

# Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

## Facebook Posts

### September 2025

#### **A thought from Aileen Fox:** The Interview

I usually have Radio 4 on in the car and, yes, I sometimes only catch a snatch of a programme but it makes for usually an enjoyable experience and passes the time whilst driving. I used to love music channels but the constant presenter chat had me turning back to Radio 4. This morning on a drive to Norwich, I had Woman's Hour on and the subject was about suicide. There followed a wonderful interview with a young lady called Eloise whose Dad committed suicide almost 2 years ago. She spoke about the need to listen to young people who are grieving because a loved one has taken their own life. This remarkable youngster spoke about her experience, the lack of help and support at school, and what she experienced via social media from peers. Her passion to ensure others get the right help whilst grieving was remarkable and she had worked hard to catch up from missed school when she couldn't face it. This included giving as part of her GCSE English, a speech on suicide, grieving and the impact it has on people, and the support that is needed for youngsters. She said at the end of it there were boys crying and a good friend said he had never cried so much, being told that boys and men don't cry! Her goal is to become a Bereavement Counsellor. She spoke too of how she loved and still misses her Dad.

The interview in itself was thought provoking and enlightening and it struck a chord with me. This year, on the many train journeys I have taken, I have been delayed three times for several hours, or had to find an alternative route. The reason each time was that someone had jumped into the path of a train. At the time all I could think of was the family left behind and the impact on the driver and the emergency workers.

In this busy difficult world so much goes on and we spend less time listening to others. Today try and smile at someone you pass in the street, ring up or write to a long-time friend, make contact and be there. We never know what may be going on in someone's life. Let's make an effort even when time is short. We might be the person who stops someone taking this drastic step. Please look out for those struggling?

If you are feeling you cannot cope, please talk to someone, anyone or alternatively ring Samaritans on their free Tel: **116 123**



## **A thought from Rev Derek:** Windsurfing

If you have ever considered the idea of taking up either surfing, or windsurfing, I thought that you might appreciate a bit of advice before investing in a board, wet suit and all the gear you will need. Not that I have even touched a surfboard in my entire life, nor am ever likely to. I had never realised just how labour-intensive windsurfing was, Karen and I sat eating our lunch in the car park at the scenic Daymer Bay in the summer of 2022 on the estuary to the river Camel across the water from Padstow in Cornwall, a man parked alongside our car, took his board out of his car, negotiated his way down the steps onto the beach, deposited the board, then walked back to the car, unpacked his sail and inflated it using a stirrup pump; he then went into contortions squeezing into his wetsuit, then carried the sail down onto the beach and walked against the flow of the tide out into the water holding his sail in one hand and the board in the other, he must have stepped up onto his board a staggering half an hour after parking up and must have worked off a shed-load of calories in the process of simply starting his hobby.



I am sure that you will understand me when I say that by the time I had finished eating my sandwich, any ideas I might have harboured even for a few seconds about gliding across the water on a windsurf board were well and truly forgotten - I would have given up before the wetsuit had even worked its way past my knees! I can forgive you for pointing out, that without all the effort, I would never experience the glory and there was a bit of me that felt envious as I watched this man, along with others, fill the sail and skim across the water at speed, I can only imagine how exhilarating it must have felt for him, and he might just have spared a moments pity for me sitting and watching him having the time of his life. I sincerely hope that all the people who put the effort in, find that the rewards are worth it.

During our holidays we saw hundreds of people squeezing their way into wetsuits and taking to the water, either windsurfing, paddle boarding, or surfing and good for them, I say.

Perhaps this whole experience was a salutary reminder that we only get out of life what we put in and there will always be a line of people standing on the seashore who can only imagine what it feels like to be experiencing the kind of feelings those out in the water are enjoying. I am like a lot of people, I guess, I want the experience without putting the effort in. Maybe that is why so many people buy lottery tickets, on the off chance that for a two-pound stake, you could have wealth beyond belief, the least amount of effort, for the maximum return. As Christians, we might well mock this attitude, but over the years, I have seen the same kind of thing happen repeatedly, as Churches have prayed in earnest that the Holy Spirit will bring about revival, that new families will start coming along and that God will gift us with a huge congregation of people that look and think like us, and we sit back and wait for God to get on with the job in hand.

The problem I see with this approach is that we are expecting God to do all the work and if God can't come up with the goods, then we pray that he will send us the right minister who can perform. The key, I believe is that when church communities work with their minister in an equal partnership and are together led by God in the power of the Holy Spirit, then, I believe that we will experience the very best that God can offer to us. If we are to share the exhilarating feeling of skimming across the water, with the sun on our backs and the wind in our hair, then we need invest time and energy in getting equipped and walking against the tide. I'm sure that the reward will always be worth the effort!

Please pray for the congregation and community in Watton



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### Walsingham Methodist Chapel

As part of Heritage Open, we are opening on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September 11 to 3pm, Saturday for the Norfolk Churches Trust cycle, walk and drive day as well as Heritage open. Sunday 11 am with our usual 2nd Sunday service at 4.30pm followed by a meal.

We will also open on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> -11 to 3pm.

All welcome to visit and if able and wish to, join our service and meal.



## Heritage Open Day – Wighton – Saturday 13 September

The East Anglia Methodist Heritage Centre at Wighton will be open on Saturday 13th September from 11 am to 3 pm to mark Heritage Open Days.

This is a great opportunity to come and see the newly extended Library facilities with a growing collection of information, photos and memorabilia about chapels and 'the people called Methodists' in East Anglia.

At 2 pm there will be a hymn Singalong – choose your favourites and join in the singing. Refreshments throughout the day. Parking and accessible toilet available.



They will spring up like  
grass in a meadow,  
like poplar trees by  
flowing streams.



*So do not fear, for  
I am with you.*

...

*I will strengthen  
you and help you.*

Isaiah 41:10



## A thought from Aileen Fox:

Who do you trust?

In a world of Hi tech and information overload, who do you trust?

My 3-year-old car has a fully computerised system which even now I struggle with at times. On the dash there is the screen which tells me how fast I am going. Then a little white symbol with a red circle around the edge tells me what the actual maximum speed limit is. As you can see in the photo there is nothing recorded on the symbol in the top right-hand corner and if you look in the centre of the whole screen a zero is showing. Yes, it's all correct, I am sitting on the drive taking the picture.

What I have noticed just recently is the incorrect maximum speed limit being shown on occasion. When I leave home to drive into town I turn right into a 30mph limit and yet it often comes up on my screen as 40mph. However, I can see the metal speed sign in the road so I know it is only 30mph and not 40mph according to my car screen. Who do you trust? I prefer the non-computerised old-fashioned sign as well as the knowledge that the speed limit along here has not changed the whole 30+ years I have lived here.

Who do we trust really? Yes, I've good friends, family, but we are all human and fallible. I'm old enough to remember singing Why don't you put your trust in Jesus to the Match of the day tune. In fact, every time I hear the tune the words come back to me.

Why don't we put our trust in Jesus? I suspect because we think we can do everything in our own strength but if we are honest we cannot. Life is hard at times and we ask 'Why?' when something goes wrong. I know though that even in my darkest times I have been carried and supported, Jesus is there for me always, even if I am often surprised by the answers to my prayer. Will you ask him into your life?



## **A thought from Rev Derek:**

To love and to cherish

Firstly, can I take the liberty of thanking everybody who has supported Karen and I in the last few weeks during Karen's illness and the family being struck down with Covid - having dodged it for five years. As I write this thought for Sunday, 14th September, my guess is that Karen will still be in hospital, which is sad because Sunday is our Ruby Wedding Anniversary. We had planned to spend our special day with the family, but things don't always work out the way we plan do they. On our wedding day, a staggering forty years ago, my bride was late, which I know is the bride's prerogative, it was a windy day and the reason for the lateness was that a gust of wind had blown off her veil and my father-in-law had run off down the road to retrieve it and make Karen presentable for one of the biggest days in our lives.

I have had a record number of weddings this year with one in May, one in August and one last Saturday, which for me is record. I thoroughly enjoy meeting with couples as they prepare for their special day, this is a one-off chance to get everything right and we all want the experience to be perfect and a day to be remembered for all the right reasons. I normally meet with the happy couple just before the big day and we have a rehearsal, practicing walking in, in the correct order, who will do what on the day, and what they need to say. It is important that the Church looks right and of course there is the serious matter of dealing with all the legal bits. It is possibly the one occasion in the year when everybody is dressed in their finery, to look good on the photos.

In the latest marriage service in the Methodist Church the couple repeat the following vows "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, from this day forward, until we are parted by death; and this is my solemn vow" and I follow the tradition of saying a line and then one by one the couple repeat them facing each other. It always strikes me about how the vows are written, with the words carefully crafted. Today a lot of television weddings have people writing their own vows, which often focus on the love the couple have for one another on that day.

In reality, in my opinion, marriage survives when we can take the rough with the smooth. Apart from the veil calamity, the high winds on a hill in Bradford meant that our photographs which could have been taken in the lovely gardens of the Church, all had to be taken inside, which felt to me like second best, not what we had planned, and I was disappointed.

This is a true reflection of life, that we have our plans laid out, our expectations, our hopes and our dreams. In our Church life we often have a vision of what we perceive as being what "church" should look like. The line in the marriage vows might be difficult, but they are true "for better, for worse" and as I look back at our forty years, there have been plenty of "betters" in our life together, some of the high points have been just about as high as they could possibly be, and life has been great. In honesty, we have also had our fair share of "worse" and some of those moments have been sad, painful and downright impossible, yet we have come through. Life is about taking the rough with the smooth and emerging as better people because of all our life's experiences, good or bad.



Please pray for the congregation and community in Wells





**HOLT METHODIST  
CHURCH**

**AFTERNOON TEA**  
**FRIDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER**  
**2 - 4 PM**



**A DELICIOUS SELECTION OF  
HOMEMADE CAKES  
STALLS & TOMBOLA**



### A thought from Aileen Fox:

For Everything there is a season...

Perhaps you know this best as the song recorded by the Byrds – Turn, Turn, Turn, written by the American musician and Activist Pete Seeger.

These words are from Ecclesiastes 3 and it's worth looking at the first 8 verses.

Already the season is changing from summer to autumn and the weather has definitely changed with long needed rain, plus the thunder and lightning at the weekend. I am writing this with the wind beginning to get up following the rain and storms we've had. At the moment the sun is shining but rain may come later. The rain was definitely needed and the roses in my garden have had a late bloom and look stunning.

Just after the heavy rain on Saturday, which had soaked many cyclists on the Norfolk Churches Cycle and Walk day, everything suddenly became still and for a while there was a beautiful rainbow, one of the brightest I had seen for a long time. Then the sky became blue and the sun came out.

The verses in Ecclesiastes are quite hard hitting and as I read them it reminded me of the need to rethink our lives and what we do with them. The last sentence in verse 8 reads "a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace." I'd like to delete some of the words and read it as **"a time to love and a time for peace"** Surely the world needs a lot of love and we long and want peace. It has to come from each one of us, in actions and prayer.



## A thought from Rev Derek:

### Field of dreams

I have a history of moaning about television programmes these days, and after forty years of marriage I can still manage to irritate my wife with my running commentary (mainly negative) throughout programmes. Once in a while something comes along that I find worth watching. I opened the BBC iPlayer and spotted "Freddie Flintoff's Field of Dreams" The first series "Preston" was aired in July 2022 when Lancashire and England cricketer Andrew "Freddie" Flintoff went back to his home city of Preston and pulled together a group of unruly young lads and taught them how to play cricket. The second series saw Freddie take his newly formed cricket team from Preston on a tour in India during the summer of 2024. Having started watching series 3, I fully intend to go back and binge on the first two at some point.

The third series sees Freddie's most ambitious project yet - working with teams in Manchester, Liverpool and an all-girls team in Blackpool. One of the things I found fascinating was when Freddie was having a conversation with the struggling members of the Bootle Cricket club. They were bemoaning the fact that the club was facing the end of the line, the problems were threefold:

- **The members were getting older and were consequently tired.**
- **Money was fast running out**
- **There were no new young players coming up through the ranks**

This encounter struck a chord with me, the narrative of a lot of Churches today is much the same "we're all getting older, there aren't enough people to do the jobs, youngsters aren't interested anymore, money is running out, and the writing is on the wall" so you can imagine, I was hooked and wanted to see how the story evolved.

Freddie's first point was to meet with some hardcore lads from Liverpool; these were teenagers who had been expelled from mainstream education and were the no-hopers in the city. They hadn't even heard of this world-famous cricketer and television presenter who stood in front of them. One lad said that he had held a cricket bat before, but it was to use as a weapon. I've only watched episode one, but with patience and putting boundaries in place, talking individually with this motley gang of lads, they are starting to make progress. Freddie Flintoff is a bit of a man's man and drew on his experience of working in an all-male environment in the past to relate to these lads.

Discussing the plan to set up multiple teams to form a league, there was a suggestion that they should include a girls' team which was fascinating; if they had been out of their comfort zones with the lads, the girls took this to a whole new level and they asked the awkward questions and made Freddie face up to some life-changing experiences in his own life.

I can commend the programme to you, they are all on BBC iPlayer. It is an important lesson, that if we want to share those things that are important to us, we must go out to where people are, be prepared to step outside our comfort zones, take risks, and let other people share their story with us. We have so much still to learn.



Please pray for the congregation and community in Wendling



# AUTUMN AT THE HIVE

## THOUGHTS ON THURSDAY

**Thursdays 3.00 – 4.00pm**

**Thursday Sep 25 \***

**Thursday Oct 23 \*\***

**Thursday Nov 20 \*\*\***

**Set aside 60 minutes to share your thoughts with others on some of life's important questions, over a cuppa!**

**Inspiring TED talks**

**Sep 25 \* Interfaith Amigos!**

Don Mackenzie  
Ted Falcon / Jamal Rahman

**Oct 23 \*\* Why does the universe exist?**

Jim Holt

**Nov 20 \*\*\* What makes a good life?**

Robert Waldinger

**All our events are free - donations welcomed**

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**THE HIVE**  
CREATIVITY - SPIRITUALITY - WELL-BEING

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Charity Reg. No.: 1134271

# Beetley Methodist Church

## Coffee Morning

**Saturday 27th September**

**9.30-11.30am**

**25% of proceeds to the Food Bank**

## **A thought from Aileen Fox:**

13 June 1886 - Memorial stones laid down

### **A Familiar Road**

I regularly travel from Fakenham to Beetley, and Dereham and I go through Broome Green, I suppose you would call it a hamlet. It was some time in travelling this familiar road before I was made aware of the old chapel on the side of the road. It's just before the railway bridge (on the Guist to North Elmham road) hidden by hedges trees and ivy. Just recently I noticed it looked different and I stopped and took some photos. Someone has removed most of the ivy so I decided to get a closer look without going inside as unsure about its safety as it has no roof or doors.

It looked small, but an article about Broome Green Chapel by Methodist author and historian Norma Virgoe, records that when the congregation could no longer meet in a house, they set about raising funds and the memorial stones were laid on 13th June 1886. It had 70 seats and there were as many as 3 services on a Sunday, plus a service and social activities in the week. It closed possibly in the late sixties. Despite its ruined status there was something special about it to me especially from a photographer's point of view.

I wondered about all the events that had gone on, the people that met together and about their lives. It sounded as though it was much more than a church building, a real community and I wonder if this was passed on to others and perhaps as people moved around more, whether this community feel was continued on into new areas and in new ways elsewhere. We never know what seeds are sown.

Are we visible today in our Churches, our lives, our socialising? Perhaps to many people our Churches are perhaps just another building that might still be used on a Sunday. Hopefully we are a bit more visible than the closed Broom Greene is.

However, Christian community is important and much needed today in an ever-changing world of discontent, unrest and turmoil. We don't always need a building but we do need a visible means of showing love to our neighbours through our everyday lives, our activities. All done with love as Jesus showed to all in need and to his close companions who faithfully followed and travelled with him.





## A thought from Rev Derek:

### Appreciation

It all feels to be a long time ago now that we stood out in the street on a Thursday evening and applauded the NHS during the Covid pandemic. I remember well that first Thursday evening, when the folk along our little cul-de-sac in Ipswich stood by our gates and applauded. Mercifully, it has taken five years for Covid to catch me and, thankfully, lessons have been learned and the thoughts of what our doctors and nurses experienced in the spring of 2020 feels to be in the dim and distant past. I remember being outraged at the time as our parliamentarians stood applauding, when only months earlier they had denied nurses a pay increase effectively deeming them undeserving of additional money.

During the last four weeks while my wife has been in hospital, I have caught a glimpse of what some of our nursing staff have to deal with on a daily basis. Visiting for a couple of hours a day has nearly driven me insane as grossly short-staffed wards put nurses under extreme pressure. My wife has been on small wards with five other women and whilst some of them have been lovely and made my wife's stay in hospital at least bearable and maybe at times quite pleasurable, there have been some women who seem to delight in making, what I felt were, unreasonable demands on tired and overstretched nurses and auxiliary staff who were always doing their best in almost impossible circumstances.

This caused me to reflect on how we make demands on people who we believe are there to serve us. There seems to be an issue in so many walks of life where too few people are trying to address the needs of ever demanding communities. I felt sorry for one poor lady who had been told she was going home at 3pm, she was so excited and had arranged for her daughter to be there to meet her on her arrival and she had carers booked for 4pm. Shortly before 3pm a nurse had to tell her that the ambulance had been called elsewhere and it could be 5pm, the poor lady was distraught, she tried to phone her daughter but couldn't get an answer and the nurses were doing their best, but the situation was way beyond their ability to resolve, yet they were the ones on the front line.

Today, I want to applaud all our public servants, there are plenty of people around to criticise when things go wrong. It is easy for us to complain that the service we expect isn't up to scratch, that what feels to be a simple visit to A&E takes hours and feels to be chaotic and totally disorganised, but during the last four weeks I have met with angels who go way beyond what should be reasonably expected of them and I applaud all that they do.



Please pray for the congregation and community in Beetley



## **Toftwood Methodist Church**

**CHAPEL LANE, NR19 1LD**

### **“CHAPEL COFFEE SHOP”**



**JOIN US FOR  
COFFEE AND SCONES**



**HOMEMADE CAKE STALL**

**FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

A warm welcome awaits you.

Come for coffee, scones, and good  
company!

Enjoy a cuppa (coffee or tea) for only £1

Treat yourself to a scone with butter for  
just £1

All are welcome!

**We look forward to seeing you there!**