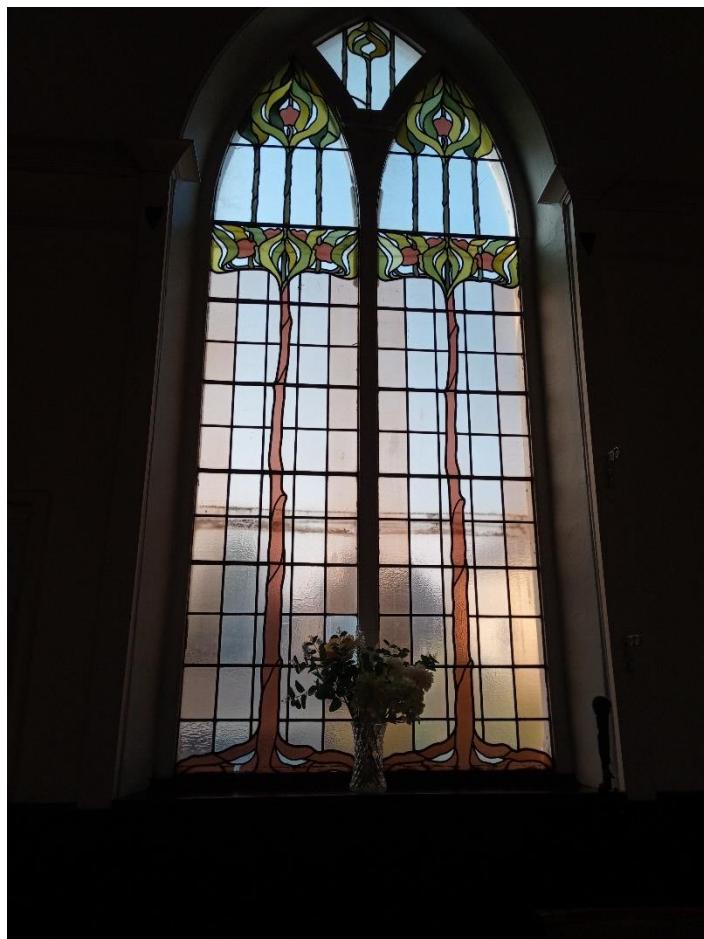


Contact

May 2023

Hinckley
UNITED
REFORMED
CHURCH



The Borough, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 1NL
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Minister

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Contact Information

Please take great care when sharing these contact details with other people. This information will not appear in the version of Contact on the church website.

Church Secretary	Christine Thomas	
Treasurer	Sally Leggat	
Premises	Malcolm Hooke	
Children and Youth Work	Chris Sharrock	
Pulpit Supply	David Crick	
Music	David Crick	
Notices	Christine & Tony Thomas	
Flowers	Kathy Smith	
Catering	Ann Martin	
Contact Magazine	Penny Randriamahavorisoa	

Worship in May (10.45 am unless stated)

7 th May	Deacon Sarah Wickett
14 th May	Lynne Cooper
21 st May	Rev Andrew Mudharara (<i>including Holy Communion</i>)
28 th May	Rev George Lea (<i>Pentecost</i>)
4 th June	Rev Geoffrey Clarke (<i>Moderator East Midlands URC Synod</i>)

*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.
Proverbs 11 v30*

Dear Friends,

During the month of May, the church will be celebrating Ascension (18th) when Jesus rose up to heaven and Pentecost (28th) when the disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit. We give thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit and, although the idea of the Ascension may be difficult to grasp, it reminds us that the Spirit is given to us not so that we can feel special, but to empower us to witness to Jesus and point others to him.

We have received several prompts in recent months to reach out to others. Lesley challenged us in her Easter message to invite someone to church – and don't give up if they just come once - invite them again. If you find this a daunting task then start by praying for your friends that through your witness they will come to know Jesus. The church ran a 'Contagious Christians' course at the beginning of March. If you had other commitments which prevented you from attending there will be more opportunities in the future – talk to Rob.

There have been opportunities to witness, for example through the Walk of Witness on Good Friday – to proclaim the good news of Jesus to the people of Hinckley as 'Churches Together'. It is intended that we organise an Alpha course in September. The Youth with a Mission team at the Kings Lodge on the A5 have been witnessing in the Market Place and have invited our church folk to join them. Carole and others are welcoming people into the "Warm Space" at church which is developing into a space for fellowship and for meeting people.

During the coming weeks David and Rob will be arranging interviews again for candidates for an outreach worker. Please pray for all those involved and that the right decisions will be made.

There are many ways to witness. We all have different gifts and we can all find a way to express our faith. It takes courage and persistence in prayer.

May God bless you all,
Tony and Christine

News of the Family

Betty and Sylvia are recovering slowly. It was good to see Sylvia at the church lunch on Tuesday 18th.

Megan R has passed her final exams and will be starting work as a doctor at the hospital in Norwich in August. Thank you for all your prayers and support over the last five years.

Congratulations to Glen C on his recent engagement.

Please remember in your prayers:

Julie and John P as they care for Julie's mum Beryl and other members of the family.
Ann M who received a diagnosis recently and needs further investigations.
Paul D had a short stay in hospital following a trip and fall.

We also think of:

Annette D, Beryl (Julie's mum), Betty H, Dennis, Ethel, Ian S, Jan and Brian B, Jean C, Joan, John P, Joyce, Joyce and Arthur, Keith G, Keith H, Lily S, Margaret and Peter, Nanette S, Nessa, Muriel, Paddy, Pat J, Ruth, Sue D, Sue T and Wendy.

We continue to pray for all those we know in need, those receiving medical treatment and those struggling with day to day living and all who care for them. Please contact me if you or someone you know is in need of prayer and would like to go on the prayer list, respecting their privacy and seeking permission first.

Contact me by email or telephone.

Sue Saunders

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Congratulations to all those celebrating birthdays in May:

John H (on the 3rd), Ferrand (on the 8th), Yuri & Malcolm C (on the 9th), Ethel F (on the 10th), Mollie H (on the 12th), Rob C (on the 14th), Laura D (on the 15th), Lily S (on the 25th), Candid M (on the 29th).

And best wishes to those celebrating their Wedding Anniversaries this month:

Jacqui & Dave (on the 15th), Arthur & Joyce (on the 24th), Andrew & Candid (on the 26th).

Apologies to anyone we may have missed. Thanks to Kathy for maintaining these records. If we haven't got your information, please speak to Kathy.

News from the Vine

New in this month will be the next selection of Take Note books, which we'll have from mid-May until late July. These are a selection of new titles all on special offer – look out for the Take Note stickers on books and the catalogues, which are free to pick up, and detail all of the books on offer. Included in the coming selection is the new Matt Redman CD, some great new titles in Christian biography, devotionals and Christian living plus a selection of ESV and Message bibles. We've also been topping up our range of gifts – we have new Hannah Dunnett gifts in and will shortly be have more new gifts appearing on the shelves. Do drop in to have a look or watch our social media for updates on new arrivals.

We will be closed for all three May bank holiday Mondays but will remain open on Coronation Saturday. During the week before and after the Coronation we will be serving a special Coronation Cupcake in celebration! A new addition to our cake selection is a chocolate brownie that happens to be gluten free (but you can't tell!).

We are happy to report that we have successfully filled our staffing vacancy but are still in need of volunteers – if you, or someone you know would be interested in joining our team for one session a week, please do get in touch:

thevinehinckley@hotmail.co.uk 01455 612345.

God Bless,
Jessica Harrison Manager

Tuesday Lunch Event: Tuesday 9th May 2023

May's Church lunch will be on Tuesday 9th at midday and will be quiche and salad.

Please let me know if you would like to attend, thank you.
Sue S:

Fellowship Walk

Weather permitting we are still hoping to accomplish a walk in April - to see Blue Bells in Burroughs Wood near Ratby. However, at the time of writing the walk is yet to take place! Apologies that we had to postpone the walk scheduled for 11th April.

The walk in May is planned for 10am on 16th - venue to be announced. Can you please let me know if you will be coming.

Thank you - Tony T

Christian Aid News



Many thanks to all those who contributed with plants or bric-a-brac for the Christian Aid Fayre held at St. Mary's on the 15th April and for those who helped to 'women' the stall.

The total raised by the URC plant stall was £77.50 and the Fayre overall total was £570.75 but this may increase from late payments. Although this total was down on last year, it was still a worthwhile event to raise money for some of the world's poorest people.

Christian Aid Week May 14-20th.

CA Envelopes will be available with the paper magazines and also within the church. These can be given in on any Sunday during May. Please be as generous as you can and please make use of the Gift Aid option on the envelope.

Malcolm Hooke

Thank you to David Crick for his work editing Contact over the past few years. I hope I will do as good a job! Thank you to everyone who has contributed this month and for all your kind words of encouragement and support.

Penny Randriamahavorisoa

Lent Challenge

How far did we walk with Jesus... Google suggests "The Jesus Trail is a 65 km (40 mi) hiking and pilgrimage route in the Galilee region of Israel that traces the route Jesus may have walked, connecting many sites from his life and ministry." For Jesus and the Disciples it would be longer than that, as He visited many other places that took Him off the direct route. It was a long way and, in my case, it took me 49 days to read the Gospel of Luke. I met hundreds of people; some I had never met before. When I set this challenge, I suggested that Jesus would still be very concerned about people as He walked to Jerusalem for the last time. Even though He knew what would happen at the end of the journey He still had time for those He met. My walk with Him through Luke's Gospel has proved that to me!

Our read through Luke was not easy at times. Some Scripture was hard to understand so we may have passed over it. But it was also very enlightening, as I watched how He dealt with the poor and sick, with those who the community thought were outcasts or not worth bothering with. I asked what I would have done in the Courtyard where Peter said he did not know Jesus? Would I have offered to carry Jesus' Cross for Him? And when the Cross was lifted up, how did you feel?

Jesus told us at least 3 times what was to happen to Him... He would be arrested, tried, and crucified. But on the 3rd day He would rise again. For the Disciples this was hard to accept and understand. But we have hindsight, because we have read the story before and know Jesus does rise again!! We still have to look at the Cross and try to understand what it means. It means that Jesus died for us, to save us and to open the door into heaven!

Which is your favourite event? Jesus blessing the Children is one of my special stories. I have read the words scores of times as I have Baptised babies and adults. In my notes for Easter Day I wrote, "Why does no one believe Jesus has risen again?" The two ladies took spices to anoint a dead body, so they were not expecting to find Jesus alive. Peter did not believe the women when they told him "Jesus had risen". He has Risen indeed!!

I end my summary at a home in Emmaus. Just two people and an Invited Guest. It was a most enlightening time for these two people. The times I have asked..."what did Jesus say?" But the bit we can remember when we sit around the Communion Table is this:

Luke C24 v 30

"When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.

31 Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him, and he disappeared from their sight."

Each time we sit around the Communion Table and break bread together Jesus is with us!!!!

Thank you for joining me on our walk-through Luke's Gospel. I would like to hear of your experiences. But this is not the end as the Story continues in the Book of Acts.

George Lea

The Tree of Life windows

On Easter Sunday Ferrand and I were visiting Hunstanton and shared worship with the congregation at Union Church Hunstanton, a church affiliated to the Baptist and United Reformed Churches. We had a very warm welcome from everyone and stayed after service for a cup of tea and a chat.

The church is an arts and crafts building with beautiful and unusual stained-glass windows, as shown on the front of Contact. (Please excuse the poor photography skills!) The history of nonconformist worship in the town is also worth noting.

During the 19th century, the number of nonconformists in Hunstanton increased but they had no place of worship. Land in the area was owned by the Le Strange family who were Anglicans and property agreements prohibited the holding of nonconformist services on any ground above the high-water mark. The church therefore gathered at low tide on the beach between 1850-1870 until permission was granted for a chapel to be built where the existing church stands today.

On a warm, sunny day a service on the beach sounds like a lovely idea (perhaps especially to us in landlocked Leicestershire) but to persist for 20 years through fair weather and foul is a true testament of faith.

If you happen to visit Hunstanton on a Sunday, why not visit this lovely and welcoming church?

Penny and Ferrand

Commitment for Life Prayer for the month

Christian Aid

By Charlotte Scott, from Christian Aid

**Commitment
for Life**

God of all people, whose image is in all those you have created and whose teaching commands us to love one another, give us the courage to stand with the most vulnerable and excluded people of the world. Help us to see the situations where there is need:

- those suffering on the front lines of the climate crisis.
- those displaced by conflict.
- those marginalized by unjust systems.

We pray for your love and grace to fill the lives of those who are struggling to thrive through poverty and injustice, that they may see change. Empower Christian Aid's partners in their work to respond and give them the tools, knowledge and perseverance to stand alongside the poorest communities. Inspire your Church across the world to look for a more equal division of power and mobilise people to build a movement for change to bring social justice for all. Challenge us to look at ourselves and understand our part in the global systems of injustice; send your Spirit to help us shape our lives and our churches to live out your call to love one another. We ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen

Something to think about ...

"Our understanding of Scripture must always be open to refinement. All interpretations of Scripture need to be tentatively final. They have to be final in the sense that obedience cannot wait for the disciple to read yet one more technical article in biblical studies. At the same time, all efforts in biblical interpretation are flawed. Our interpretation of Scripture, therefore, must never be closed to correction and revision."

(from 'Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes' by Kenneth E Bailey).

Thanks to Christine for sharing this quote.

Rotas If you can help on the Door Steward rota, please see Penny Randriamahavorisoa; if you can help on the Coffee rota, please see Ann Martin. **If you are unable to fulfil your duty, please arrange a swap.**

	<i>Duty Elder</i>	<i>Door Steward</i>
<i>Sunday 7th May</i>	Christine Thomas	Paul Deeming Julie Payne
<i>Sunday 14th May</i>	David Crick	Sally Leggat Ann Martin
<i>Sunday 21st May</i>	Roger Moseley	Jacqui Brown Heather Crick
<i>Sunday 28th May</i>	Sue Saunders	Kathy Smith Sue Thain
<i>Sunday 4th June</i>	Karen Jones	Richard Benham Sue Saunders
	<i>Coffee</i>	<i>Flowers</i>
<i>Sunday 7th May</i>	Carole Wallis Ruth Griffiths	
<i>Sunday 14th May</i>	Karen Jones Jacqui Brown	C. Thomas
<i>Sunday 21st May</i>	Christine Thomas Ann Martin	
<i>Sunday 28th May</i>	Marilyn & Crawford Payne	C. Sharrock
<i>Sunday 4th June</i>	Sylvia Ellis Chris Sharrock	

Wednesday at One

May 3 rd	Mr John Moore	St. John Hinckley
May 10th	Rev Solomon Bentu	Tilton Rd Pentecostal
May 17th	Rev John Berry	The Beacon Church
May 24th	Rev Anthony Thacker	St. Mary Hinckley
May 31 st	Rev Malcolm Clarke	Hinckley Baptist
June 7 th	Mr Steve Vickers	St. Mary Barwell

Warm Space Drop-in (Thursday pm)

May 4 th	Chris and Sylvia
May 11 th	Ruth and Ann
May 18 th	Kathy and Phillip
May 25 th	Sue and Sylvia

Life is a love story

From “God Calling” edited by A.J.Russel

You need me. I need you. My broken world needs you. Many a weary, troubled heart needs you. Many a troubled heart will be gladdened by you, drawn nearer to me by you both. Oh it is a glorious way, the upward way, the wonderful discoveries, the tender intimacies, the amazing, almost incomprehensible, understanding. Truly the Christian life – life with me – is a love story. Leave all to me.

All you have missed you will find in me. Try me.

You cannot make too many demands upon me nor put too great a strain upon my love and forbearance – claim – healing – power – joy – supply – what you will.

Thank you to Ruth for sharing this extract.

Recalling the Ministry for Mar- April 2023
(click on the links to read the bible readings)

In reflection on the message for Sunday 19th March 2023.

Mothering Sunday

Call to Worship, Psalm 23, The LORD is my shepherd.
Extracts from Isaiah 49 v13-16. Restoration of Israel.

<https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=549620379>

We welcomed Sandra and Gaye into Membership.

Sermon: The God who mothers us. Grown-ups may not like to be mothered by their mothers, but there is no shame in being mothered/nurtured by God. Psalm 23 expresses how God nurtures us in many ways, “all the days of” our lives. In the Isaiah reading, mothers may not have compassion for their children in later years, but God says, “I will not forget you!”

God has got our names engraved on His hands, loving us at all times, so that we can have trust and confidence that He will help us with our problems and see us through times of need.

Noting that we were seated around God’s table (see v5 in Psalm 23), the congregation joined together in Communion.

In reflection on the message for Sunday 26th March 2023

Extracts from Matthew 20, v20-28, A Mother’s Request.

<https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=549620536>

Sermon for Passion Sunday: Serving Others.

The reading reminds us that Jesus was The Servant King. We were born with the gifts which God gave us. Our God-given gifts should be used to serve others. We will have our own problems, but God is always there to help us. The chosen hymns were selected to illustrate how we can serve, like Jesus: e.g. MP1261, v2:

We are pilgrims on a journey and companions on the road;
We are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.

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In reflection on the message for Sunday 2nd April 2023

Palm Sunday

Call to Worship, Psalm 118, 1-2 & 19-29.

Give thanks to the LORD for he is good, his love endures for ever.

Extracts from Matthew 21, v1-11. Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King.

<https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=549620636>

Sermon: ...Loosened to Serve. Jesus made a Triumphal Entry to Jerusalem, but not as conqueror with pomp and power of arms. Instead, he came riding on a donkey. Although the crowd sang Hosannas, expecting him to come as a King to overcome the Roman occupation, instead he came peacefully – on the donkey, not a horse, as The Servant King. He came to serve mankind by dying on the cross, so opening a route to freedom for others by his resurrection. The glory of Jesus' achievement will only come as we continue to serve him.

Thus, begins Holy Week.

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In reflection on the message for Sunday 9th April 2023.

Easter Sunday

The day for some of us started at 9.00 am with a breakfast Communion Service.

Readings:

Mark 16, v1-8. Jesus Has Risen. Mary Magdalene and Salome went to the tomb.

John 21, v9-14. Jesus said, "Bring fish...Come and have breakfast."

Mark 14, v22-25. The Communion Narrative.

10.45 Service:

Call to Worship: Christ is Risen – He is Risen Indeed. Hallelujah!

Extracts from Acts 10, v34-43. Christ, the Lord of All.

v34f: Then Peter began to speak,

"I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism, but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.

v35f: You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. ...and how he went around doing good and healing...because God was with him."

Peter is testifying as a witness to Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection. Peter notes that as a consequence (v43) all believers "receive forgiveness of sins through his name." This applies to all, whether Jews or Gentiles. Christ is the Lord of All, who commanded us to preach to all peoples (v42).

Reflection: 'All peoples' means not just 'people like us' ('plu'), but we must introduce Jesus to people from outside our comfort zones. And, if they come to church only once, repeat the invitation many times.

Extracts from 1 Corinthians 15, v1-11. The Resurrection of Christ.

Paul writes to people who are 'plu',

v1f: Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you.

Paul outlines the Easter message above in the Acts Reading, giving further evidence of appearances of the resurrected Jesus including to Paul, at the time of his conversion.

Reflection: So, just as the Gospel was spread through the Holy Land by Paul and the disciples, we are the channels for God's word to be passed onwards in modern times.

Extracts from John 20, v1-18. The Empty Tomb.

v1: Early on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

This is the passage from John's Gospel which reports Peter witnessing Christ's resurrection, that was referenced in the Acts Reading above.

Reflection: This is a Reading which illustrates that men and women are equally important in Gospel stories. The Easter story is so powerful that it is as intriguing now as it has been throughout the centuries since it happened. It stresses the lasting power of Jesus' message of peace, love and joy, which has spread worldwide.

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In reflection on the message for Sunday 16th April 2023.

First Reading: extracts from John 20, v1-18. The Empty Tomb.

v1: Early on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

This is the passage which reports Peter and the disciples witnessing Christ's resurrection.,

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene.

<https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=549621416>

Second Reading: extracts from John 20, v19-29. Jesus Appears to His Disciples.

v19: On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

v20f: After he said this he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

v22: And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Jesus appears to Thomas Didymus (often called 'doubting Thomas') who was absent when Jesus came and who refused to believe until he could touch Jesus' hands and side. Jesus told Thomas to do so, then Jesus said, (v29) "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Sermon: Resurrection: It is clear from our readings that the disciples had a problem with understanding the events of the resurrection of Jesus. We all have our thoughts on what the resurrection (the risen Christ) is about.

The many appearances of Jesus in the lives of the disciples, to Mary Magdalene, Peter, Saul/Paul, to those on the Emmaus Road, etc., help us to realise that we in modern times have our own experiences of meeting God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). Thus, as believers, we should have no doubts that Jesus is alive for us and we meet him in our private and Church life. That we shared together today in the Sacrament of Holy Communion should have dispelled all doubts about the living Christ.

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Thanks to Brian Beagley for summarising these services for us.

Church Lunch – Sunday May 7th

It is hoped that we can share another church lunch after the morning service on Sunday 7th May. This is the weekend of the Coronation of King Charles III so we can celebrate together. Bring your own food and any extra you may want to share. The preacher on that day is an old friend of David & Heather's: Deacon Sarah Wickett from High St Methodist Church, Harpenden, Herts.

Dates for your Diary

Sunday 7th May – Church lunch after the morning service

Sunday 4th June - The Jubilee Singers are performing at St Mary's Church, Hinckley at 2.30pm

Regular Meetings

Every Monday Chat and Prayer session on Zoom - log in after 6.45pm for a 7.00pm start and ending about 8.00pm

Tuesday Weekly Bible Study Group – see Richard Benham for details

Wednesday-at-One – Wednesday 1.00pm

Wednesday Monthly House Group

Next meeting Wednesday 3rd May 7.30pm at the Crick's

Thursday – Prayer meeting for future of the church 11.00 Front Foyer

Thursday 7.30 Music group practice - all welcome

Friday Prayer Group 10.00am (in the church).

If you need any help using Zoom, please contact Tony Thomas.

Please submit material for the June edition of Contact by Sunday 21st May. Articles can be emailed. The next edition of Contact will be available by Sunday 28th May.