pleshey Retreat House thinking and praying about the day ahead. I randomly picked up a devotional book in the library and as I opened it I found I was reading these same words from Romans 8. (continued)

A Testimony to God's Faithfulness (continued)

We have also experienced the truth of the verse in John 14, "My peace I give to you: not as the world gives give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled and do not be afraid". During Peter's life he had struggled with Asperger's Syndrome and for him, and for us as parents, life was unpredictable and often very difficult. When Peter died we could have been left with many "if only's", but God has taken these away. In John 14, Jesus says that our hearts don't have to be troubled by our memories. We do not have to shred them or find a rubbish skip for them as we have experienced God's peace, a peace that the world cannot give.

Rosemary Freeman

Julian of Norwich

Dame Julian was an English woman who, in the fourteenth century, took up residence in a small dwelling attached to the Church of St. Julian in Norwich. Drawn to this life by a set of visions that came to her when she was in her thirties, she spent the rest of her life meditating on those revelations and living as a recluse or anchoress. The small church was close to the river and people would visit her for comfort and advice. The original building was largely destroyed during the WWII, though it has been rebuilt.

We know very little about her. We do not know her surname & even the name Julian may have been acquired from the church where she lived. We know she was born in 1342 because she tells us, in the revelations, that she was 'thirty and one-half years old' when they came to her on Sunday 8 May 1373. But, she does not want us to be interested in who she was. She calls herself 'a simple, unlettered creature' probably means she had no formal education in either English or Latin. (continued on page 10)

Fresh Expressions

Dear Friends

We are just taking charge of a truly great asset of a large and useful building in the middle of the village which we expect to be well used by a wide variety of groups. Some of these will be church organised groups and others will be community groups. But whether church or community they are probably 'attractational' groups. This word 'attractational' has been used by the Fresh Expressions movement in the church to describe the old way of doing church. When we organise something, & put an event on in a church building, and invite people to come to us, we are operating in 'attractational' mode. But, if we keep on doing the same things we have always done, keep on worshipping in the same way that we have always done, will we ever attract the people who have not been attracted to us in the past? The answer is, of course, no.

Fresh Expressions encourages Christians to rediscover the missionary mode of operating. We need to hear the command of Jesus to us, that we should be the ones who 'go', we should not expect others to 'come' to us. And this is not about travelling to foreign lands, or suddenly deciding to go and work with drug addicts in the big cities. It is not necessarily as radical as that. Fresh Expressions is about heeding the call to 'go', but to go to where people like ourselves genuinely want to be. How about church in a pub? Or church in a coffee bar? Or church for cinema enthusiasts? Or open air church for wildlife enthusiasts? Or a church for ravers in a night club? Or church in hi-rise armchairs for the elderly & infirm? With Fresh Expressions anything is possible.

But there is also a hybrid way. We can 'go' and make even smaller changes and still meet new people in our new building.

(continued)

Fresh Expressions (continued)

Perhaps if we were to go from a 11am service to a 3pm service, we would meet with people for whom 3pm was convenient but 11am was inconvenient. Perhaps if we met for worship on a Saturday night instead of a Sunday night we would be 'going' where new people could join us. Perhaps if we offered an act of worship with no music we would be going over to a form of worship which tinnitus sufferers would find welcoming. But any such change would require local research. We should only go to where people are, and to where we believe God is calling us.

Mid-week worship for young families or for the elderly is another way of going and making a move ourselves. If many families or the elderly can't join us on Sunday mornings, perhaps they can join us mid-week? But it takes time to research and build up a new approach. If the initial approach seems to be well received, then the next step is to do it more often, and to expect more people to join in, so we should plan for growth, and plan to do things better. As we start to use our new building we need to be flexible and willing to move into new opportunities which are available to us.

The question to ask about every such idea is; who would we never reach by just doing things the way we always do them? And do we have a gospel responsibility to those who are never likely to be part of our church as it is now? We are used to expecting people to come, and we certainly can and try to attract people with glossier publicity, and improved facilities, and tastier coffee, and friendlier invitations and welcomes, etc. But the command of Jesus is still to go, and Fresh Expressions tells us that more and more people will remain unreached if we only use an attractional approach. So, just because we have a new building, that shouldn't stop us from being the ones who are willing to 'go', even if that means some very small but very important journeys of change.

Mike

Julian of Norwich (continued from page 7)

Nor do we know whether she wrote them down herself or dictated them. She believed these visions came to her for the benefit of all people and she writes:-

'I beg you all, for God's sake, and advise you for your own profit, stop looking at the wretch to whom this revelation was shown. Intently, wisely and meekly, look at God, Who because of his courteous love and unending goodness wills to show it to all of us in general, for our comfort.'

In a surviving manuscript in the British Museum, a scribe has written:-

'Here is a vision, shown by the goodness of God to a devout woman named Juliana, who is a recluse at Norwich, and is still alive in this year of our Lord 1413. In this vision there are a great many comforting and deeply moving words of all those who desire to be Christ's lovers.'

Some words from Julian of Norwich:

'The reason we are not fully at ease in heart and soul is because we seek rest in these things that are so little and have no rest within them, and pay no attention to our God, who is Almighty, All-wise, All-good and the only real rest.'

'Christ himself is the ground of all the laws of Christian men, and he taught us to return good for evil. Here we can see that he himself is this charity and does to us as he teaches us to do to others.'

Information and quotes from 'The Revelation of Divine Love', a new translation by M.L. del Mastro (Pub. Burns and Oates).

Julian Meetings will take place in our new Church building on the Fridays below, and will include a time of silence after a short introduction:

September 10th 7.45pm - 8.30pm Introductory meeting.

October 8th 8.00pm - 8.30pm

November 12th 8.00pm - 8.30pm

The Story behind Harvest Festivals

Have you ever wondered who began Harvest Festivals? It seems pretty obvious to thank God for the Harvest but actually it is a comparatively recent church service. Less than 200 years ago, harvest was not formally 'celebrated' in church, but in the taverns and on village greens in the countryside, with wild drinking and eating before the harshness of winter set in.

In 1834, an eccentric clergyman named the Revd Robert Stephen Hawker arrived in Morwenstowe, a tiny hamlet of a few farms perched high on the windswept cliffs of the north Cornish coast. The church had been without a vicar for years, but now Robert Hawker strode its lanes in a bright purple or red cassock.

Rural life in those days was harsh, and Hawker soon realised the sheer effort needed to survive in those parts. Harvest was the only thing that got people through the winter: a poor one meant starvation. Each bad year Hawker buried some of his congregation.

But the summer of 1843 was perfect, and the harvest that year was exceptionally bountiful. The people of Morwenstowe were getting set to celebrate with their usual abandon, when Hawker stepped in. Who, he asked, did they think had given them the harvest? Were they not even going to say 'thank you' to Him? Abashed, the people came to church and Hawker led them in giving thanks to God for his rich blessing upon them – and so the 'Christian' Harvest Festival had arrived.

Remembrance

Have you seen the film ‘*Saving Private Ryan*’? The first 20 minutes of the film is a powerful account of war, portraying the first landing crafts arriving at the Normandy beaches on D Day. The film successfully brings to life the events of that day as a vivid act of remembrance.

From a biblical perspective, the word remembrance means making present a past reality, so that we can benefit from it today. On Remembrance Sunday, we think about those who have given their lives in wars over the years, as well as those who continue to grieve over their lost loved ones. We want to make their sacrifice in past conflicts real for us today so that we can engage with the horror of war and those enduring suffering today.

It involves dealing with the *why* question in the face of relentless tragedies and injustices: *why does God allow such suffering to take place?* One of the great themes of the scriptures is that God identifies with the suffering. But the Christian faith goes beyond this! It affirms that in Jesus, God’s son, divinity became involved in suffering and death on the cross. It is at Calvary that we see how God himself knows what it is to lose a loved one in an unprovoked attack. ‘I could never myself believe in God if it were not for the cross. In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it?’ (John Stott).

Although we don’t fully understand the reason why God allows evil and suffering to continue, we do know what the reason *isn’t*. It can’t be that he doesn’t love us! (continued)

Remembrance (continued)

God so loved us and hates suffering that he was willing to come down and get involved in our hurting world. This can be a source of real strength on such an occasion.

However, how can we ensure that those who have given their lives are truly honoured, not forgetting those who are risking their lives in conflicts today? An appropriate response is to actively work and pray for justice in our world, especially where there is inequality and conflict. In a divided world, we are also called to renew our efforts to work for peace. We need to be serious about being peacemakers, especially where it involves those close to us. As Jesus said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God' (Matt 5:9).

All are welcome to attend the Remembrance Sunday act of worship that is held at the Memorial on White Court at 12noon on Sunday 14 November. It is a solemn and moving tribute, supported by many local community groups.

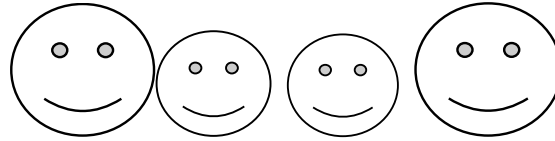
Toothsome!

When I had a job delivering lunches to elderly and house-bound people, I used to take my four-year-old daughter on my afternoon rounds. She was unfailingly intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs.

One day, I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely turned and whispered, 'The Tooth Fairy will never believe this!'

The Church in Great Notley

Junior Church



First, Second, Third and Fifth Sundays
(12 & 19 Sept, 10 Oct, 14 & 21 Nov, 12 & 19 Dec)

A Junior Church session led by our leaders in an adjacent hall. This allows parents time and space to enjoy worship.

Worship on second & third Sundays
concludes with Communion

The Fourth Sunday
(26 Sep, 24 Oct, 28 Nov)

This is **All Age Worship** when the children will be encouraged to be more involved throughout the service and a craft activity will be provided linked to the theme.

CRECHE FACILITIES

A purpose-built room with large window and sound system allows carers a comfy place to enjoy worship yet care for young children.

We continue to provide a caring and nurturing environment for you and your children at worship each Sunday. We are always willing to listen and welcome comments on how we can best suit your family's needs.

Please do not hesitate to speak to any of the Junior Church team – or contact Louise Shrubsole on 01376 562517

Other Dates for your Diary.....

Sat 4 Sept	10am-4pm	Public open day in our new church, with refreshments & activities for children.
Mon 6 to Fri 10 Sept	8.30-11.30am	Drop-in coffee mornings
Sat 18 Sept	To be advised	Great Notley fete
Sun 26 Sept	After service	Harvest Lunch
Sun 17 Oct	11am	Formal Opening
Mon 1 to 18 Nov		Operation Christmas Child '10
Mon 8 Nov	7.30pm tbc	General Church meeting
Sun 14 Nov	noon	Remembrance Sunday at White Court Memorial

The ***TABOR CENTRE*** in Braintree needs ***you!***
 What for? – ***to be a trustee!***

What is the Tabor Centre? The Tabor Centre is a charity unique in North Essex in providing, throughout the year, day time care for up to 80 disabled adults per week, & respite for their 24/7 family carers.

As a volunteer, a trustee is part of a team that is committed to the Tabor Centre and its members helping to formulate policies, contributing ideas on future Centre educational and cultural activities, ways and means of raising money - as a charity we have to fund raise most of the funding needed to keep the Tabor Centre up and running.

If you feel you would like to be a trustee, particularly if you have financial, administrative and good-with-people skills, we should very much like to hear from you. Please ring Anthea on 01376 346208, then come along and see what we are all about.

Church Council Members

Ministers

Mike Shrubsole	142 Tilkey Road Coggeshall CO6 1QN	Br. 564880
Beth Bendrey	181 London Road CM77 8PT	Br. 567981

Secretary

Jacqui King	94 Chestnut Avenue CM77 7YJ	Br. 560561
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Treasurer

Maggie Ouwehand	20 The Ley CM7 3NS	Br. 348682
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Church Councillors

Paul Freeman & Rosemary Freeman	57 Pochard Way CM77 7WA	Br. 554974
Mike Higby	39 Wainwright Ave CM77 7LJ	Br. 331180
Marion Rollins	The Limes, Denton Cr Black Notley CM77 8ZZ	Br. 343361
Louise Shrubsole	142 Tilkey Road Coggeshall CO6 1QN	Br. 564880
John Warboys	6 Teal Close CM77 7YB	Br. 331461

We are always looking for good articles to put into this newsletter, so if you have come across anything you think might be of interest to others (personal reflections, poems, etc), please let Marian or Jacque have them before the next deadline i.e. Mon 1 Nov, **for distribution end Nov.**

Articles may be edited due to space restrictions.