



# Chelmsford Circuit

Issue 35

Newsletter Date: March & April 2025



## Questions of Leadership

Sometimes the question of styles of leadership in the life of the Church arises. I've recently been involved in the District Committee that oversees Methodist Probationers, that is those who are in the first two years of their presbyteral ministerial work. One of the probationer ministers described the approach to leadership as much more about being alongside, than leading from the front and she used the analogy of 'the midwife'.

I found this idea fresh and really helpful and I think, albeit I've not met many male midwives (yet!), it says something about my hopes for leadership. Comparing church

leadership to a midwife means that the leader's primary role is to support and guide people and communities through a spiritual "birthing" process, facilitating growth and transformation in faith, similar to how a midwife assists a woman during childbirth, providing care and guidance without taking over the process themselves. Some of the key ideas that can be seen in this kind of language include: nurturing and caring; facilitation, not control; recognizing signs of change; bringing empowerment and agency.

A midwife aims to empower the mother to take ownership of her birthing experience, just as a church leader can empower individuals to take responsibility for their own spiritual development. The Bible highlights the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, who cannily defy Pharaoh's orders to kill Hebrew babies by claiming the Hebrew women were "quick to give birth". Here we see the idea of supporting new life and defying oppressive forces.

I have often wrestled with the question of how much of my own thinking I should present as I have tried to help churches and the Circuit find the way forward, and I've found this midwife model of leadership really helpful. It doesn't mean never being direct on occasion though. There are times when the midwife has to be assertive, perhaps most of all on the question of when to push! Sometimes we need to be clear on when to 'push' to bring new things to birth, and the midwife can bring timely insights into these questions.



Continued/....

Very soon I am going to be involved in a different type of ministry as a hospital chaplain. I'm aware that there is much in our churches and Circuit which is gestating and waiting to come to birth yet, but that will be the work of others - and not just those perceived as 'leaders'.

I want to express a very sincere thank you for all that the faithful people of God, in our Circuit, have taught me about God's wonderful 'new life'. I pray that we will continue to be born again, time and again, as we follow Christ, our ultimate leader and guide.

**With every blessing, now and always,**

### **UPDATE FROM BARBARA DANIELS CIRCUIT SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**

It's been a very busy few months in the realms of safeguarding within the Chelmsford circuit. I attended the Methodist Safeguarding conference in February which was a valuable learning experience as well as meeting new people and connecting with other circuit safeguarding officers. Listening to the speakers and telling their stories as well as highlighting key points in how as Christians and safeguarding officers we should be accountable to God, each other and the people we serve. Safeguarding starts with how we respect, care and love each other within the circuit. For myself and from what I took from the conference, I am trying to be more mindful and trauma-informed as a Christian and a safeguarding officer.

In relation to foundation safeguarding training, it has been problematic organising delivery of training as there is such a shortage of trainers. I would urge anyone who would feel they would like to do this, please contact myself and I will in turn try and get this organised. I will reiterate again how hard working the safeguarding leads in the Chelmsford circuit have been and how as a team they support me immensely in gathering information and going above and beyond in their roles. Also to thank all the volunteers within the circuit who all do so much already and yet always willing to help further.

Myself and the church safeguarding officers met before Christmas and we watched some films on domestic abuse, had discussions, had some food and a quiz. In March we are all meeting again to watch another film and food will be ordered in, as a thank you for what they do.

I am also looking into how volunteers within the circuit can complete the mental health first aid short course, as I believe that knowledge and awareness around this subject is a crucial part of ensuring a positive and proactive safeguarding culture.

**Barbara Daniels**



## Dear friends,

The world is changing unimaginably fast. Things we never imagined happening are now part of our daily reality. Advances in technology, shifts in culture, and global uncertainties have made change the only constant. Things that once seemed impossible are now everyday realities.

- Artificial intelligence is reshaping industries and daily life.
- Climate change is altering our environment in unprecedented ways.
- Digital communication connects us instantly but also

raises challenges like misinformation and isolation.

- Cultural and societal norms are evolving faster than ever before.

In the midst of all this rapid change, people seek stability, meaning, and truth. That's why faith remains so essential—it provides an anchor in a world of uncertainty. The message of Easter, for example, is timeless: no matter how much the world changes, hope, renewal, and the promise of new life in Christ remain constant. In this whirlwind of change in the circuit, it's easy to feel overwhelmed, searching for something solid to hold onto. But in the midst of uncertainty, one truth remains unshaken: Jesus is alive, and with us in such tumultuous times.



*I am reminded of how Thomas perceived the change in other disciples, after meeting with resurrected Jesus, his doubt turned into devotion*

During the first week of January, I spotted daffodils blooming right after Christmas. This sight brought back fond memories of my college English course, where we studied the poem, “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” by William Wordsworth, commonly known as Daffodils.

Right after Christmas, merchants and sellers foresee the demand and reactions of buyers, quickly stocking their shelves with Easter items. The bright yellow of the daffodils reminds me of resurrection, how quickly dead bulbs react, even in the cold of winter, and spring to life. This transformation mirrors the change and reaction of people in the resurrection story. When I see such change in both nature and commerce, I am reminded of how Thomas perceived the change in other

disciples, after meeting with resurrected Jesus, his doubt turned into devotion. Similarly, the women on Easter morning, upon encountering the risen Christ, had their fear transformed into faith.

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The centurion at the crucifixion, witnessing Jesus' peaceful and prayerful death while the other two crucified men complained, experienced a change of heart, his guilt turned to grace as he declared, "Surely this man was the Son of God." Jesus was and is the misunderstood Messiah. But the good news from the grave is this:

- The devil could not stop Him.
- The cross could not defeat Him.
- The grave could not hold Him.

**An ancient legend tells of a believer in the early church who was about to be martyred for his faith. As they tied his hands and led him to the stake, he was asked if he had any last words. With great conviction, he shouted, "He is risen!" Unknown to the authorities, Christians had gathered in the surrounding hills to witness his execution. When they heard his cry, they responded in one voice, "He is risen indeed!"**

**That's how the early church greeted one another:**

**He is risen!**

**He is risen indeed!**

We hardly greet and say good morning on Sunday to our fellow worshipers and to the preacher of the day, which opens doors for faultfinders saying, if this is the church then we are better not being in church, because Church in this age is unconnected to her basic teachings as the early church was, listening, loving and learning church. Many youngsters struggle with the idea that the Church isn't relevant or compatible with this modern age. In Church smile changed into sadness, Jo to jeer, song to sigh, gospel to gossip, scaredness to socialness, worship changed into whisper in the house of the Lord. However, one truth has changed is Easter story remains true truth, relevant in this era of information because it speaks to themes that transcend time, hope, renewal, and faith. While technology and information drive modern society, people still seek meaning, purpose, and spiritual connection.

This Easter, may we embrace the unchanging message of the Gospel with renewed faith. Christ has risen, bringing life, purpose, and victory over darkness. No matter how advanced our world becomes, this truth will always be relevant. Wishing you and your loved ones a blessed and joyful Easter!

**He is risen! He is risen indeed!**

**With love in Christ,**

**Rev. Asif Karam**





**EXPLORING** **Explore programme**  
Spring 2025 start

Explore is an opportunity for any member of the Methodist Church in Britain to take a step back, and consider how you are called to respond to God's invitation to church leadership

**9** sessions **1** evening a month  
**2** hours per session **countless** benefits

**Taster: Thursday April 24th 2025**  
You can register at any time of year, although the course element starts May or September.  
Next course starts: May 2025 (Exact Date TBC)

**Booking link and QR for taster**

To book for the whole course, [click here](#), scan QR code or see link below.

**Booking link and QR for full course**

[www.methodist.org.uk/exploring](http://www.methodist.org.uk/exploring)

## Explore Programme Spring 2025

Taster Session Thursday 24th April 7-9 pm

Did you know that the Methodist Church has a dedicated programme to support people who are exploring a vocation in the church? This could be any vocation - ministry, stewarding, pastoral mission, NPNP or anything else....

When you register on The Explore Programme, you will be offered support through:

1. Reflecting with an Accompanist
2. Journaling your experiences
3. Shadowing people involved in work of the kingdom of God
4. A range of learning & development resources and support to dip in an out of
5. Being part of a monthly group who learn together on a 9 month course

You can register up at any time of year, although the course element has two cohorts a year and usually runs from September to May, and May to January.

There is a Taster session for the May 2025 Cohort on Thursday 24th April 7pm-9pm - you can book using the QR code in the flyer or via [www.methodist.org.uk/exploring](http://www.methodist.org.uk/exploring)

Attending the taster session does not commit you to the full course, but provides an introduction to what you can expect. We hope to see you there in April!

# Equipping for Equality

A development session for those passionate about  
Justice, Dignity and Solidarity

## Making digital presence accessible

Wednesday 19th March

7pm - 9pm

on Zoom

## **An online development session for those passionate about Justice, Dignity and Solidarity**

Join Fiona Fidgin, Digital Communications Officer, for this workshop:

To explore why digital is important to us

To discover where our digital skills support needs are

To share our digital skills and wisdom

To learn how to do something new, inclusively and accessibly

If you came to this session at the Equipping for Equality Day much of this material will be familiar - you could invite a friend along to learn more.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/making-digital-presence-accessible-registration-1024770515197?>

[aff=oddtcreator&fbclid=IwY2xjawlRgyVleHRuA2FlbQlxMQABHVh1adLpZ0F4lBMdNYch8AujbKZpWcRmlg2magxFqiek3RWv6WITNrKZ-A\\_aem\\_SaB-YCkoibbMgqMF9utmeA](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/making-digital-presence-accessible-registration-1024770515197?aff=oddtcreator&fbclid=IwY2xjawlRgyVleHRuA2FlbQlxMQABHVh1adLpZ0F4lBMdNYch8AujbKZpWcRmlg2magxFqiek3RWv6WITNrKZ-A_aem_SaB-YCkoibbMgqMF9utmeA)

# EASTER OFFERING

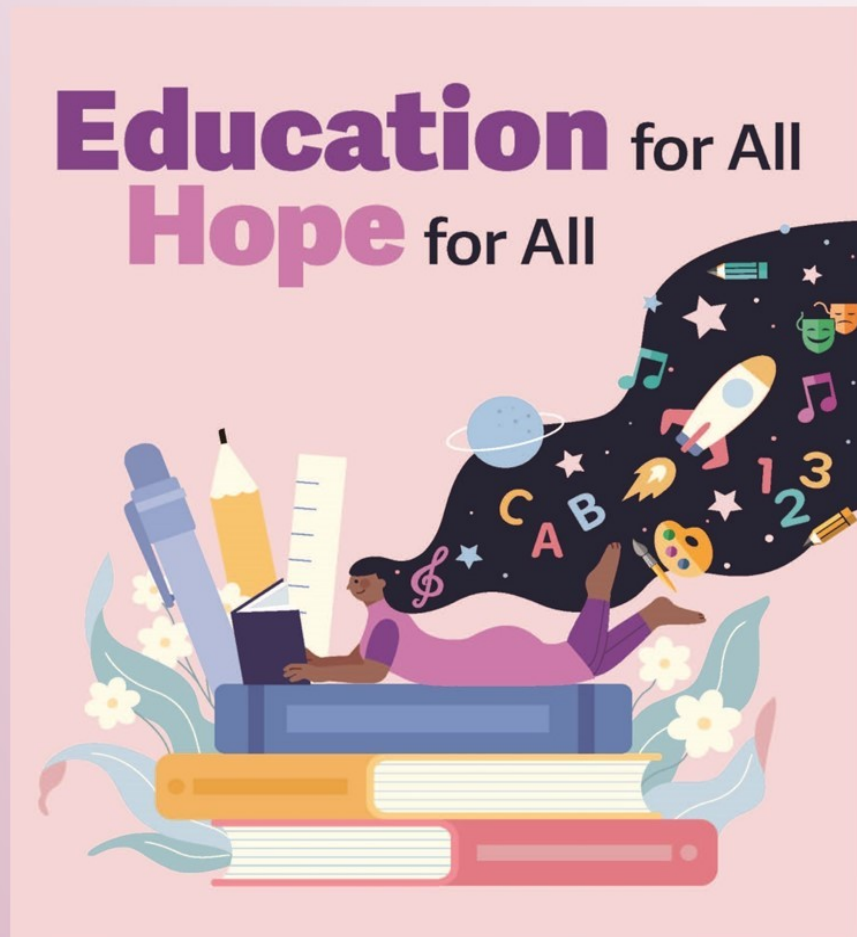
SUNDAY 18TH MAY 2025

4pm Witham Methodist Church

Please  
come along  
and  
support  
this event.

Everyone is  
welcome.

Plenty of  
parking in  
nearby  
public car



The Easter Offering 2025 service focuses on every person's right to education. Stories tell of people who are committed to changing lives through education.



Methodist Women  
in Britain

**Education for All, Hope for All** offers churches, circuits and districts a moment to consider how education transforms lives and communities, opening God's promise of hope and fullness of life for all people.

It includes the dedication of the Easter Offering donated to the World Mission Fund, which works with over a hundred of the Methodist Church in Britain's Partner Churches and organisations around the world.

**Witham Methodist Church. Guithavon Street CM8 1BJ**

## **CAKE MINISTRY AT THE CHURCH IN GREAT NOTLEY**

At Great Notley we are always looking for ways to increase links with our local primary schools. Rev'd Rachel, who recently became a Governor at Notley Green Primary School, regularly visits the teaching staff in a pastoral capacity. With the help of a small team of bakers from the church she takes in a home-made cake each week, during term time, to bless the school.

This may seem a very small act but the teachers are so very grateful for the cake they get on Thursday morning. The children also take a great interest in what sort of cake has been provided each week and the teachers see 'cake day' as the best day of the week! Rachel finds it is a great conversation starter with tired and stressed teachers, and a way of showing them God's generous love.

New ideas have been generated in how the school can use our church building and through the school our contact with local families has also increased. Some initiatives have meant that parents and relatives have come into the building without being worried about it being a church, a place of worship. They are made to feel welcome and we trust that it will help them overcome the fear of coming into a church and possibly even an occasional service.







# COMMUNITY PRAYER WALK

**SATURDAY 22ND MARCH 2025**

**PRAYER WALK 10.00AM**

Starting from  
**Community Centre in Beaulieu Park CM1 6AU**

JOIN US IN THIS NEW INITIATIVE TO PRAY FOR CHELMSFORD. WE  
WANT TO BRING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER AND BUILD A PLACE  
WHERE ALL FEEL LOVED & CAN GROW

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

Come along with family and friends.  
Dogs are welcome but may not be allowed in the centre  
but we can bring drinks out to you:)  
We will start with a warm drink and then walk (max 1 hour)

**Organised by the Methodist Churches in Chelmsford**  
**More details from 07731 831541**

**This will be the fourth in a series of walks in various parts  
around Chelmsford. Could you can suggest places where  
we could meet?**



The **Methodist** Church 



# LENT 2025



**Lent prayer sessions Chelmsford Circuit** emphasising the importance of prayer and spiritual growth. These will be on Zoom to encourage greater participation, inspired by the disciples' desire to learn about prayer. Each session would include half an hour of learning followed by half an hour of prayer, culminating during Holy Week. 7.30pm till 8.30pm.



**Rev'd Asif Karam invites you to join him throughout Lent.**

## • **Theme:** "Lord, Teach Us to Pray"

- 12th March 2025: Prayer Is About Reverencing – Matthew 6:9
- 19th March 2025: Prayer Is About Reigning – Matthew 6:10
- 26th March 2025: Prayer Is About Requesting – Matthew 6:11
- 2nd April 2025: Prayer Is About Releasing – Matthew 6:12
- 9th April 2025: Prayer Is About Relying – Matthew 6:13
- 16th April 2025: Prayer Is About Rejoicing – Matthew 6:13

*We do not publicise zoom details as they may get into the wrong hands.*

If you would like the zoom details, please contact

[karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk](mailto:karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk)



**Chelmsford Methodist Circuit. Trinity Methodist Church.**

**Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 2XB**

**[karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk](mailto:karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk)**



## An introduction to unconscious bias



### Unconscious Bias Training

Thursday 3rd April 2025 at 10am, online

An Introductory Unconscious Bias training session, run for members and leaders of the Methodist Church in Britain

Learn more: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/387493412227...>

**Mandatory training for all Circuit Stewards, Church Stewards and those working with families/ children. Full list on The Methodist Website.**

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/the-inclusive-methodist-church/training-for-justice-dignity-and-solidarity/mandatory-edi-training-equality-diversity-and-inclusion/>

What is unconscious bias?

'Unconscious bias refers to a bias of which we are unaware and which happens outside of our control. It is a bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences.' Hidden biases have the power to undermine and derail our desire to act justly, and fairly towards other people and lots of areas in our decision making. eg, when it comes to recruitment, promotion, and openness to new sources of ideas. It is possible to be unconsciously biased regarding disability, religion, race, gender, age, social class, and more.

We will be using the video resources for introducing unconscious bias which is now available on the Methodist Church Website.

The resources can be found at: [Introduction to Unconscious Bias – for church councils, circuit meetings and other groups - Methodist Church](#)

The online session will include watching the videos and joining in small group conversation/reflection following each of the 3 video clips.

The reading/study material which is required before and after the session will be sent to participants once they have booked a place and the booking period has closed. When booking your place, please select which session you will be attending.

## **One shall tell another (New Wine)**

I wanted to write about this song written by Graham Kendrick (1981) to encourage you to listen to it and reflect about it. Recently we listened to it and sang along at Broomfield, but there wasn't really time to pick out the message in it, and put our own "take" on it. The playing instructions for it are "Lightly with increasing pace" and the style is what I would call middle eastern folk dance: think of STF 487 You shall go out with joy (+ chorus). Naturally, the theme of the day was Jesus turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana.

One Christmas nearly thirty years ago I remember Rev Bernard Arnold giving Hatfield Peverel a narrative sermon/wonderful allegorical story of a Candle Maker who comes to a run-down inner city area and transforms it with his personality, life-skills, kindness, and candle light.

From verse 1: And lights will shine in every street so warm and welcoming

In September when we attended Rev Asif's welcome service, I was taken with another simpler song: STF 239 Sent by the Lord am I, which is based on a Central American folk melody. This has a similar message to verse 2 of "One shall tell another:"

Compassion of the Father is ready now to flow, through acts of love and mercy, we must let it flow.

At the beginning of this year we went to the thanksgiving service for the life of Dave Drewett. This was a man who was good in helping us fledgling preachers to share the idea that God could do so much more:

From verse 3: He longs to do much more than our faith has yet allowed to thrill us and surprise us with his sovereign power.

And of course the rousing chorus invitation:

Come on in and taste the new wine, the wine of the kingdom of God, here is healing and forgiveness.....

Should you be inclined to visit such a far flung place as Perth Australia, you may hear the story that many people have three reasons for going there:

- 1) Beach: Beautiful blue sea/sky, fantastic coral coast, wonderful weather
- 2) Golf: excellent courses, climate, facilities, (be prepared to share with kangaroos though!)
- 3) Alcohol: huge wine growing region, large drive through liquor stores\*

\*Note: Supermarkets don't sell alcohol which I only found out when we were in the petrol station and saw swarms of people leaving the local liquor store with their weekend "slab of tinnies."

My advice: join me in being alcohol free, be like John the Baptist and leave off strong drink; save yourself for the Wine of the kingdom, give an extra purpose to giving up for Lent and don't go back- Good luck!

**John R Clemo 21.2.25**



## Lunch Club St Andrews Primary School

Up until half term, we have had three very busy sessions at lunch club this year.

We started lunch club 2025 with looking at the meaning of our names.



The angel told Mary to name her son Jesus, for he would save his people from their sins. The name Jesus means 'to save'.

What is the meaning of your name?

We researched the name of each child which was a part of their craft.

Every name has a profound meaning and somehow it does play itself out in our lives.

2<sup>nd</sup> Lunch club was about Jesus as the carpenter's son. The child Jesus, was sure to help Joseph making beautiful items from wood.

How do we help our parents around the house?

The children made a door which could be opened.

The third lunch club session was on Jesus as a twelve-year old boy.

Joseph, Mary, Jesus and family and friends travelled from their home Nazareth to Jerusalem, to go and celebrate a festival. On their way back home, Joseph and Mary discovered that Jesus was not with them.

They had lost Jesus.

Mary and Joseph must have been terrified, when they discovered that Jesus was nowhere to be found, as every parent would be.

They travelled back to Jerusalem to look for Jesus and found him in the temple talking to the priests.

The craft was a two layered picture, top: Mary and Joseph looking for Jesus, under that: Jesus in the temple.

We have started to act out the stories, getting the children to participate in the telling of it. They are enjoying the acting and we endeavour to always make it a fun time for them.

The children are such a joy and so full of enthusiasm.

Blessings, Barry, Ria and Aileen

(HP Methodist Church)



# The Methodist Church

## **We do not live by bread alone**

In the wilderness, Jesus reminded us that people don't live by bread alone. Each week during Lent, we'll reflect on what sustains us, based on the lectionary Gospel passage for Sunday.



## **What's available for individuals?**

40 daily deliveries of spiritual nourishment through Lent, delivered to your email inbox.

Here's what to expect each day if you sign up:

- **Monday:** A recipe video using easily available ingredients. We encourage you to cook and share this with your community—perhaps as a Sunday meal after church!
- **Tuesday:** A Bible study video, with discussion on questions from the week's Gospel passage.
- **Wednesday:** A craft video, perfect for doing at home or in a group setting.
- **Craft Resources**
- **Thursday:** An inspiring story about how the Methodist Church and our partners work to ensure nourishment and care for all.
- **Friday:** A reflection on a classic soul song, revealing the good news within its lyrics.
- **Saturday:** *Soul Food Saturday*, our magazine-style video show, featuring a panel sharing weekly highlights and showcasing photos from across the church. We'd love to see what you're up to during Lent!

**Sunday:** No email, but we invite you to gather in worship, reflecting on the theme as you praise God together.

Sign up for our Lent reflections

Daily deliveries of spiritual nourishment through Lent, straight to your inbox

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/soul-food/>



# Volunteering sign-ups are now LIVE for 3Generate 2025!

Whether you're a seasoned veteran or a budding first-timer, we want your help to make this 3Generate even bigger and better in 2025.

Join us in bringing together children and young people from across the Connexion and giving them a weekend they'll never forget – jam-



packed with faith and fun! We have a wide range of roles available, so no matter your skills and experience you can be an integral part of the 3Generate Delivery Team as we return to the NEC Birmingham from 3-5 October.

Find out more about the different roles and sign up here:

[www.methodist.org.uk/3Genvols](http://www.methodist.org.uk/3Genvols)

Help make 3Generate 2025 happen!

Join one of these >>>>>> fabulous volunteer teams



With roles to suit anyone, bring your gifts to a fabulous volunteer team and have a weekend to remember.



Find out more about different roles and sign up at [methodist.org.uk/3Genvols](http://methodist.org.uk/3Genvols)

“ Seeing and engaging with the young people throughout the weekend felt like being part of something bigger. ”

2024 Volunteer





## Full Brochure for 2025

[https://media.methodist.org.uk/media/documents/Learning\\_Network\\_Brochure\\_September\\_2024.pdf](https://media.methodist.org.uk/media/documents/Learning_Network_Brochure_September_2024.pdf)

## Also on the Circuit Website

<https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk/admin6/training/learning-network-guide/>

*Many thanks for all those who have supported the Circuit Newsletter by sending in articles and sharing the newsletter with colleagues, friends and family. I really appreciate your*

## NEXT CIRCUIT MEETINGS

**Monday 17th March 2025—Trinity 7.15pm**

**Monday 2nd June 2025—Halstead 7.15pm**

**Saturday 20th September—Trinity 9.45am till midday**

Circuit Administrator: Karen Murrell.

Email: [karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk](mailto:karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/chelmsfordcircuit>

<http://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk>

**‘Share your news’**

**Deadline for  
May/June 2025  
by Mid April**