

Penge Congregational Church



**December 2017/
January 2018
Newsletter**

From the Minister

"Lord, now I can die in peace! As you promised me, I have seen the Saviour you have given to all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people, Israel." (Living Water edition of the New Living Translation)

The words of the Nunc Dimittis, spoken by Simeon when Mary and Joseph went to the Temple to present the baby Jesus, as required by the Law of Moses. Joseph and Mary were amazed at these words. Even with what they knew about Jesus, it must have been almost incredible to think of this tiny baby revealing the kingdom of God both to Jews and to all other peoples (known collectively to the Jews as Gentiles). Of course Simeon knew that the great joy this would bring to countless millions of people would come at a price to this couple who had been chosen by God himself to nurture his son from infancy to manhood: "He will be a great joy to many... And a sword will pierce your very soul."

Joseph would not live to see this baby grow up and begin to do the work of his heavenly father. But Mary would be there to see Jesus begin his ministry; she would see him hounded out of his home town; she would see him harassed and challenged by the religious leaders; she would go to bed night after night knowing that he was sleeping out somewhere with his disciples. Ultimately she would be there at the foot of the cross to see him suffer so terribly and die at the hands of the Roman occupiers. Of course, she would also be there to see him resurrected and to see him taken up into heaven, Christ Triumphant, to sit at the right hand of God his father. But I wonder if that would have consoled her completely for the loss of her son, the human Jesus?

That tiny baby, Mary's first born, new life coming into the world, had to grow up to suffer and die, in order to fulfil the purpose for which God had sent him. God had to sow in order to reap. Thirty odd years on, the tiny baby had become a man, a teacher, someone whom people either loathed and feared or whom they followed and loved. As he came to Jerusalem for the last time, he explained to Philip and Andrew, two of his disciples, that the time had come for him to enter into his glory. "The truth is, a kernel of wheat must be planted in the soil. Unless it dies it will be alone- a single seed. But its death will produce many new kernels- a plentiful harvest of new kernels."

So God sowed his seed: he sent his son to teach us so that we would want to follow him. That son died as a human being to save us so that we

could follow him into the kingdom of God. He rose again to new life so that we could have everlasting life in him. The seed died so that it could produce countless new seeds. As we enter a new year, shall we dedicate ourselves anew to God's purpose for us, his people, to bring the light of the world to lighten the darkness around us, and to show Jesus to everyone we meet?

May God bless us and those we love this Christmas, this New Year and always.

Pam

Christmas Postbox

As usual this will be available in the church for you to post your cards for other church members.

There are three rules to bear in mind:

1. **Please don't put in cards for people who don't live locally. We cannot deliver your cards to Portugal for you!**
2. **Please put your cards in alphabetical order with an elastic band round them, to help the sorting process.**
3. **There is a box beside the postbox for your donations in lieu of the postage you are saving. This year, your donations will be used to buy food to donate to Living Well at Holy Trinity for the benefit of the many people they help there.**

Seasonal Smiles: (Blame Chris Parker!!)

What happened to the man who stole the Advent Calendar?

He got 25 days!

What motor bike does Santa ride?

A Holly Davidson!

Who is Santa's favourite singer?

Elf-is Presley!

Why are Christmas trees bad at sewing?

They always drop the needles!

David Nicholson Memorial Recital 2017



This year's recital for David was described by one of his friends as "a beautiful tribute to a great man who was a dear friend and colleague".

In 2010, Sarah and Alec and I thought it would be a good idea to celebrate the 70th anniversary of David's birth with a memorial organ recital, with no thought that it could become an annual event. The wife of a Reuter friend urged me to continue the recitals. They have become occasions of great warmth and good will, with affectionate remembrance of David, wonderfully talented organists contributing the music, a well-known British retailer making the sandwiches, and members of the church providing all the behind-the-scenes organization, and the audience giving donations to the National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society in recognition of the disease that David had suffered from for many years. The eighth recital on Sunday November 5th this year was very well-attended, and this time the donations were given for the work of Amnesty International. In his retirement, David had become our church's representative to the local Amnesty group, and the treasurer of that group, Andrew Platman, spoke affectionately of how much they had valued David's contribution to their work.

Robert Cooper began the recital with a pyrotechnic *Paeon for Organ* by Oliphant Chuckerbutty, and followed that with two of Schumann's *Sketches for Pedal Piano* (in spite of their title, these pieces are played on the organ). Andrew Chadney played next: William Walton's "Suite from *Henry V*", and William Lloyd-Webber's "Barcarolle".

Then the audience were charmed by the delightful "Row the Boat", from *Ad Wammes' Wave* --- a duet by Jonathan and Sarah Holmes. After that

came the joyous and witty Dubois *Toccata*, played by your own organist. Martin Ball delighted us as usual with his colourful and intriguing registrations in a Rheinberger *Pastorale*, a Francis Jackson *Chorale*, and Sibelius' *Intrada*, Op 111a. Jonathan Holmes concluded this year's recital with Vierne's big *Scherzo and Final*, from his Symphonie 5. And Christopher Town, who has a long-standing interest in our Lewis organ, provided commentary on the music and the musicians.

It was a great pleasure to welcome David's friends from the local Amnesty International group this year. A number of his Reuter friends were present, some of whom were attending for the first time and who wrote later to say how much they had enjoyed the afternoon. A friend from university days in Nova Scotia (almost 60 years ago) came from her home in Gloucestershire; another friend came from Dorset; and one of our former neighbours came up from Kent. There were several people from the SE20Art group, and it was a special delight to have our friend Elaine from New York days with us at this time. Some of my family came from Glasgow, and we were all pleased to see an old friend from St Andrews. There were also music-lovers who may have seen notice of the recital at "organrecitals.com".

The afternoon tea was much appreciated (especially the hot bits) and I extend my most grateful thanks to those who heated them! Thank you especially to the minister and members of PCC for devoting Church Day this year to the Memorial Recital for David. My family and I are most humbly proud of the affection in which he is held by so many people.

It was also gratifying to send £400. to Amnesty --- thanks to the generosity of the audience.

Most of all, we owe a great debt to the organists, who share so freely and generously of their time and their great musical talent in order to give so much pleasure to so many.

And of course, praise and thanks to God for our glorious organ!

Marilyn Nicholson

Flower Rota 2018

This version takes account of changes notified since it was published in draft in the November issue. The rota for a three month period is always included in each month's Newsletter, so any further changes can still be accommodated.

January

7: Pat Clarke

14: Jean Sumner

21: Melanie Cogan

28: Rosemarie Baker

February

4: Caroline Parker

11: Joyce Perry

18: Melanie Cogan

25: Friendship Club

March

4: Jean Sumner

11: Lionel Sawkins

18: Pat Clarke

25: Melanie Cogan

April:

1 (Easter): David Nye

8: 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: Flower Fund

10: Diane Pask

17: Jean/Rosemarie

24: Marilyn Nicholson

July:

1: Pat Clarke

8: In memory of Mollie (Flower Fund)

15: Jean Sumner

22: Friendship Club

29: Pam (Christina's wedding on 28th)

August:

5: Melanie Cogan

12: Margaret Collins

19: Lionel Sawkins

26: Joyce Perry, in memory of Rex

September:

2: Melanie Cogan

9: Pam Owen

16: Joyce Perry

23: Flower Fund

30 (Harvest): Marilyn Nicholson

October:

7: Kathleen Sewter

14: Pat Clarke

21: Joyce Perry

28: Melanie Cogan

November:

4: Joan Fairbrother

11: Friendship Club

18: Melanie Cogan

25: Joyce Perry

December:

2: East Family

9: Melanie Cogan

16: Penny Read

23: Monica Sinclair

30: Flower Fund.

Charlie's Graduation: Winchester Cathedral 20 October 2017

It was a beautiful sunny day after a week of storms and rain for our wonderful day in Winchester. Charlie's graduation after three long years of his toil, sweat and tears (at times!) had finally arrived, and I could not have been more proud!

We had stayed the night before as Charlie had to go to The Guildhall to be fitted for his cap and gown at 8am, then have his photographs taken. Leaving Jeff, Jack and my mum at the flat we had rented, I ran there with him, and could barely contain the tears from welling up when my 'baby' stood, all grown up, suited, booted and so handsome! (I would say that; I'm his Mum!!) Where had the years gone? It seemed like only yesterday when he was happy setting up his Playmobil and toy soldiers which would keep him entertained for hours, yet here he was, a young man, qualified, independent, and so capable (a trait I rarely see in him at home!).

The ceremony took place in the early afternoon, and, as the Chancellor of Winchester University, Alan Titchmarsh (aka the TV gardener) presented the new graduates with their degree certificates, one-by-one. Charlie, being the joker he is, could not help but have some 'banter' with Alan, who had commented on how smart he looked; Charlie said he didn't look too shabby himself in his robes!



Charlie Palmer-Cogan BA (Hons) Creative Writing and Drama

Along with hundreds of other happy graduates and their families, we then sang the University hymn, said prayers of thanks, and exited the beautiful cathedral for more photos in the glorious sunshine, and a stroll through the gorgeous Winchester streets, topping for a celebratory tippie and lunch of course! Charlie is now working as an intern at the University, and also at Street Reach, a youth charity nearby. **Melanie Cogan**



Dates for 2018

Here is a table of key dates for 2018. Please note that, nearer the time, we shall inevitably find reasons to change some of them!

Month	Date	Event
January 2018	11 th 14 th	Deacons' Meeting Church Meeting
February	8 th	Deacons' Meeting
March	8 th 18 th	Deacons' Meeting Church Meeting
April	5 th	Deacons' Meeting
May	10 th 13 th 20 th	Deacons' Meeting Church Anniversary/Gift Day/Parade Annual Church Meeting
June	14 th	Deacons' Meeting
July	12 th 22 nd	Deacons' Meeting Church Meeting
August		
September	6 th 16 th 30 th	Deacons' Meeting Church Meeting Harvest Festival parade
October	4 th	Deacons' Meeting
November	4 th 8 th 11 th 18 th	Church Day/Gift Day Deacons' meeting Remembrance Sunday Church Meeting
December	9 th	Toy Service/Parade



**FACE
PAINTING**

CRAFT

GIFTS

CAKE

ART

SE20

CRAFT FAIR

**SATURDAY
9TH DECEMBER**

PENGE

KENILWORTH HALL, KENILWORTH ROAD

11AM - 4PM **FREE ENTRY**

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Jesus, of course, always intended his church to be united. So we shouldn't just think of Christian Unity for one week a year, then forget about it. Nevertheless, we do have a special week each year when local churches make an extra effort to focus on their role as *the church*, rather than lots of different churches. Each January, the dates are the same: 18th-25th. This is what is known in the established church as the Octave of St Peter and St Paul- the eight days between the Saints' Days of these two Apostles. In 2018, we are hoping to build on the very successful week we had last year, with a general pulpit swap between the local churches on Sunday 21st January, and a series of weekday services in churches. At the time of writing the only ones that have been confirmed are an evening Taizé service on Monday 22nd, and Café Church at PCC on the morning of Tuesday 23rd. We will put posters up outside the church and advertise the services in our service sheets nearer the time.

Churches Together nationally has produced some resources for the WPCU, produced by churches in the Caribbean and based on Exodus 15, the Song of Moses celebrating the release of the Israelites from slavery and oppression.

"The themes of the daily material raise some of the contemporary issues addressed by the churches of the Caribbean. Abuses of human rights are found across the region and we are challenged to consider our manner of welcoming of the stranger into our midst. Human trafficking and modern-day slavery continue to be huge issues. Addiction to pornography and drugs, continue to be serious challenges to all societies. The debt crisis has a negative impact upon the nations and upon individuals – the economies of the nations and people have become precarious. Family life continues to be challenged by the economic restrictions which lead to migration, domestic abuse and violence. The Caribbean Churches work together to heal the wounds in the body of Christ. Reconciliation demands repentance, reparation and the healing of memories. The whole Church is called to be both a sign and an active agent of this reconciliation."

You can download this material free at:

<https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2018/>

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY SERVICES 2018

Thursday 18th January

3pm-6pm: Quiet Time- Come for as long as you wish.

St Edmund's, Village Way, Beckenham.

Sunday 21st January

Morning: Pulpit Swap between participating local churches. Pam will be preaching elsewhere. Look out for news of who will be coming to us this morning.

3pm: Songs of Praise. St George's, High Street, Beckenham.

Monday 22nd January

8pm: Taizé service.

Beckenham Baptist Church. Beckenham Road (opposite the Spa).

Tuesday 23rd January

9.30am-11am: Café Church.

Penge Congregational Church. 172 High Street SE20.

Thursday 25th January

11am: Coffee Service. Revd. Ray Coster (of Beckenham Methodist Church) will tell us about the World Council of Churches.

St Michael's and All Angels, Ravenscroft Road.

Church Diary December 2017

Sunday 3rd: ADVENT SUNDAY

10.30am: Toy Service. Gifts of toys for distribution locally by Penge Salvation Army.

6.30pm: Lord's Supper, led by Marilyn.

Tuesday 5th:

9.30am – 11am: Café Church.

Sunday 10th:

10.30 am: Jesus is coming! Includes the Lord's Supper, led by Jannett Ashley, the Minister to preach.

6.30pm: Bible Discussion, led by the Minister.

Wednesday 13th:

10.30-noon: Friendship Club Christmas Meeting, in the church.

Sunday 17th:

10.30am: The Real Meaning of Christmas, co-ordinated by Lynn.

6.30pm: Carols by Candlelight, followed by seasonal refreshments in the Kenilworth Hall.

Sunday 24th: CHRISTMAS EVE

10.30am: Carols round the Crib

11.30pm: Christmas Communion by Candlelight.

Monday 25th: CHRISTMAS DAY

10.30am: Christmas Family service.

Sunday 31st:

10.30am: Family service, led by the Minister.

NO EVENING SERVICE.

Church Diary January 2018.

Sunday 7th:

10.30am: Epiphany Carols, led by Marilyn.

6.30pm: Lord's Supper, led by the Minister.

Thursday 11th:

7.30pm: Deacons' Meeting. The Vestry.

Sunday 14th:

10.30am: Lord's Supper, led by Jannett.

Followed by Church Meeting in the Snug.

6.30pm: Bible discussion, led by Chris McShane.

18th-25th January Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

See separate page for details of services in local churches.

Sunday 21st:

10.30am: Visiting preacher from another local church.

The Minister will be preaching elsewhere this morning.

3pm: United Songs of Praise, St George's Church, Beckenham.

NO EVENING SERVICE.

Tuesday 23rd:

9.30am-11am: United Café Church at PCC.

Sunday 28th:

10.30am: Mission: a pearl of great price, led by Chris McShane.

6.30pm: Taizé service, led by Lynn.

Penge Congregational Church

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Church gathered May 1908

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Ms Jannett Ashley

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