WHO'S WHO AT WATTISFIELD

Local leader	Jo Patel jojopatel@btinternet.com	07808 487844
Joint secretaries	Jo Patel (as above) Michael Watson michaelwatson849@aol.com	 07930 351702
Treasurer	Andrew Wright andrew@milesdrainage.co.uk	01379 898233
Puddle duck Café/ Hospitality	Mary Wright scillymary@yahoo.co.uk	01379 898233
Junior Church Leader	Adrian Black adrian.black7@btopenworld.com	01953 681506
'Contact' editor	Frances Emerson frantonem1@mypostoffice.co.uk franticfran21@gmail.com	01359 221274

Our website: www.wattisfieldurc.co.uk

Diss URC: www.dissurc.org.uk

EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

Following the recent devastation in Venezuela Andrew co-ordinated a donation to the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal from the chapel. With match funding this amounted to an excellent total of **£390,** so thank you and well done to everyone who gave generously.

PRAYER FOR NEPAL AND TIBET

Loving and compassionate God, we weep for the people affected by the terrible and devastating floods in these countries. We pray that aid will quickly arrive where it is most needed; that you will comfort the grieving, give strength and resilience to the rescuers and bring peace, hope and healing where it is so desperately needed.

Amen

(Contributions for the winter edition of 'Contact' by Nov.22nd please)



MAILING FROM JO

September 2026

Dear Friends,

As the seasons are quietly changing, you might find yourself feeling a bit autumnal and thinking about harvest. Everything is changing, but this year for many people, the summer hasn't been easy. Especially for the farming community, their harvest yields may have been much lower than expected, but life has to carry on and the seasons will change…

We can feel hopeful as we enter September. It is a time of renewal and new beginnings, as children go back to school, colleges and universities. Everything is new for them, new classes, new teachers and the prospect of making new friends, new discoveries and learning.

When we don't have a new beginning to look forward to, then we can embrace the changing autumn weather. The leaves turning gold and red, the air feeling crisp and cool. It's a very welcome relief after the heat of the summer. Nature shows us that change is a part of God's plan. Trees let go of old leaves to rest and prepare for new life, and we can do the same. We can lay down our worries, let go of the old habits we've been meaning to change and trust God for this new season.

The Bible reminds us of God's steady love, while the world around us shifts.

'To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven.' ***Ecclesiastes 3:1***

'As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.' ***Genesis 8:22***

'Be patient then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains.' ***James 5:7***

As we wait for the autumn rain to come and refresh the land and replenish the reserves, we can reflect on how patient we are in life. Do we feel frustrated and anxious, or are we able to let go and give our worries to God? Are we able to be patient while we wait, not just for a change in the weather, but a change in our lives? Maybe we've been asking God for something to shift for a long time and so it's good to be reminded to remain steady in our prayers and our faith. To be reminded to remain steady in hope too, because for everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven. God remains the same and His love for us never changes.

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
His mercies never come to an end."

WORSHIP AT WATTISFIELD

September	6th	11am	Jo Patel (Communion)
	13th	**10.30am**	Visit to Southgate Church, Bury St Eds *(No service at Wattisfield)*
	20th	11am	Ron Wade, Thetford
	27th	11am	Rev'd Jenny Martin, Halstead (Communion}
October	4th		**HARVEST THANKSGIVING & GIFT DAY**
		11am	Service led by Rev'd Ian Fosten followed by refreshments. Donations will be in aid of the Falconer Trust
	11th	11am	Rev'd Neil Thorogood., Moderator of the URC General Assembly
	18th	11am	Jo Patel **Songs of Praise**
	25th	**10.45am**	United service at Diss URC *(No service at Wattisfield)*
November	1st	11am	Jo Patel (Communion)
	8th	**10.50am**	Remembrance Sunday at St Margaret's
	15th	11am	Ron Wade, Thetford
	22nd	11am	Paul Kemp, Finningham
	29th	11am	Rev'd Pat Atkinson from the Vidiyal Trust
December	6th	11am	Ron Wade, Thetford (Communion)



SERVICES AT ST MARGARET'S

A service of Holy Communion is held on the 4th Sunday of each month,

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SEPTEMBER			
Date	**Time**	**Event**	**Where**
Wednesday 9th	2-4pm	CrafTea Time	Connie's Room
Saturday 12th	9am-5pm	Suffolk Churches' Ride & Stride	Suffolk and beyond!
Sunday 13th	3-4pm	Taizé service	Diss URC
Saturday 19th	10.30am	Puddle-Duck Café	URC
Tuesday 22nd	6pm-7pm	Benefice Bible Study	Finningham Church
Wednesday 23rd	2-4pm	Scrabble time	Connie's Room
OCTOBER			
Tuesday 6th	7.15pm	Church meeting	Connie's Room
Wednesday 14th	2-4pm	Craftea time	Connie's Room
Saturday 17th	10.30am	Puddle-Duck Café	URC
Tuesday 27th	2-3pm	Benefice Bible Study	Finningham Church
Wednesday 28th	2-4pm	Scrabble time	Connie's Room
NOVEMBER			
Wednesday 11th	**1-3pm**	Craftea time	Connie's Room
Saturday 21st	10.30am	Puddle-Duck Café	URC
Tuesday 24th	6-7pm	Benefice Bible Study	Finningham Church
Wednesday 25th	**1-3pm**	Scrabble time	Connie's Room

NEWS FROM THE 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.

The Heart of East Anglia Mission Partnership is up and running and the advert for a URC Minister to work with all of the churches in the group, is circulated regularly to all URC Ministers. We now just have to wait! The Moderator will keep us informed of any progress. Please keep the partnership churches in your prayers. Also keep an eye on the notice board at Chapel under 'Mission Partnership News', and I will post any events from the other churches that we can support and enjoy.

From October 2026 until July 2027, I will be helping at Southgate Church a few hours a week. As part of my ministry training, I have to work with other churches and so I will get to know their leadership team and learn from them, alongside working as Local Leader at Wattisfield and Diss.

Jo

CHURCH MEETING

As Jo will be away doing the first week of her training, the planned September church meeting has been postponed to **Tuesday October 6th at 7.15pm in Connie's Room.**

GOOD NEWS FROM MARGARET

Following hip surgery in August, Margaret had a bit of a bumpy ride (probably literally) when she had to go to A&E only 3 days after the operation and was admitted to hospital for the next couple of days. Since then, with support and help from her daughters, she has gradually regained her strength and is now feeling better and walking well again.

It's been a tough time for Michael too, and we send them both our love and best wishes for better health in the coming days.

SAD NEWS

We were shocked and saddened to learn of the sudden and unexpected death of our friend Willie Mcgarva last month. He and Ann, his wife of nearly 63 years, started coming to Wattisfield when Thetford URC sadly had to close just under 2 years ago and became members almost immediately, as did their daughter Kathryn. Ann and Willie became valued members of the congregation, coming to services very regularly and frequently, and also enjoying the monthly Puddle-Duck coffee mornings.

Despite many health issues, Willie was never heard to complain. At the August Puddle-Duck he was part of a team doing one of Jo's quizzes and displaying a phenomenal wealth of knowledge (to the editor anyway!) on the subject of football. Often quite quietly spoken, Willie was really animated and enjoying himself and it was good to know how much he felt at home at Wattisfield.

Ann was always a tower of strength to Willie and we send our loving sympathy to her and Kathryn and pray that our Lord will comfort and support them at this sad time.

A GATHERING PRAYER

TOUCH THIS MOMENT

Touch this moment with the wonder of your closeness.
Touch our lives as we gather to give voice to praise.
Touch with peace any who are overwhelmed.
Touch with hope any who feel their burden is too great.
Touch us all with the healing of your forgiveness.
Bless those who have made ready for our worship:
those who have prepared a place
for congregations and musicians,
readers and makers of refreshments,
arrangers of flowers and workers with all ages,
preachers and those who welcome us in.
May they know that their work is blessing
for us all, received with thankfulness.

Holy God, touch everyone gathering here.
May your love be known amongst us
as we worship in Christ's name.
Amen

Neil Thorogood

(Moderator of the URC General Assembly 2026/27)

(Taken from the 2026 Prayer Handbook of the URC)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SPECIAL SERVICE

It would be good to have as many people as possible in the congregation on **Sunday 11th October at 11am**, as Rev'd Neil Thorogood, Moderator of URC General Assembly, will be leading the service. Neil is touring around the country, visiting as many churches as he can in the coming year to build a picture of the life of the United Reformed Church. So we are very privileged that he has chosen to come to Wattisfield and we want to show him what a wonderful place the Chapel is! We hope you will put the date in your diary and plan to join us for this special service.

For Craftea & Scrabble dates please see p10

PUDDLE-DUCK CAFÉ

is on the third Saturday 10.30am – 12.30pm
19th September, 17th October, 21st November

PUDDLE DUCK CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

SATURDAY 19th DECEMBER
11am – 2pm

BOOKING ESSENTIAL~
See Mary or Jo



ON YOUR BIKE!



It seems quite incredible that another year has sped by and the annual Ride & Stride day is upon us again! Organised by the Suffolk Historic Churches' Trust, riders and walkers visit churches and chapels in our county and also over the border in deepest Norfolk, being sponsored either by the number of places of worship visited or just by a donation. The resulting sponsorship money is then divided equally between the SHCT and a church chosen by each participant. Our chapel will be manned as usual between 9am and 5pm on the day, September 12th, to sign in visiting cyclists.

I'm sure most readers are familiar with that information already, but I was intrigued to learn from the SHCT website that a few years ago another sponsored event was included, the Pedal and Drive Vintage and Classic Car Tour and Rally, and last year yet another one called 'Steeple to Steeple' so that horses could join in the fun as well! If anyone is interested, please see the website for more information.



On Sunday 13th September

there will be a

Churches Together Taizé Service

at Diss URC, Mere Street, from 3-4pm

A service of quiet prayer and reflection, open to everybody with refreshments afterwards.



. . . . to Jan & Ian Ferguson from Diss URC who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary in early September. Prior to that Jo led a service of celebration and blessing at Diss on 23rd August, during which Jan and Ian recounted their very interesting and unusual journey in some detail. It transpired that they had spent a considerable portion of their married life afloat!

It's good to catch up with Jan when we have united services, either at Diss or Wattisfield, and we wish them both every blessing for the future.

HONOURS FOR OLLIE!

Ollie Sanders, Julian and Louise's middle son, has just graduated from university with a 1st Class Honours Degree in Sports and Exercise Science and is now going on to do his Masters' in Performance and Analysis with Sunderland Football Club.

Huge congratulations to Ollie!



My favourite smells

(with apologies to Maria von Trapp)

Raindrops on gardens with damp fragrance rising;
(Can it be Spring, or am I fantasizing?)
Scent of the gorse on the moorland and fells,
These are just two of my favourite smells.

Chorus

When the boss moans, when the kids scream,
When I'm feeling stressed:
I think of a few of these God-given smells,
And then I feel grateful - and blessed.

Smells of creation, garden and farm,
Loft full of hay and cows in the barn.
Soil, muck and compost, pungent and fruity,
Aromas of usefulness rather than beauty.

Chorus

Fragrance of flowers, God's perfect creations;
Roses and cowslips, lilies, carnations,
Freesias and violets - such glorious scents!
Sweet briar too, its perfume so intense.

Chorus

Scent of clean linen, and smells from the kitchen.
Fried onions really set taste buds a-twitching!
Bacon in frying-pan, bread that is baking,
Parsley and mint, and cakes in the making.
Sweetness of honey fresh from the comb,
These are the smells that remind me of home.

Chorus