

Penge Congregational Church



July 2024

News

Andrew and his wife Eleanor retired from Avenue Road Baptist Church in June. Andrew was very involved in leading Churches Together in Beckenham CTiB which we belong to.

Here is his letter to the church (which includes us!). Chris, Lynn and Khadija enjoyed a piece of cake and cup of tea with everyone at his farewell party.



Dear all in CTiB,

Thank you for sharing in Sunday's 'Farewell Service' for myself and Eleanor. It was so encouraging that Neil was able to take part in the time of prayer in the service itself, and that many were able to join us in the afternoon for tea, cakes and chat.

CTiB has so often been an amazing witness to what it means to be sisters and brothers in Christ, enriched by our individual church differences. Last Sunday was just the latest example!

For many years you have blessed me, and I thank God for that.

I pray the Lord will give us plenty of opportunities in the future to bump into each other!

Thank you again, and God bless you all

Andrew



Christine from Beckenham Methodist Church

asked us to advertise their job opportunity again, ***as new dates have been given for your last chance to apply! See the advert for running their excellent cafe on page 18.***

Upcoming **CTiB** events are:

Tuesday 2nd July - CTiB meeting - at St Paul's Brackley Rd - 7.45 for an 8pm start.

Sunday 7th July - CTiB Picnic - at St Paul's which begins at 12.30 on the lawn. You are asked to bring your own picnic - please announce at your churches over the next couple of weeks.

Norma Powell's funeral will be on

Friday, **5th July at 11am in the church.** Please pray for her partner, **Mark** and her brother, **Michael**, for **all the family - children and grandchildren and great grandchildren.**

The Services for July are on page 15

Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre

Many years ago, when we were living in South Africa, my husband and I, together with members of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis, went to stay at Silveira House (a Jesuit Centre for religious training and education in Zimbabwe). It was here that we learnt about **Mutemwa** and **John Bradburne**.

Mutemwa means **outcast** in the Shona language.

It is home to some 30 people suffering from leprosy - those who have been shunned by society.

John Bradburne (1921–1979) was born in Skirwith (near Penrith) in Cumbria. He was a Captain in the 9th Gurkha Rifles in the Second World War.

After many years travelling and searching, he found ‘the place that God wanted him to be’ – living alongside men and women suffering with leprosy in Mutemwa, Southern Rhodesia (now known as Zimbabwe), a place he helped transform into a community of peace, joy and love. John has come to be described as a hermit, a poet and a musician, a joker and a mystic, and a theologian... and a bee keeper! Read on...

World Bee Day 2024

May 20th marks World Bee Day, a day to celebrate the vital role bees play in our ecosystem. World Bee Day aims to promote actions that protect bees and their

habitats, as well as to acknowledge the vital role of beekeepers and other stakeholders in ensuring their conservation. It's a great opportunity to learn about the importance of bees, their challenges, and what we can do to support them.

John Bradburne lived for ten years with the lepers - he



knew everyone by name and he ministered to them, feeding them, talking with them, sharing with them the love of Jesus - the one of universal Love.

And he withdrew to his little tin hut to be with God.

"It seems my mission is to bees only, to tell them that we men want to forget their stings and our own fear and avarice and to be friends with bees and the rest of creation." JRB 1969.

Bees regularly visited John in swarms wherever he stayed. He welcomed them into his home, and he valued their



presence, as it kept visitors away, so he could get on with his writing and meditation’.

Today the bees came in

With a humming merry din

And settled in their swarm amidst my hive;

Til meridian they waited

And then they celebrated

The fact that in this cell is man alive:

Alive to solitude,

Dead to the world - intrude

Let none who with my sunny solitude would strive.

‘Bees have become synonymous with John Bradburne. So the next time you pray, think of John and his bees, and don't be surprised if some bees start buzzing around!’

During the civil war of 1979 John Bradburne was kidnapped and murdered. But Mutemba lives on and so does John's presence and commitment.

Happy World Bee Day (that is, when it comes around again next year on the 20th May.)

The editor has used extracts from the **JBMS** Newsletter. Permission to print these extracts was received from **Kate Macpherson**, secretary to J.B.Memorial Society.

Read more about John Bradburne by going to their website address:www.johnbradburne.com

Something to cool us down when the weather gets too hot!!

by Jean Sumner

The days when we had real winters: the snow used to be so thick Bromley council had to send the snow ploughs out to clear the roads. Everywhere looked beautiful when it first snowed. It was like an enchanting fairyland - so white and clean. Everywhere was glistening. But then it began to thaw. It turned into horrible, dirty, slushy mess. Then it would freeze and become very icy. You had to be very careful when you went out or you slipped over, as I know having done so a few times.



Children loved the snow. You could have great fun playing snowballs and building snowmen. And if you were lucky enough to live near a hill you could slide down on a sledge - if you had one - or even on a tray. My friends had a sledge of sorts (I think their dad made

it). As we lived in Churchfields Road which was flat we had to pull and push it! Where are all the cars?



One year we had a big freeze up and as it thawed:
there were big icicles on my gutter.



The photo below no longer shows Churchfields Road. It was taken from my balcony in Laurie Park Crescent. Winters have got a lot warmer since then. We had a very heavy snow fall in 2009, but the weather has changed so much over the years.

Jean

All the photos are taken from Jean's photograph album



Life on a Narrowboat

I write this as we are about to move onto our 2nd week on a narrowboat having set off from **Litchfield** and been through **Birmingham** and **Worcester**. Mooring up on the way and last night visiting **Kidderminster**. I only have a mobile so the article will be short.

Psalm 104 is the first bit of the Bible that I learnt back in my primary school and then only the first couple of verses. So many of the great things God has provided can be seen from the canal. He provided water from the many rivers which feed the canals. The occasional fish jumping from the still water. The cattle feeding on the lush grass and drinking from the edge of the fields. The birds busy collecting food and returning to the hedges to feed their young. The rare kingfisher making a quick dart across our bow and disappearing before emerging again and setting off further ahead. Swans with signets and ducks with their young approach port and starboard eager for our duck food. Adult swans shoo off any intruders looking to steal their young's meal.

Mooring up we see the clear moon across the fields and in the morning the very early sunrise shoots like an arrow through any gap between closed curtains.

The opening and closing of locks, especially when one day we did some 30 odd can be quite tiring. It is however very relaxing and we are thankful for all that God has provided.

Chris Parker



Daughter, Caroline, at the helm.





That is Narrow!



***Chris P has provided us with an illustrated
Psalm 104***

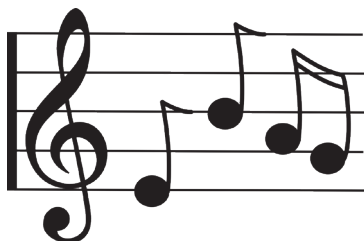
Thank you to others who responded to the request to share your favourite Psalm!

Firstly from **Jannett Ashley**:

My favourite psalm is the well known Psalm 23. A Psalm of David.

This psalm brings great comfort daily to me in good times and bad times, for It tells me that God is always there with me what ever my walk in life may be.

To me, Psalm 23 offers, hope, rest, guidance, love and peace.



From **Jean Genie**:

My favourite Psalm is 100, it is so uplifting and hopeful. It has been a real help recently to Jonny and me. X

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

Anne's Favourite verses from two psalms:

Psalm 91 verse 1

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

This verse for me is so uplifting and joyous. I hear a great chorus and full orchestra celebrating! Then all is still and I find myself under a huge oak tree thinking quietly of all the precious gifts he has given me!

Psalm 23 verse 2

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside still waters.

This is my place of comfort when all around is going absolutely haywire! For me it paints a picture of peace and tranquility, obliterating the moments of frenzy that we all experience in our lives.

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And another chance to give thanks to God in the company of others...

Tuesday evenings: Praise time 7:30 to 8:30

Sunday evening: Bible study 6:30-7:30pm.

July services

A group of us met in the **Moon and Stars** to plan the next months' theme. We thought about a theme of **"Certainty in uncertain times"** and **decided to focus on Moses.**

These are the July themes and we will continue the story in August. Jesus' experiences have so many echos of what happened to Moses, and also speak to our lives today and the lives of those in exile and refugees. God is right there with us wherever we are.

Sunday mornings at 10:30am

7th July Moses is hidden in the bullrushes and is adopted into another family Exodus 2:1-10

14th July Moses kills the Egyptian and has to flee for his life Exodus 2:11-22

21st July Burning bush - God tells Moses his name Exodus 2:23-3:6 and 3:9-15

28th July Cafe Church with Communion - The blood of the lamb saves the Lord's people Exodus 12:21-28

Notices

We are welcoming Longheath Baptist Church who will be using the church for their services on Sunday afternoons in July.

THE BELOVED SON

Thanks to CTiB and the church for distributing flyers of this new play, written and directed by Murray Watts, I was present when St.Paul's, Brackley Road staged it in the church.

We saw the acclaimed actor **Andrew Harrison** in the role of Dutch Catholic priest **Henri Nouwen** but that was not all. His one man show introduced us to a myriad of characters, needing numerous accents from different countries, some folk highly academic and others delightfully neuro-diverse.

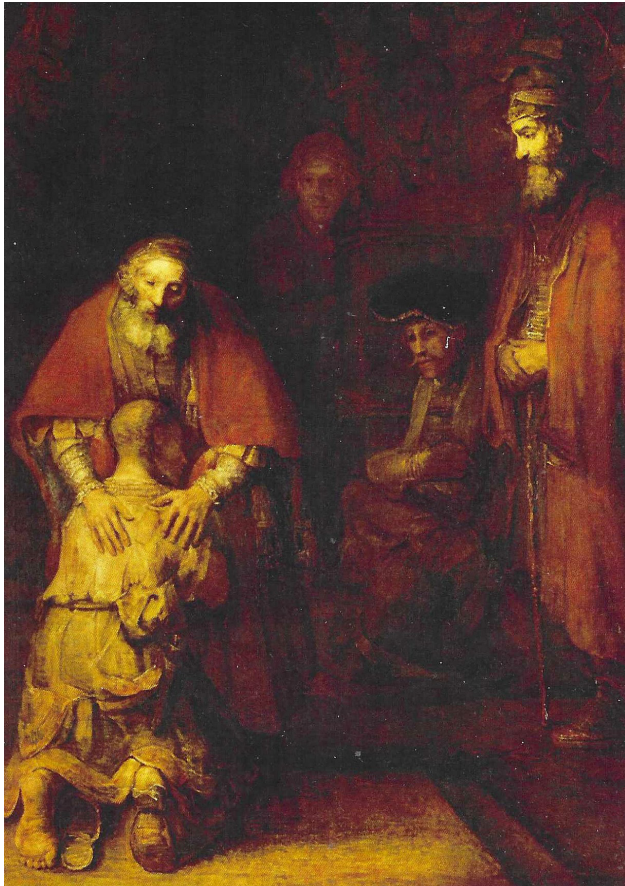
An involuntary standing ovation from an emotional audience at the end was no less than the solitary actor deserved. From the start, when he tested our faith as he gazed above and beyond the audience, fixing his eyes on an imaginary Rembrandt painting of **The Return of the Prodigal Son**, a key theme throughout his complex life and the people among whom he lived, loved and worked, including L'Arche communities.

Devoid of any props, wardrobe, theatrical lighting Andrew Harrison brought so many relationships to life on a blank stage via his role shifts, in an incredible (or should I say credible) way! Holding an audience of about 140 people enthralled in an interval-free 80 minute performance was both moving and memorable.

A marvellous production that I find impossible to do justice to in words. It has led me to borrow books on the life of Henri Nouwen (thanks to your dear Editor)

and if I had a chance to see the play again I would
seize it!

Jenny Froude



Rembrandt's painting



Beckenham Methodist Church

is seeking to appoint an **experienced** and **highly-motivated**

Manager

to run its Community Cafe

This is an exciting new role for someone who is passionate about working in a popular, first-rate community café, who enjoys interacting with a wide variety of people and who has an understanding of, and empathy with, the Christian ethos of the café

Duties will include:

- Taking orders, food and drink preparation and delivery
- Managing the day-to-day activities of the café, including rotas, volunteer recruitment and retention and volunteer development (this includes volunteers from MENCAP)
- Ensuring a warm and welcoming environment for all customers
- Exploring options for the future development of café activities

The successful applicant will ideally have a background in catering and in the community/charity sector, and will be positive, self-motivated, have excellent literacy and numeracy skills and be proficient in the use of Word and Excel

- **Working hours:** 25 hours per week, Monday to Friday - 40 weeks per year, mainly during term time
- **Salary:** £18,000 – equal to £18.00ph/£23,400 pro rata
- **Start date:** September 2024

For more information, an application pack and full job description please email: JKManagerapp@outlook.com

Closing date for applications: 23:59 on Sunday 7 July *

Interviews for short-listed candidates: Saturday 20 July

*We reserve the right to stop accepting new applications before 7 July, should we reach capacity before then



Penge Chamber Choir
and
Penge Players

Entrance of night

A beautiful programme of choral
and instrumental music about
the night and sleep

Saturday 13th July 2024
Penge Congregational Church

8 P M

Tickets £10/£5

PENGE MUSIC PRESENTS

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS

PIANIST, ECHO ZOU

including works by Chopin and Schubert

**20TH JULY 2024
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

for July

PENGE MUSIC PRESENTS
OPEN MONDAYS

15TH JULY

16TH SEPTEMBER

14TH OCTOBER

**Doors 7pm
for 7.30pm
start**

Performers please register by
Friday before at
pengeopenmondays@gmail.com

Relaxed and informal
atmosphere

BYOB

**Tickets £5
audience and
performers**

Under 16s free



Website:

www.pccweb.co.uk



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

Lynn 07817 862 158

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