

Penge Congregational Church



April 2018 Newsletter

From the Minister

This Newsletter will be published on April 1st, which is Easter Day. So let me begin by greeting you in the traditional way: **HE IS RISEN!"**.

To which the traditional reply is **"HE IS RISEN INDEED!
ALLELUIA!"**

This year on Good Friday morning before we walk in silence surrounded by fellow local Christians to our open air service on Beckenham Green, we shall have a short reflective service at PCC. We shall be reading right through John 18 and John 19; just as we do at our Christmas Candlelight service of carols and lessons, we shall tell the story through Scripture.

Even though we know Jesus went to the Cross in fulfilment of God's plan, even though we know the victory was won on the Cross and it was therefore a moment of triumph, not of defeat, I don't think we can help but be overcome by the realisation of the human cost of that scene at Calvary. And no more so when we read John 19: 25-27: "Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother."

Even in that moment when Jesus was fulfilling his purpose as the son of God, he did not forget his humanity. He did not forget the woman who had borne him and brought him up, and followed him as he ministered and taught. The woman to whom Simeon had said at the Temple 33 years before, " 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'"

As Mary stood there watching her son suffer that agonising torture on the cross, did she think of that prophecy?

There were the other women too: Mary's sister, Salome, whom Jesus had rebuked when she had asked him to save the chief places in his kingdom for her sons. Surely her presence at the cross shows at the very least that her love for her sister was greater than her humiliation at that rebuke. There was Mary the wife of Clopas: at that moment when just being there, just associating yourself with Jesus would have been so dangerous,

was she demonstrating her faith in Jesus? And Mary Magdalene who had been possessed by a demon from which Jesus freed her, and who then showed such devotion to him. These women, at very great personal risk continued to identify themselves with Jesus. even as he died for them. They showed enormous courage by being there, a courage that most of the apostles had not being able to find. But it was more than courage: it was love.

May the Easter story and its demonstration to us of the boundless love of God for his people inspire us with renewed faith to follow the new commandment of Jesus: "LOVE one another as I have loved you". God is love. May we show that love to all around us as we do the work of our Master.

Pam

Pam will be away on holiday from Saturday 7th April until Thursday 19th April. If you have any pastoral concerns during that time, please contact Lynn on 07817 862158. As ever, issues concerning the building- bookings or maintenance- should be notified to Bernie on pcclettings@outlook.com or pccmaintain@outlook.com. If it is an urgent matter, please phone Bernie on 07900 518537

A very big thank you to our Scouts, who, during the visit last month of the Beast From the East, used their Thursday evening session to clear the snow from the church drive and the pavements around the building. Given that the wind was coming straight at them there, they were true heroes, and we are grateful for their public spiritedness. (Apparently there was also a snowball fight afterwards!)



Owing to appalling weather on 2nd March, which was the actual date of the WWDP this year, our Penge service had to be postponed to the 9th. It was gratifying to note that, when we did gather at St John's church, we had the biggest congregation for some years with around 50 people present. With all the current concern about the amount of plastic that is not just littering our planet but actually getting into the food chain, this was a very topical service. The Christian women of Suriname wrote a service thanking God for his marvellous creation but also reminding us that he entrusted it to our care.

We learned a little Sranan: A heri grontapu di Gado meki bun dori dori. Which means in English: All God's creation is very good! We also sang a song written especially for the service: San Gado du, reti tru = What God does is done well.

During the reading of Genesis 1: 1-31, 7 women brought forward prayer objects, which they unwrapped as they came forward, discarding the packaging on the floor. Later on the packaging was picked up and put in recycling boxes as we reflected on the small things we can do to preserve God's creation for future generations.

It was inspiring to worship with women and men from several local churches; and we thank the people from St John's for their hospitality- and for the delicious selection of home made cake served after the service while we enjoyed fellowship together over tea and coffee.



I have used the Our Daily Bread daily readings as a basis for my daily devotions for many years. I first started well over 20 years ago primarily because the devotion each day is short enough so that I was able to read it before leaving for work at 7.30 each morning when I was working as a school librarian. On most mornings nowadays I have longer but I still read the ODB devotion because I like the format of Bible reading and reflection, and I am familiar with the writers.

This year, for the first time, I decided to attend the [free] London ODB Bible Conference held in the impressive non-conformist setting of Westminster Chapel, just 10 minutes' walk from Victoria Station. The day's topic was David and the speaker was Rev. Bill Crowder, whose reflections have been appearing in the ODB daily readings for many years.

It was rather gratifying on arrival to have to join a queue in the street to get into the chapel. How often do you see that nowadays? The chapel was packed, with people in the lower of the two galleries as well as the body of the chapel, which holds over 1500 people.

The four teaching sessions, by Bill Crowder, were really interesting. I have asked for them on CD so, when I receive it, please feel free to borrow it.

It was a wonderful experience to spend a Saturday in a room packed with ordinary Christians who had chosen to devote their day to learning more about King David, and to do so in fellowship with others. Perhaps next year other church members would consider attending this event?

Pam



INVITATION TO THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

**FRIDAY 8TH JUNE –
SATURDAY 9TH JUNE
2018**



UNION CHAPEL, ISLINGTON, LONDON

Friday 8th June

More information will follow we are in the process of finalising an event based on Mental Health issues and how as churches we can support and come alongside people.

Saturday 9th June

Union Chapel, Islington, 19b Compton Terrace, N1 2UN

9.30 – 10.25am – Tea and Coffee will be served, **1pm** Lunch time, **4.15pm** Tea and Coffee will be served.

The church will be hosting us this year – at lunch time there is an option of ordering lunch through the church café run by homeless volunteers. Otherwise you can bring your own lunch or visit one of the local shops. There is a full hour for lunch to chat and catch up with friends old and new.

There is also a range of information and charity stands to browse around.

Directions.

By Car Post Code **N1 2UN** however we strongly encourage people to use public transport as parking in the vicinity is extremely limited. Union Chapel is outside the congestion zone.

The recommended car park is Upper Street Car Park - Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street,
London **N1 0PW**

By Train The nearest tube stop is **Highbury & Islington** station on the **Victoria line** and the **Overground** network. It is less than five minutes from Union Chapel – just turn right out of the station and you can see the red brick tower of the Chapel.

By Bus – The following Buses stop close 4, 19, 30, 43, 271, 277, 279, 393 but remember you will need an oyster card or contactless payment – buses in London don't accept cash.

Lunch is £5 and can be ordered as a picnic bag which will contain a Wrap, a bean salad, a piece of fruit and homemade cinnamon bun or brownie – you can also bring your own lunch.

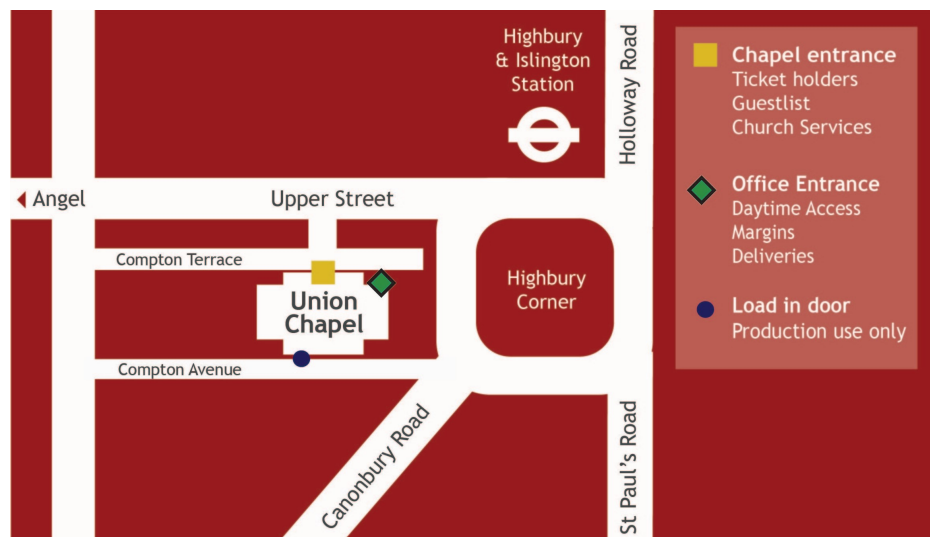
Children's work Joy Howell children's worker for the SW Midlands and Annette Dickenson children's worker for NW Area will lead the sessions and engage all children 10 and under in a programme based on the theme. We ask you to pre-register if possible for numbers.

Youth work Judith and Johnny our Church Support workers will launch the summer challenge and encourage our young people to be together, share fellowship and fun.

Saturday evening

We invite you to stay at Union Chapel for an open mic event, sit and relax, chat, sing, share a poem or a drama. Come prepared to contribute it will be a night to encourage one another.

The bar will be open and light refreshments available.



Good Gym visit PCC.

On Tuesday 20th March we welcomed a group of runners to the church.



They came as a group of ten from Good Gym. This group combine keeping fit with doing good works in their community.

Our church member Sinead put Adele their organiser in touch with me. After a meeting on site a few weeks ago we decided that the group could tackle the entrance foyer at the front of the church. Some of you may have noticed a gradual clearing of tables etc from the area over the last couple of Sundays. My thanks to those who uncluttered the area, and to Chris Doran who moved the scaffolding tower to the foyer ready for erection. Also to Pam who came down early to get the tea and coffee bits set up, before attending the Lent Art group in the Vestry.

On the evening all was set out with sponges, warm buckets of sugar soap water, sandpaper and ladders. The runners had set off from The Bridge Public House and at the suggestion that they needed to earn the warm drink duly and

the



and cake waiting for them, they cracked on into sanding down washing walls and ceiling. Others placed masking tape on edges of doorframes ready for next stage, which will be the painting.

Having completed a good hard session of cleaning it was time to relax a little and consume some drink and cake. I was surprised that this was not the norm at other venues they had attended and PCC was praised for its welcoming goods. We were able to chat and share experiences of 'church' and the activities that our halls provide throughout the week.

Soon it was time to move on and do some running and more exercises which took place in Royston Field.

Our new friends, are due to return Tuesday evening 27th March to tackle the painting. This April Newsletter edition will be out too early for the up date, so I will give a progress report in the May Newsletter.

If you wish to make enquiries about the Good Gym group then please visit www.goodgym.org. They already have pictures and an account of their visit on the site. Apart from their exercise time, they also have socials and of course the help in the community projects which has included work done in our open spaces. They also do 'missions' where an elderly person is visited and gardening is done or small jobs like light bulbs changed. Members are paired with an older person for weekly visits.

All aspects of GoodGym are **free** to participate in. Most Goodgym members donate an optional £9.95 a month which go to the GoodGym Charity to help them reach more older people.

Chris PARKER



Editor's note: To date Good Gym Bromley have completed 4,178 "missions" in the Borough.

Flower Rota for the next three months

April:

1 (Easter): David Nye
8: In Memory of Heather (Jean S)
15: Melanie Cogan
22: Flower Fund
29: Pat Clarke

May

6: Joan Sole
13: Kathleen Sewter
20: Joyce Perry
27: Melanie Cogan

June

3: The Guides
10: Diane Pask
17: Jean and Rosemarie
24: Marilyn Nicholson



Church Diary April 2018

Sunday 1st April: EASTER DAY

10.30am: Easter Family Service, including communion.

The Minister.

6.30pm: Easter Praise.

He is Risen, Alleluia!!

Tuesday 3rd:

9.30am – 11am: Café Church.

Thursday 5th:

7.30pm: Deacons' Meeting. The Vestry.

Sunday 8th:

10.30 am: Doubting Thomas, led by Marilyn.

6.30pm: Evening Worship, led by Lynn.

Wednesday 11th:

10.30-noon: Friendship Club. The Vestry.

Sunday 15th:

10.30am: Morning Worship, including the Lord's Supper, led by
Chris McShane

6.30pm: Evening Service, led by Marilyn.

Sunday 22nd:

10.30am: The Good Shepherd, led by Jannett and Lynn.

6.30pm: Bible discussion, led by Chris McShane.

Saturday 28th April:

South East Area Spring Assembly at Old Coulsdon CC.

Sunday 29th:

10.30am: The True Vine, led by Chris Parker, the Minister to preach

6.30pm: Taizé service, led by Lynn.

**Sunday 13th May is our church anniversary (and the start of
Christian Aid Week). There will be a Parade service at 10.30am,
during which we shall mark the centenary of our Cub Pack
commissioned at PCC in February 1918!**

Penge Congregational Church

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Church gathered May 1908

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