

# Seedtime & Harvest

## A Circuit Newsletter for Lowestoft and East Suffolk Methodist Circuit September 2026

Dear all,

We have just begun a new Methodist year. The heatwaves seem to be over and we are back to unsettled changeable weather. And winter is coming! I am writing this on the 1<sup>st</sup> September, with only 114 days until Christmas. That means our focus, even though it is still sunny, will be on Harvests and Remembrance and Christmas. I just thought it would be a good time to remind you of the mission money available for each church from circuit funds. Christmas is a time when people make what may be an annual visit to church. Even if they don't come in, there will be carol singing somewhere around. It's a good time to think about how we can make our neighbours and our contacts aware of Jesus once again. There are resources out there and there is money to buy them. Have a think before your church councils and before it's too late about what you could do to make people aware of why we celebrate Christmas year after year.

Easter is early next year as well, so as soon as Christmas is gone we will have that to prepare for and again it is a good opportunity to make our message, our purpose and our mission known to all who never come through our doors.

The internet has made it easier for us to find resources, so why not have a look to see what we could do. We have all written mission statements, so now is the time to make them mean something.

Martin

### **Circuit Website Launch**

**[www.lesmethodistcircuit.org.uk](http://www.lesmethodistcircuit.org.uk)**

Hi Everyone,

I am delighted to let you know that our new **Lowestoft & East Suffolk Methodist Circuit website** is now live. I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who contributed by providing information, photographs, and other content.

The website can be found at **[www.lesmethodistcircuit.org.uk](http://www.lesmethodistcircuit.org.uk)** and is a valuable resource for anyone wishing to learn more about our Circuit and the seven churches within it. The Home page includes a welcome from Rev'd Martin, our Superintendent Minister, along with an interactive map of our churches, details of upcoming events, and the latest news from around the Circuit. Visitors can also explore individual **churches**, which include photographs on each page, to find information about worship times, activities, facilities, and accessibility.

The site includes a **Life Events** section with information about baptisms, weddings, funerals, and other significant occasions, while the **News** page helps people keep up to date with activities and events across the Circuit. There are also links to useful Methodist and community resources, contact details for Rev'd Martin and the Circuit Office, as well as access to the **Seedtime and Harvest** newsletter, **safeguarding** information, and other key Circuit **policies**.

We hope the website reflects the faith, worship, community spirit, and service that unite our seven churches, while making it easy for both newcomers and existing members to find information and get involved.

Please take a look when you have the opportunity and let me know what you think. We would also be very pleased to receive any **news items** that you would like featured on the website. If you are sending photographs, please ensure that everyone pictured has given permission for their image to appear online. Karen Delf from Kessingland Methodist Church has very kindly agreed to help with the administration of the site, and particularly the news items, and news items can be sent to her or to Carol at the office

Best wishes,

**Warren Low**

warrenlow@yahoo.co.uk

Corton

### **Greetings from Corton Methodist Church.**

We are delighted to be able to share some very positive news about the future of our church building. Following many months of planning, fundraising and discussions, the work to replace Corton church roof is now due to begin in late September. The project is expected to take around six to seven weeks to complete and will not only provide us with a brand-new roof but will also include redecoration work to the church, helping to refresh our much-loved building for the future.

For our small church, this has been a significant undertaking, and we are extremely grateful for the support we have received. Thanks to generous funding from the Circuit, alongside successful applications to charitable grant-making organisations, we have been able to secure a large proportion of the resources needed and will be taking a loan out for the rest of the work. Hence what had initially seemed a daunting challenge has become an exciting opportunity, and we are all looking forward to seeing the completed work and the difference it will make to our church.

Although the building works will inevitably cause some disruption, church life at Corton will continue throughout the project. During the roof replacement, our weekly Sunday services will be held in the meeting room at the rear of the church, allowing us to continue worshipping together while the work takes place. Unfortunately, our popular Toddlers Group will need to find alternative accommodation during this period, as the construction work will make the site unsuitable and unsafe for young children. However, we are grateful for the understanding and flexibility shown by the

parents, carers, and our wonderful volunteers Pat and Wendy, and we look forward to welcoming the group back once the roof project has been completed.

Outside of the roofing project, our church life has continued to flourish through the year. Our monthly community coffee mornings have taken place regularly and have proved to be a great success. They provide a great opportunity for both residents and visitors to the area to meet together, enjoy refreshments and conversation, and they have helped strengthen our community connections. We look forward to continuing them once the roof replacement and redecoration work have been completed.

We have also been blessed by the wide range of preachers who have led worship at Corton over recent months. We offer our sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to our Sunday services and enriched our worship through their gifts and ministry. A particular highlight was our Pet and Eco Service on 6th September, led by Sue Groome, which brought together themes of creation, stewardship and care for God's world, with a congregation including 4 dogs, a cat and Fred the tortoise!

As we look ahead to the completion of the roofing project, we do so with gratitude, hope and excitement. This investment in our building is ultimately an investment in the future mission and ministry of Corton Methodist Church. We thank everyone who has supported us through prayers, encouragement and practical assistance, and we look forward to continuing to serve the community of Corton for many years to come.

### **Warren Low**

*Corton Methodist Church*

*Picture - Paula and Jeanette after the Pet/ECO service with Simon the dog and Fred the tortoise*



### **Trinity**

As I write this Trinity is about to celebrate 56 years. We welcome and celebrate everyone who has helped imagine, build, attended, is attending, or has contributed to our church life over the years. It continues to be a privilege to worship together as friends and an active church community. We remember with love and great affection all those who have guided and played their part in building and maintaining church life at Trinity, but who are no longer with us. We are also privileged and pleased to be able to celebrate with folk their major milestones in life: recently Sally and Charles

celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary- being married at Trinity, where Heather played the organ – and was able to do so again on their Anniversary weekend.

Sadly, it is true that we also have to face the loss of those who by death or infirmity are no longer with us. In recent months we have recently lost two active members of our stewarding team – Ans Bates and Janet Ramsden. Both bore their illnesses with fortitude, humour and bravery. We treasure their memory.

Nevertheless, life goes on. We welcome new people, visitors and ‘seekers’ – those who cross our threshold for any reason. Our congregation fluctuates between 45 and 60. We are actively planning our usual Xmas activities as well as a Quiz and fish and chip night in November (but with the rising cost of fish & chips we may have to consider what food to provide for future events). Worship life is supplemented and supported by Rev Martin who is currently hosting a 13-week bible study course each Wednesday.

We have resumed our ‘Little Lambs’ toddler group as well as our crafting group. The Ladies group has plans for the year ahead. Our Nursery continues to perform strongly – due to the skill and care of their team supported by a church committee led by Charles Reynolds

As the Autumn and Winter approach we are planning to update our heating in the sanctuary with air-sourced heat pumps. (there must be a joke here about ‘hot air’ but my wit has failed me).

So all in all, a lot happening.

I think Wally Thompson our church architect, local preacher and friend to many here could not have said it better when he said ‘ “I see the whole building as an expression of HOPE – hope for the future, hope for our young people, hope built on the faith of our people through these times of economic stress” He went on to say “My greatest hope is not that people who come and see this church will ask, ‘Who designed it? ‘, but that all will know that God is HERE and that he is present in the hearts of his people. When they read the inscription on the foundation stone ‘built to the glory of God’, may they say, ‘Yes, indeed, it **IS** to the glory of God ‘.”

This vision is still relevant today as we look at ways of expanding both our spiritual and community activities.

Julian Rogers

## Norton Subcourse

Jimmy's Garden Party is our biggest fundraiser. Started 30+ years ago as a tea party in Jimmy and Joan Goodrum's back garden it now attracts a couple of hundred of the community. Happily, the gardens of two of our trustees open onto a grassy acre of common land that copes nicely. A few years ago, as the evening deepened, happy hangers-on were singing popular songs led by a local guitarist. Our two tired trustees had given up the idea of a cup of cocoa and bed. Then a passing thunderstorm cleared the site in minutes. The weather was kind again this year. As were the community, new-comers to our two villages and a few who returned just to feel the vibe once more.

Seeing our refurbished outside area in the sun earlier this year triggered the idea of a 'Strawberry Tea'.

The idea grew into something worthy of 'Bake Off' and a crew of cake-makers came together to create an event that is still being talked about.



Mark De-Lisser ([markdelisser.com](http://markdelisser.com)) comes up from London to hold workshops at the Chapel - home to our Gospel Choir. Last month some of the choir hired a bus so they could travel to London to join 500 others at one of his big events. Leaving at dawn the trip out was quieter than the sing along on the way home. By popular demand our October 11th service will feature lots of traditional hymns with the Gospel Choir helping!

Liz Grieve

## HUNGATE

On Beccles Open Gardens Day the sun shone brightly, there was a bit of breeze and the Church Garden looked lovely. Many people came and spent time admiring it and appreciating the peace and quiet. They also enjoyed the tea and cakes and time to chat in the Garden Room. Now we're into planning for our 24<sup>th</sup> Christmas Tree Festival, November 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>. Why not be involved by decorating a tree or coming along to enjoy the amazing spectacle.



In the meantime, as Martin has sadly chosen to leave, the Leaders have thought carefully and prayerfully about future ministry at Hungate. As a joint Methodist and United Reformed Church it would be usual for us look at the possibility of having a URC Minister. We've decided to do things differently and have chosen to support the Circuit in its invitation to a new Minister, for September 2027, who will also be Minister in Beccles. We have support in this from the Methodist Chair of District and the Moderator of the United Reformed Synod.

In the next few months, we will also be looking at the possibility of becoming part of a Mission Partnership with nearby United Reformed Churches.

We do not know how any of this will work out but we trust we will continue our involvement with both denominations and welcome the support that they are able to give us.

Brenda Sigsworth

## Kessingland

### New Members

Kessingland have been delighted to welcome new members. Sue white and Kate Kemp were welcomed in the summer months.

Each chose a favourite hymn. Sue's was What a Friend we have in Jesus and Kate's

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind.



Then just last week we also welcomed Pat Button and Pat Graham into membership.

They chose a hymn each too: Majesty, and I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart.

### **Birthdays:**

Six of our members celebrated their birthdays this week in August.

Left to right: Bethany (with her dad); Joyce (with husband Brian); Les Richards; Julia Shreeve; Dennis and Pressy Seager. Jean Holt with the candle!



**SPACE** is the name of our craft group started in August.

Spiritual Peaceful Activities Creativity Encouragement = SPACE!

One of our first ventures was to make a group collage for Harvest weekend

### **Pilgrimage**

Last Sunday for the commencement of the new Methodist Year we thought about our journey through life.

We downloaded the Shell pattern from the website and some folk have been busily knitting Shells. These were given out during the service and some sent to sick or elderly friends as a reminder to us all of our journey of life- with God.



### **Lord of every pilgrim heart**

Lord of every pilgrim heart,  
bless our journeys  
on these roads  
we never planned to take,  
but through your  
surprising wisdom  
discovered  
we were  
on ...

*Peter Milla*

Pam Bayliss