

**CHURCH MAGAZINE
OCTOBER 2024**

The earth is the Lord's
and all that is in it,
the world
and those who live in it.



Psalm 24: 1

Our Vision: "To celebrate God and share the love of Jesus."

Pastoral Letter

Welcome Friends,

Together in Fellowship

We are very blessed as a fellowship in many ways, but I just wanted to identify three and extol those opportunities.

First, to know God in our lives and to be able to meet, worship and praise Him without fear, or concern. Second, we are an ‘intergenerational’ family fellowship, from baby size to mature size. Third, we are a multicultural church, with many different nations represented in our fellowship. For all these blessings I thank God.

So why do I mention these facts? Well because we are very fortunate and blessed as a fellowship and as a church to have such an age range and diversity across the spectrum. So what are the benefits, surprisingly, quite a few. We can learn from each other. For instance, the younger people can share their experience of how they see life and society in the 21st Century and how this connects, or not, with them. What are their hopes and concerns, and how either their fledgling or growing faith in Christianity is playing a part in learning about life to help them not only survive but thrive.

It can be a challenge but also an opportunity growing up in a society that has social media, so many different cultures, and so many different expectations that pull one way then another. It can be challenging with the expectations of the latest fashion, the latest mobile phone, or the latest gimmick. This coupled with trying to understand who am I, what’s life all about, what’s my purpose, what are my gifts or talents if they have the headspace to think about this, which are probably some of the myriad thoughts and questions asked by young people, if not to their family, to themselves in today’s world.

As a church family, we can support each other. The more mature in the fellowship have so much life experience to offer support, guidance and wisdom from their own lives. But crucially, the experience of walking with God, through life's challenges and how their faith in God, His teachings through the Bible, have helped overcome the challenges and moreover, grow in faith and knowledge of the Lord and the right path to tread.

Equally, the younger family members of our fellowship have youth and vitality in which to lend a helping hand, to those less able in physical strength. To offer to open a door or volunteer support if needed can make a world of difference. Who knows what possibilities there are when we open doors, or shine a light into someone's life with a smile? We can show the love of God in so many small ways each day.

As we start a new church season, we had an opportunity on the 1st September with the Church Lunch, to connect, so let us build upon those opportunities to spread the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ in whom we trust.

Let's be proactive in using our skills and talents, in how we connect and start a conversation, with all of our church family. Let us strengthen the bonds of friendship and fellowship across the ages and diversity with people young and older; Let us share in life's learning together, with God's word at the centre of what we say and do. Grow stronger together, and reach out in to our community together, to make a difference in our community together, as God's family at the heart of the town.

Blessings

David

PRAYER by Rosemary Stinson

Prayer is talking to the Father
saying what is on your heart telling Him how much you love Him.
The one who loved you from the start.

The words you use don't really matter,
just let Him know the love inside.
Knowing His presence is always near you
your deepest thoughts no need to hide.

Bring Him your pain and anxious longing,
the ones that need his help and care.
Ask Him for strength to speak to others,
the message of grace to gladly share.

Thank Him for the joy he gives you,
the sunlight shining through the trees.
Birds singing, flowers brightly blooming,
His hands have fashioned all of these.

Tell Him of the times you fail Him,
ask forgiveness for each wrong.
Then hands outstretched, look heavenward and worship Him in joyful song.

Finally be still and listen to His words of comfort sweet
as He calls you to come closer
and bow down at His wounded feet.

When I saw Rosemary recently I asked her if she would like to provide a prayer or poem and she was pleased to provide me with this prayer she wrote in March 2016.



Hannah Lewis,
cello, and
Hans Montanana,
piano, will perform
music by
Sergei Rachmaninov.



A charity concert for the House of Grace
supported housing project

Sonatas Two by Two

with Cygnus Trio and Hans Montanana

Witham United Reformed Church

Saturday 16th November at 7pm

Free admission with an invitation to donate generously.

Refreshments will be served after the concert.



Javier Montanana,
violin, and
Cesar Saura,
piano, will perform
music by
Johannes Brahms.



HOUSE of GRACE News

We took possession of a 3 bedroom house at the end of 2023 on the Hatfield Road Estate. To make the project viable a fourth bedroom needed to be created by dividing the through lounge. Green Pastures from whom we lease the house were very supportive throughout and the cost of the alteration is repayable through the lease payments. Hence no major fund raising was required. Praise God!

Not surprisingly getting quotes for the work and fitting in with builders' availability was protracted but the work was completed by the beginning of March 2024. Because the house is multi-occupancy safety regulations are strict and it took time to get them in place. God's hand was with us throughout and we are blessed with volunteers who understand these things and can source our requirements.



It was exciting to move on to the stage of decorating & furnishing the house, buying essentials like bedding/towels etc. Praise God again for volunteers more than happy to wield a paint brush/put together flat pack furniture/scour charity shops for bits & bobs. We've ended up with a well furnished, welcoming house, one which brought exclamations of amazement from the visiting founder of Green Pastures & all who see it.

You can imagine the rejoicing when we

welcomed our first two residents at the beginning of May.

What a difference for them – a safe place to stay, somewhere to keep their belongings, facilities to keep themselves & their clothes clean & a place where you can make yourself a hot drink as and when you want to. They are so pleased with the accommodation and are keen to look after it & improve it (a paved backyard has become a garden of flowers).



Going forward, on the property side we need to replace the flat roof on the extension. Quotations are being sought but this could be a major financial commitment.

For our residents, they need to be supported in order to address the issues which played a part in their homelessness & they need to find employment to enable them to move on to independent living. Today's employment market is not an easy place so we need to help them gain skills & confidence. Already they are helping out where possible, either voluntarily or for a small remuneration with things like gardening, tidying up church premises, outside painting jobs. If you are aware of any jobs they might be able to help out with, please let us know. They are very reliable guys.

Working & being alongside Christians and in a Christian environment reinforces to them the love of Christ, which set us on the path to this project originally. Two residents have signed up for the Alpha course starting at the URC on 18th September.

Rural Evangelism Outreach Trust - Foster Asamani

The photo below is of Pastor Clement, one of the faithful servants that serve the churches in Sankana in West Ghana and its environs. He is in desperate need of a motorbike to enable him to do his Sunday services and weekday prayer meetings.

Seventeen villages and hundreds of people in WA district have benefited from the support that Witham URC has given

The cost of the motorbike is around £2000 and so far £700 has been raised from a church in Great Totham. If you feel able to help Pastor Clement, Foster and Charlotte Asamani would be delighted to hear from you.



Pastor Clement

Background

The RURAL EVANGELISM OUTREACH TRUST or REOT was a trust set up to help the people of Wa, a district in the Upper West Region of Ghana, which is extremely remote and impoverished. It was to this district that Rev. Victor Donani and his wife Theresa were called by God, back in the 1990's to preach the Gospel and establish churches in the villages, many of which had little contact with the outside world. Despite difficulties Victor succeeded in planting 17 new churches, in this predominantly Muslim region.

In 2001 Victor and Theresa's daughter Charlotte Asamani and her husband Foster joined Witham United Reformed Church.

Subsequently in 2002 the then minister of Witham URC, Rev Richard Church, visited Wa and the surrounding villages and Witham URC became involved in supporting some of the projects which were designed to help the newly planted churches. Money was raised and sent and was spent on a Church in Sankana, paying for a roof and also providing training for the local Pastors, and other items such as bicycles, and a 4x4 vehicle were purchased. Money was also sent to support the villagers in a time of famine.

Whilst the formation of the new churches was extremely important, Victor also realized that the people were living in terrible poverty and he decided he should concentrate his efforts on trying to alleviate this.

In December 2005 Victor incorporated the Rural Evangelism Outreach Trust (REOT) in Ghana and he stated that the trust had the following vision. "We plan to kill the two troubling devils, serious hunger and severe poverty. The land is rich, wide and lying in waste while the people are suffering in the presence of these God given blessings'

Since handing over responsibility for the newly planted (17) churches to the Fountain Gate Organization. Victor became fully engaged with the work of REOT and set up a trial planting of Cassava with 55 groups of 8 people (440 people). Soap making began, 34 people were trained, some of the soap was kept and the rest sold to pay for more materials. A tree nursery was established in the village of Siiro to the south of Wa, Several acres of land was ploughed and cultivated and planted with maize and ground nuts. The farm project provided employment and training

Eastern Synod at Witham - Saturday, 12th October - Muriel Heppinstall

Synod is the six-monthly meeting of representatives of all the URC churches in the Eastern Region and it travels between the larger churches in the region. This October it is Witham's regular turn and we need all the help we can get. We need help with setting up on the Friday evening, welcoming and stewarding during the day, help with refreshments, managing the car park and clearing up afterwards, etc , etc. Please put this date in your diaries and sign up on the church notice board.

Memories and More - Ruth Blackett

I thought it was about time I updated you about Memories and More as we are coming up to celebrate our 3rd Birthday this month.

I really can't believe that we have been running for so long. The group meets every Tuesday in the café area of the centre from 10.30am to 12.15pm. The team arrive for 10am to set up the tables and to pray before the morning session starts.

We can vary in the number who attend but we usually can fill all the tables we put out with service users, carers and team members.

This group was set up to help those who have memory issues usually connected to dementia/Alzheimer's and their carer's.

We offer a supportive environment with drinks and cake! Time for chatting and then some activity time, which covers a real range of topics, recent ones have included Olympic games, singing with Peter and Bob, sports day, hats, British landmarks and a recent case full of retro clothing from Marks and Spencer's archive department to look through and reminisce over. Most of all we have some fun and bring smiles to peoples faces if we can!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the helpers who keep this group going from week to week, giving of their time and experience.

It is a wonderful way to share the love of Jesus with those who attend and encourage them to come to other events connected to the Church.

A couple of photos from recent events



Sports Day



Olympic Game

If this group is relevant for you then please do pop along, we would love to see you.

The Gathering

17th October
10am- 3pm

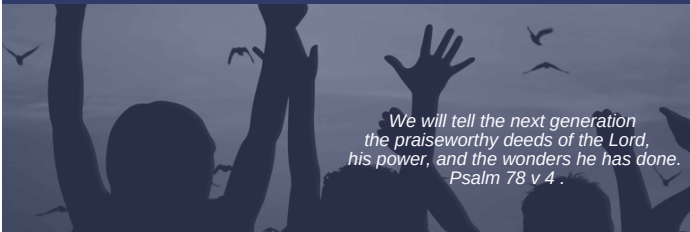


Venue: Romford Baptist Church,
Main road, RM1 3BL

Theme: Children and Youth.

Speakers:

Revd Alan Moss (Pioneer Minister)
Pastors Mark & Claire Barford (AOG)
Compassion UK
Faith in Schools
KICK
(Transforming lives through Sport)
Mustard Seed Team



*We will tell the next generation
the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord,
his power, and the wonders he has done.
Psalm 78 v 4 .*

Free Admission and Buffet Lunch included.
RSVP for Catering Purposes to chris.bolster@cteel.org.uk
Parking Available - Up to 40 Spaces.



*Join us for
Afternoon Tea
Monday October 14th
at 2.30pm*

*Sandwiches, scones
with Tiptree jam & cream
Home-made Cakes*

Price: £7.00

*Booking with the
church office is
essential.
01376 500958*



Meals for the Alpha course

Could you help please by providing a simple one course meal for the Alpha course ? The course commenced on 18th September and runs for a further 10 weeks; the meal provides an important focal point for the start of every session. There is a signing up sheet on the church notice board in the community cafe and there are still a few weeks to be filled. Also a big thank you to these that have offered to provide meals so far.

TUESDAY PRAISE

OCTOBER 2024
AT WURC
12.30 - 1.00PM

TUESDAY

SPEAKER

1st Oct

Marina Price

8th Oct

Vicky Zarb

15th Oct

Revd Stephen Northfield

22nd Oct

Revd Lorna Bantock

29th Oct

Revd Noah Cockett

Refreshments available afterwards

Rev Dr Peter Stevenson - sent by Jean Moody Great Totham URC

A bill which would allow terminally ill adults, with six months or fewer to live, to get medical help to end their own lives has been introduced in the House of Lords, by former Labour Justice Secretary Lord Falconer. The issue has gained further prominence this year, partly because of Dame Esther Rantzen's revelation that she had joined Dignitas, the assisted dying clinic in Switzerland.

A bill to introduce assisted dying was last debated in the House of Commons in 2015, when it was defeated by 330 votes to 118. More recently there have been moves in Scotland, Jersey and the Isle of Man towards changing the law. A bill introduced by Lib Dem MSP Liam McArthur will be debated in the Scottish Parliament in the autumn.

In the Isle of Man, a bill was supported at its third reading by two-thirds of the island's parliamentary representatives, known as members of the House of Keys. It will now be considered by the Isle of Man's Legislative Council.

For some, there is little fear in death but a greater concern about dying and the journey that might be ahead. Few people would choose a painful end without dignity and independence, becoming a 'burden' on family members or the medical services.

However, that has not been my experience during 25 years of pastoral care and witnessing many pathways that people have taken. I have heard folk say, "I am ready now and wish the Lord would take me," but I have rarely heard a person ask for euthanasia. The expression, "You wouldn't let a dog suffer in that way!" is sometimes used as a reason for assisted dying, often by a third person looking in rather than the patient themselves. Modern palliative care practices and effective pain management reduces the suffering of many people in their last days.

The Bible says very little directly on this subject, beyond the universal understanding that humans are made in God's image and the sanctity of life with its associated commandment not to take the life of another. Jesus is never challenged on the subject nor does it come up in His general teachings.

My greater concern in this discussion is the chance that opening the possibility that someone can choose when they die in this manner may have unintended consequences enabling people to decide for others when their time on this earth should finish.

Peace and shalom

Preachers at Great Totham URC in October - Sue Bowyer

October 6th Dot Dean from Maldon URC . Harvest Thanksgiving service.

October 13th Rev. Mark Ambrose.

October 20th Ian Hardie from Witham URC . A communion service.

October 27th Trevor Andrews from Kelvedon URC

You are very welcome to join us at any of our services which begin at 10:30 am.

You are also welcome to come along to our next coffee morning which is on Saturday 12th October .

You will find us in Chapel Road, Gt. Totham North. CM9 8DA



"It's either an appeal to youth culture
or we can't afford to service the boiler
for the Winter season"

UKRAINIAN GET TOGETHER

**Free Monthly Ukrainian meet
up! We kindly invite hosts &
guests to.....**



**Wood End Farm
Witham CM8 1EH
6th October | 2-4 pm**

**Free Refreshments &
Cake . Plus crafts for the
kids.**

**For any enquiries please contact Maria on
07800585175 or Amanda on 07450831969**

Minister	Minister	Lorna Bantock	571757
Children and Youth Pastor	Mrs	Viv Sollis	500958
Associate Children and Youth Pastor	Ms	Tracey Eagling	500958
Children & Youth Elder	Mr	Gavin McCall	
Church Secretaries (also Elders)	Mr Mrs	Tony Deighton and Muriel Heppinstall	518866
Discipleship Elder	Mr	David Wellings	
Mission and Growth Elders	Mrs Mr	Fenella Hardie Ian Hunt	
Pastoral Elder	Mrs	Sarah Wellings	
Property Elder	Mr	Billy Kennedy	
Church Treasurer (also Elder)	Mr	Ian Hardie	
Worship Elder	Mr	Keith Meredith	
Kitchen Manager	Mrs	Heather March	500958
Community Cafe Pastoral co-ordinator	Mrs	Eve Murfitt	
Prayer Chain Co-ordinator	Mrs	Rosemary Stinson	516602
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