



WHO'S WHO AT WATTISFIELD

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Our website: www.wattisfieldurc.co.uk

Diss URC: www.dissurc.org.uk

A PRAYER FOR JUNE

Heavenly Father,

with grateful hearts we step into June –
halfway through the year –
and we pause to reflect on your faithfulness
that has brought us this far.
Thank you for the countless blessings,
the lessons learned
and the grace that has sustained us.
Lord, as we enter this new month,
we surrender it fully to you.
We trust you to lead us through the days ahead.
May this month be marked by growth,
breakthrough, peace and joy.
In Jesus' name

Amen



MAILING FROM JO

June 2026

Dear friends,

As we turn the calendar to June this year, we find ourselves in the extreme warmth of summer already! As I write this, the rich green of the trees, the longer evenings and the vibrant life in our gardens, are all serving as a natural reminder of the growth around us.

As Spring turns into Summer, we may often feel a renewed sense of hope. The darkness of winter and the uncertain weather in the earlier part of the year give way to the promise of warm, sunny, bright days.

In the same way, the Church is a place of light, warmth and growth. If we look back over the 5 months of 2026, it has gone quickly, but we change with the seasons and the years too. So it's good to stop and review all that has happened this year and to celebrate how we have grown as a church.



To help us to do this we recently held the Church AGM in a different way. At the morning service on Sunday 12th April we combined the business side of the meeting with hymns, prayers, Bible readings and reflections, as a celebration of the life of the church over the previous year. It was well received and it meant more people could attend and be kept informed of all that is happening behind the scenes and reflect on the wonderful life of Wattisfield Chapel.

One important change that is happening in the whole of the URC Eastern

Synod, is the formation of Mission Partnerships.
 The (new) name of the group that Wattisfield
 Chapel is now a part of is:

*'The Heart of East Anglia
 Mission Partnership'*



THIS GROUP CONSISTS OF: Wattisfield URC, Diss URC, Bury St Edmunds URC, Southgate Community Church (LEP) in Bury and Cloverfield Community Church (LEP) in Thetford. LEP stands for 'Local Ecumenical Partnership': a single church formed by churches of different denominations coming together to form one congregation. Southgate Church combines 3 denominations; Anglican, Baptist and URC. Cloverfield Church is Anglican and URC. Both of the LEPs have Anglican vicars in leadership; Rev'd Mike Simm at Southgate (Mike is coming to lead the service at Wattisfield Chapel on Sunday 12th July) and Rev'd Matt Houghton at Cloverfield.

The 'Heart of East Anglia Mission Partnership' (HOEA MP) has now been formed, and so advertising for a URC Minister to work alongside the current partnership leaders, has begun. The process is in the hands of the Moderators of the URC Synods, and as it gets underway, we will invite all of the church members in the partnership to meet the person applying for the role. We will listen to them preach and vote as to whether they should be 'called' to be the URC Minister or not. This appointment is for a full time Stipendiary Minister and it will not change my role as a Local Church Leader.

FURTHER NEWS FROM ME: is that from September 2026, I will begin to study at Westminster College in Cambridge on a part time course. This will run alongside my current job as Church Leader.

WORSHIP AT WATTISFIELD

June	7th	11am	Jo Patel (Communion)
	14th	11am	Ron Wade, Thetford
	21st	11am	Jo Patel
	28th	10.45	United service at Diss URC (No service at Wattisfield)
July	5th	11am	Jo Patel (Communion)
	12th	11am	Rev'd Mike Simm from Southgate Community Church (see Jo's letter p 2)
	19th	11am	To be confirmed
	26th	11am	Keith Lewis, Coney Weston
August	2nd	11am	Ron Wade, Thetford (Communion)
	9th	11am	Jo Patel
	16th	11am	Rev'd Lythan Nevard, Moderator of the Eastern Synod of the URC
	23rd	10.45	United service at Diss URC (No service at Wattisfield)
	30th	11am	Rev'd Pat Atkinson from the Vidiyal Trust
September	6th	11am	Jo Patel (Communion)



ST MARGARET'S There will be a service of Holy Communion held on the 4th Sunday of the month, i.e.

June 28th, July 26th, August 23rd

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JUNE			
Wednesday 10th	2-4pm	Craftea time	Connie's Room
Saturday 20th	10.30-12.30	Puddle-Duck Café	URC
Tuesday 23rd	6pm	Discussion group	Finningham Church
Wednesday 24th	2-4pm	Board games	Connie's Room
JULY			
Saturday 4th	From 10am	Singing & Sandwiches	URC - see p 5
Wednesday 8th	2-4pm	Craftea time	Connie's Room
Saturday 18th	10.30-12.30	Puddle-Duck Café	URC
Wednesday 22nd	2-4pm	Board games	Connie's Room
Tuesday 28th	2pm	Discussion group	Finningham Church
AUGUST			
Wednesday 12th	2-4pm	Craftea time	Connie's Room
Saturday 15th	10.30-12.30	Puddle-Duck Café	URC
Sunday 23rd	Last date for contributions to Contact, please		
Tuesday 25th	6pm	Discussion group	Finningham Church
Wednesday 26th	2-4pm	Scrabble time	Connie's Room

I will train for 2 years and then I will be ordained as a Non-Stipendiary Minister for Wattisfield and Diss URCs. Again, my training and my role will not be impacted by the appointment of a Mission Partnership Minister, as we will all work together as part of a Ministry Team.

ANOTHER LOVELY CHANGE: is that over the summer we will be welcoming Estelle as a Church Elder at the Chapel. She will work alongside Andrew, Michael, Adrian and Ron, who have all been Elders for many years and who continue to serve the church with everything they do for us. We will ordain Estelle as an Elder at the morning service on Sunday June 7th, and pray for her as she settles into her new role.



We are extremely grateful for all that God is doing, and will do, to nurture and grow life at the Chapel. So as we reviewed the past year, we celebrated and gave thanks for the blessings we have received and we look forward with hope and joy for all that is ahead.

Jo



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We would like to highlight 2 Sunday morning services coming up at Wattisfield, when we hope to gather people from across the Mission Partnership to join us for worship. They are: **Sunday 16th August**, when Rev'd Lythan Nevard, Moderator of Eastern Synod, will be leading the service and **Sunday 11th October**, when Rev'd Neil Thorogood, Moderator of URC General Assembly, will be leading. We hope you will put these dates in your diary and plan to join us.



SPRING WAS IN THE AIR!

After the fantastic support of our visitors and a very generous donation, the final total raised at 'Spring is in the Air', the floral display put on by the Flower Fairies over the Easter weekend, was a wonderful £708.82.

I'm pleased to report that because of your generosity and the Church's matching the donations given over the weekend, the following items have been purchased and will be taken to Chapter 15, the homeless charity based in Thetford.

- 16 pairs of underpants
- 7 pairs of jogging bottoms
- 4 sleeping bags
- 4 waterproof (self-inflating) ground mattresses

In addition to this, and as a result of the splendid amount raised, a sum of £506.90 has been passed on, enabling Chapter 15 to purchase food and other resources they require to carry on with their excellent work.

Why is this charity called Chapter 15?

Nadine, the founder of Chapter 15, chose this name to reflect some significant '15s' in her life. This included founding Chapter 15 in its original format in 2015.

She also wanted the charity to reflect her Christian faith and God's heart to reach out to those most in need. This is demonstrated very powerfully in Chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel in the Bible. Here, Jesus tells some earthly stories we can all understand to reflect deeper heavenly truths. Luke 15 contains 3 wonderful stories of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Lost Son.

Our thanks go to Jean and the Flower Fairies, and to all who made the weekend go so well and raise this brilliant amount of money.

Mary

In addition, a cull of some things that had been 'hanging around' for some time meant the charities 'Break' and 'Tools with a Mission' were also beneficiaries of the verge sale.

Christian Aid Week continued to 16 May, and the proceeds from the Puddle-Duck Cafe and donations from our Sunday service brought the money raised for Christian Aid to over £500 – a tremendous result, which is matched by the Church using interest on its reserves, bringing the total to be sent to the charity to over £1,000.

Christian Aid gives examples of what donations can provide. A selection of ways it can use £1,000 includes:

- **100 pairs of chickens that produce fertilisers for urban farmers.**
- **20 solar dryers that turn fresh produce into valuable long-life products.**
- **12 tablets that training groups share to access farming news, weather forecasts, market prices and mobile banking.**
- **Establishing a soil-free hydroponic farm, complete with 2,000 litre water tank and solar powered irrigation, for an urban farming group who are transforming their lives.**

However Christian Aid uses our contribution, we can be assured that it will help to alleviate poverty and bring more sustainable lives to some very impoverished people.

Many thanks to all in the team that worked on the sale, to those who donated items and money, and to those who made purchases, including all those Chapel-goers and Puddle-Duckers who supported in so many ways.

Lets see what 2027 brings!

Adrian Black
June 2026

I'm always surprised at the diversity of artefacts that people look for and purchase – books, puzzles, games, china, cutlery, tote bags, tools, stamps, car accessories, toys, ornaments, glassware, CD's, vacuum cleaner bags, toiletries, a silk scarf, a whole box of books and pamphlets relating to World War II, curling tongs and many other useful and quirky items were dispatched to new delighted owners. The foodstuffs were much sought after, as always, and Frances and Mary both made return trips with replacement supplies!

One of my favourite occasions was meeting three Asian people as they browsed for things of interest. Two live in Thetford, and had brought a friend who was visiting, staying in Hopton, who had alerted them to the sale. Alongside pleasant conversation they picked out an eclectic mix of treasures, including a bread bin, several sheets of postage stamps, half a dozen crested spoons from various seaside resorts, a replica ice-pick and some china. I wonder what they actually expected when they drove up to the stall?

At the end of each day Jo, and Pam on the first evening, arrived to help dismantle the stalls and cram the remaining contents back in the car for the long journey to the back of the house! Then repeat the whole process the following day until Monday evening, by which time the car was less full, and the creaking suspension was somewhat relieved. On the Wednesday morning Jo, Andrew and I unloaded the contents of the car directly onto tables in the Chapel ready for the Puddle-Duck Cafe that Saturday.



Three days of hard work by a team of people led to a most successful result. We had raised £345.20 for Christian Aid, including over £80 on foodstuffs, and £31.70 from the Thelnetham branch. The Marfan Trust also benefited, to the tune of £36.50. So, a grand total of £381.70.

THE BENEFICE OF BADWELL AND WALSHAM

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP

St Bartholomew's Church Finningham

23rd June - 6pm

28th July - 2pm

25th August - 6pm



Everyone is welcome to join us as we explore the Bible and faith together in an informal group.

No need to book. Just come along!

Each session is a standalone one.

(Ask Jo for more details)

The RETURN of SINGING & SANDWICHES!

Join us at Wattisfield Chapel on Saturday 4th July for another morning of singing for fun with a professional teacher.

(No experience necessary)

Tea and coffee from 10am. Lunch 12.30pm

Cost £7 to sing + £5 lunch (optional)

Book with Mary (01379 898233)

or Jo (07808 487844)

(AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, please, and by the end of June at the very latest!)

DIVERGING THE VERGE TO A BI-VERGE!

(An account of the 7th annual Christian Aid Week Verge Sale)

Scanning the weather forecasts in the papers and on TV over the first weekend in May proved worrying. Rain was predicted for the following weekend, 9-11 May, the three days of this year's Christian Aid Week verge sale. Being terribly British, we carried on with preparations regardless and hoped for the best! Mind you, I did fish several large plastic sheets from the depths of the garage just in case we needed a speedy cover-up! The kitchen was filling up with donated items from neighbours and villagers; marmalade, jam, buns and cakes were being prepared elsewhere, and the rota for help in setting up and taking down the stall each day of the sale was finalised.

Mid-May is the time for the annual Christian Aid Week, and Wattisfield Chapel takes part in the fundraising that goes on across the country. This year the focus of Christian Aid Week was on Kenya, an African country with a growing debt burden, driven by high interest rates set by international private lenders. Christian Aid reports that public spending there has been falling, making life difficult for many people. More than a third of the population is undernourished, with particularly devastating effects for children. For instance, in 2023 Kenya spent £3.7bn in external debt payments, but just £1bn on health services. Christian Aid focuses on reducing poverty by empowering local people, families and communities to live more comfortably and sustainably, for instance by promoting urban farms through training, supporting employment, practical help and by working with local partner organisations. Christian Aid has worked in Kenya for 29 years with amazing results; but there is always more to do in a country where **almost half the population still lives on less than £3 a day.**

So for Christian Aid Week 2026, Wattisfield Chapel shares prayers and



hopes for the people of Kenya, as well as fund raising. Of course, Christian Aid also continues throughout the year in its humanitarian aid work globally to fight poverty and oppression, including in areas such as Ukraine, Gaza and Sudan.

For the past six years Wattisfield Chapel has supported Christian Aid Week by holding a verge sale in Hopton. Space is also provided to raise money for The Marfan Trust, another of the charities we support. This year, however, we thought and acted bigger! A lot of the stock comes from our monthly Puddle-Duck Cafe bric-a-brac stall, and a couple of months ago the jigsaw puzzles and books were mounting up - 29 jigsaws and far too many books to count (I'm convinced they're breeding in the Church cupboard while we're not looking!). So Mary came up with a bright idea, and offered to set up a 'branch' verge sale in Theltham to capture a fresh market for some of the puzzles and books. Indeed this nascent second site raised over £30 before the remaining stock was returned to Hopton for the final day of the sale.



Friday 8 May arrived bright and sunny as Jo, Andrew and I transferred the contents of the Chapel cupboard into my estate car (a very tight fit).



Saturday morning was again sunny and warm, as if to spite the meteorologists yet again! I got the tables and groundsheets set up along the verge ready to accommodate a vast array of antiques and collectibles (well some would call it 'tat').

Whatever the label, it provided three days of interest for people – meeting, chatting and choosing precious purchases. As a well-oiled machine, Mary, Penny and I set about disgorging the contents of the car onto the verge, and Mary provided buns and cakes to sit alongside the marmalade and jam on the comestibles table, a process that was repeated on the Sunday and Monday. The weather kept dry all weekend except for a short, sharp spell of rain on the Monday morning (so retrieval of the plastic sheets had proved wise!).