

Penge Congregational Church

Christmas Services

Carols by Candlelight Sunday 17th December at 4:30pm

Traditional re-telling of the Christmas story in music and scripture

Alan Langridge on the organ, and the Penge Chamber Choir

Tea and mince pies afterwards

Midnight Communion by Candlelight

Sunday 24th December at 11:30pm

We welcome the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Baby of Bethlehem.

Christmas Day Family Service

Monday 25th December at 10am



December/January 2023/4



Put Christ back into Christmass

The Minister writes:

So here we are: 11 years as Assistant Minister, Acting Minister and latterly Minister; 25 years as Church Secretary (which I have been doing alongside Ministering these last years); 25 years on the Diaconate; 30 years as a church member. And on 31st December I retire!



It's the right time. Ten years ago I retired at 60 from a full time job in education. I had lots of plans. But then my predecessor as minister, who was having increasing health problems, had to retire at the same time and I suddenly found myself up to the neck in the affairs of PCC.

To be fair I had been heavily involved before then but I had expected to have plenty of time for those plans.

The thing is, you see, God has plans for us all which do not necessarily coincide with our own!

When I did the **Congregational Federation's training course**, I had thought I was mainly doing it to expand my own spiritual relationship with God. He had other ideas: he had a purpose for me. And, when the situation arose where the church suddenly found itself without a

minister or the resources to employ another one from scratch, I realised what that purpose was.

Now I'm not telling you this so you can think about my nobility in abandoning my plans and following God's. As Christians, we all listen for God's voice and we all thrill when we realise he has a purpose for us. And as members of a church, the Body of Christ, the family of Christ, we are on the lookout all the time for ways in which we can identify the needs, not just of our church family, but also of those around us who don't know Jesus.

In **Colossians 3**, Paul tells us that "since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourself with tender-hearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

"You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember the Lord ***forgave you, so you must forgive others.***

"And the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love."

I am a member of the family that is Penge Congregational Church; PCC had a need and I felt God calling me to answer that need. Others within our church family do that as well; it just so happens that being minister is a role that people notice more than the needs being quietly met by others. I feel I have done the work God called me to do, and now it's time to step back and allow others to follow God's direction and take PCC to its next level.

I'm not disappearing. I hope the church will allow me to remain a church member and even, after a suitable length of time, to let PCC become comfortable in its new ways, to join you occasionally on a Sunday morning as a member of the congregation. I shall certainly be keeping in touch with individuals who have been family for so long.

My church family has loved me and supported me for all these 30 years and I have done my best to love and support you too.

We are all about to walk in new ways: me as a retired person, you as a church looking forward to doing something new. The immediate future for us all may seem a little foggy and uncertain, but God our Father is there for all of us.

The prophet **Isaiah** said this (Chapter 26, verses 3-4):
“You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast because they trust in you.”

Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord himself, is the Rock eternal.”

God bless you!

Oh, and a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year to you all!

Pam



PENGE MUSIC PRESENTS

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS

IONA DUNCAN, HARP

An exciting, varied programme
including works by Britten, Debussy,
Mozart and Tournier

16TH DECEMBER 2023

1PM

£5 entry on the door
cash and card taken
under 16s go free
tea, coffee and biscuits served on arrival

Penge Congregational Church
172 High Street Penge, SE20 7QS
Tramlink: Beckenham Road tram stop
Nearby train stations: Kent House,
Penge East, Penge West, Clock House
Bus routes: 75, 176, 197, 356, 354,
358, 227, 194, N3
FREE PARKING at a
nearby multistorey carpark



December services at PCC

Sunday 3rd December. Advent Sunday:

10.30am: The Light from Heaven. Luke 1: 67-79

Sunday 10th December:

10.30am: Mary and Joseph

Service to include **Advent Communion**

Sunday 17th December:

10.30am: The Shepherds

4.30pm: Carols by Candlelight.



Sunday 24th December. Christmas Eve:

10.30am: The Angels

11.30pm **Christmas Communion** by Candlelight

Monday 25th December: Christmas Day:

10am: Christmas Morning Family Service

Sunday 31st December. New Year's Eve:

10.30am: Dedicated to the Lord: Luke 2: 21-38

This will be **Rev'd Pam Owen's** last service.

Services for January 2024 will be announced by the Deacons.

Christmas Services

Sunday Morning Services in December continue, as every month, but with additions as below:

Sunday 17th December at 4.30pm:

Carols by Candlelight.

Our traditional re-telling of the Christmas story in music and Scripture.

With **Alan Langridge on the organ**, and the **Penge Chamber Choir**.

Tea and mince pies afterwards.



Sunday 24th December at 11.30pm

Midnight Communion by Candlelight.

We welcome the Coming of **our Lord Jesus Christ** as the Baby of Bethlehem.

Monday 25th December at 10.00am

Christmas Day Family Service

Sunday 31st December at 10.30am

We say Farewell to 2023, and also to Rev'd. Pam Owen, as she retires.

Find the Carol:

I know none of you like to take part in a Quiz but I have to fill this Newsletter and this page was empty!! How about identifying the Carols below from the first line initials? (desperate Editor)

1. I C U T M C

18. C A, S T H M

2. W T K O O A

19. H N, S N

3. I T B M-W

20. O I R D's C

4. G K W L O

5. A I A M



6. G R Y M, G

7. I S 3 S C S I

8. O H N

9. O L T O B



10. O C A Y F

11. T H A T I

12. O C, O C, E

13. L J S S D N S

14. W S W T F B N

15. T F N T A D S

16. S A T W's S

17. A W G M O O



Answers on page 18
(no peeping, unless desperate)



Join us on Sunday 10th December 2023 for a thanksgiving party for our minister Pam and her work among us at PCC.

Pam retires at the end of the year and we want to join together after the 10.30 service for lunch - starting at about 12 noon until 2pm.

All welcome - let others know - those who may want to come along!

Speak to Lynn about any contributions.

Here is an advent calendar with a difference.
Unscramble a word each day until Christmas day.

Use the word as a focus for prayer. We have done this before and it is something that brings us together as a community who are praying for each other and for the world. You may need help from your friends if you are stuck but I don't think the words are too hard and they have something to do with Christmas (as a little hint). Lynn

We are going to start this time of preparation for Christmas with a night time prayer vigil.

Please join us in the church if you can make it.

We will meet from 10pm to 12:30am in church and have a **feast of prayer**. We know Jesus liked to pray at night when the day's business was over.

He prayed all night in Luke 6:12-13 before calling his followers. Again, in Matthew 14:22-33 when he prayed all night and then just before dawn went out to his disciples. They were struggling with the wind and the waves on a small boat in the sea and Jesus came to them.

Anyone is welcome so pass this on to friends who may want to come along.

Thanks, Lynn



Letter to the Editor

I am writing to you as editor of the PCC Newsletter which I still receive, as you asked if anyone knew about 'The Policy of Girlguiding' following the Rev'd Pam Owen's comment in her Minister's letter (see the November 2023 issue).

Firstly, the Girlguiding Promise changed some years ago and the wording is:

"I promise that I will do my best,

To be true to myself and develop my beliefs,

To serve the King and my Community, to help other people and to keep the (Brownie) Guide law."

The promise was updated again on the death of our Girlguiding patron the late Queen Elizabeth II and now the word King has replaced Queen.

Girlguiding is open to girls from all backgrounds and beliefs. This includes girls with no faiths or who have non-religious belief system.

Secondly, 'The Policy of Girlguiding' is:

Religious parades are not part of the Girlguiding programme.

No young member should attend a faith-based parade without consent from their parent, guardian or carer, and taking part in any religious act must always be voluntary.

I have been a member of Girlguiding as a Brownie, Guide, Sea Ranger and Leader for nearly 60 years. As a leader and member of Girlguiding, I have attended many church parades but at no time was I forced to go.

On every Remembrance Sunday Beckenham Division Girl Guides lay a poppy wreath at the war memorial in Beckenham on behalf of all the members of Girlguiding in Beckenham Division.

This includes the units who meet at Penge Congregational Church.

It is performed as a loving act of remembrance for all those who sadly lost their lives in wars and conflict.

Kind regards,

Diane Pask

District Supporting Leader

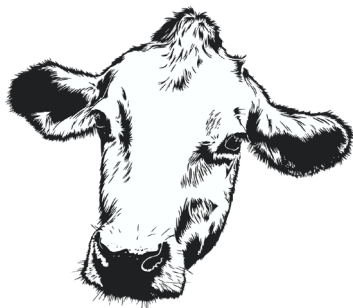


Thank you, Diane, for your helpful response to my query. *Editor*

Synopsis :

Jack and the Beanstalk 2024

It's what you've 'bean' waiting for! A plant based Family Panto! We can't promise you a healthy meal, but we can promise you a Giant serving of songs, fun and laughter – all with a side order of crazy characters including the evil Giant, cheeky Dame, magical garden Gnome and Buttercup the cow who produces some very unusual milk!



Book now to see Jack, Jill and even the Mayoress as they attempt to climb the Beanstalk



Christine Foulds, who sends me these lovely posters for St Mark's Players, told me that the Players are always looking out for help back stage.

You meet lovely people and it's exciting work (especially if you bring the curtain down at the wrong stage!) (Ed.)

St Mark's Players' Family Pantomime
featuring children from Glenlyn Academy



Jack and the Beanstalk

**Live
band**

January 2024

Saturday 13th, 20th, 27th

2.30pm & 7.30pm

Sunday 14th, 21st 2.30pm

Adults £12 Children £9
(Group Discounts)

**St George's Hall, Albemarle Road,
Beckenham, BR3 5HZ**
Fully Accessible

BOOK NOW

www.sm-players.co.uk
07422 516436 / 07973 408807

Supporting

StChristopher's
More than just a hospice



Joyce Perry has reached the grand young age of

98 years

Happy birthday, Joyce, from all at Church

We didn't manage to get the message out for your birthday on 25th November - but it lasts for all the year!



And more News of Members:

Helen and Nick Cole send love from France.

They remember us and we pray for them.

If anyone needs prayer, we have an email address that you can use: Pccprayer@outlook.com

And do remember that there is a **prayer and praise** group on Tuesday evenings 7.30 until 8.30pm.

All Welcome

Decorating the Church

Thanks to all helpers: **Mark, Khadija, Chris D, Chris P, Pam, and not to forget Lynn and Chris M** - for all their work on decorating the church for Christmas.

Photos on pages 20 and 21

Befriending Quilts

Working with Age UK, Beckenham quilters provide between 30 and 40 quilts at Christmas to help keep the elderly warm and valued.



The Next Issue will be

February 2024

***There will be a fascinating
story about the***

***Beckenham Quilters and the
valuable Community work
that they do!***

How well do you know your Carols?

Answers to the Quiz on page 8

1. It came upon the Midnight clear
2. We Three Kings of Orient are
3. In the Bleak Mid-Winter
4. Good King Wenceslas looked out
5. Away in a Manger
6. God rest you Merry, Gentlemen
7. I saw Three Ships come sailing in
8. O Holy Night
9. O Little Town of Bethlehem
10. O come, all ye Faithful
11. The Holly and the Ivy
12. O come, O come, Emmanuel
13. Little Jesus, sweetly sleep, do not stir
14. While Shepherds watch'd their Flocks by Night
15. The first Nowell the Angel did say
16. See Amid the Winter's Snow
17. As with Gladness Men of Old
18. Christians Awake, salute the happy morn
19. Holy Night, Silent Night
20. Once In Royal David's City

Go and do likewise



Local Information

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Events in Beckenham 2024 - ctib.uk

v6

15/11/2023

Day	Date	AM	Lunch	PM	Evening
Thursday	18/01/2024	Green Bird café open at St Johns 9.30-2.00			
Friday	19/01/2024	Green Bird café open at St Johns 9.30-2.00			Avenue Baptist - Campfire Worship 8pm
Saturday	20/01/2024		Green Bird café open at St Johns 10.00-4.00	RCCG - Worship Together 5pm	
Sunday	21/01/2024	No pulpit exchange this year but do visit another CTIB church if you can			
Monday	22/01/2024		Joy's Kitchen at Beckenham Methodist 10.30-2.30	St Edmunds 'A quiet time of reflection' 2-4pm	Beckenham Baptist - Taize Service 8pm
Tuesday	23/01/2024		Joy's Kitchen at Beckenham Methodist 10.30-2.30		Penge Congregational - Worship 7pm?
Wednesday	24/01/2024	St Georges 10.30 Communion (with refreshments after)	Joy's Kitchen at Beckenham Methodist 10.30-2.30		
Thursday	25/01/2024		Joy's Kitchen at Beckenham Methodist 10.30-2.30		Neighbourhood - Lecto Divina, prayer and worship

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2024

www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer



NB. The email address above should read

www.ctib.org.uk/weekofprayer





**Ready for
Christmas**



Website:

www.pccweb.co.uk



To arrange a marriage service, funeral, baptism or similar event, please contact the Deacons:

lynn.mcshane22@gmail.com

To book any other events (concerts etc.), please contact
Bernie Hall:

pcclettings@outlook.com

Tel: 07999 296 686 (new number)

For enquiries related to this website please contact **Iona McShane** on:

iona.mcshane@gmail.com

To submit articles for the monthly newsletter:

margaret@ecoharmony.org

Deacons at the moment are

Jannett Ashley

Douglas Rathbone

Chris Parker

Lynn McShane (treasurer)

lynn.mcshane22@gmail.com