

Penge Congregational Church



June 2021

Holy Spirit Flower



From the Minister...

Throughout May, our Sunday services have been based around the presence of the Holy Spirit within each Christian. Our first service looked at the promise of the Holy Spirit; our second at the gifts of the Spirit; our third was Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came to all the believers in Jerusalem; and our fourth reflected on St Paul's prayer for spiritual wisdom in his letter to the Ephesians. "I pray for you constantly, asking God...to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you may grow in your knowledge of God. I pray that your hearts may be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called- his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance".



Because all believers have been given the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, to dwell within them, the followers of Jesus form a unity, with Jesus and his Father, and with one another.

In our twice weekly Zoom meetings, we have been thinking a lot about the effect the gift of the Spirit and its presence within us must make on our lives. As Christians, we follow the teachings of our Saviour and our faith in him must lead us to action: it is little use being given a gift if you put it away in a cupboard and never use it. The gifts of the Spirit are given to us so that we

can share them and use them to witness to Jesus and to work for the kingdom of justice and peace that he taught us to desire.

In his prayer for the Ephesians, St Paul asks that their hearts might be flooded with light, so that they can understand what God has called his people to do. In his letter to the Philippians, written at much the same time, he develops that image of light further. He says this: “Work hard to show the results of your salvation...Live clean innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.” Again we see that image of light, but this time Paul emphasises the importance of shining that light out into the darkness of the world around.

Isn't this a message for us? I'm not for one moment saying we Christians are surrounded by crooked and perverse people, but we are surrounded by so many people who think belief is an irrelevance and that people of faith are a bit crazy!



Paul says we should be shining like bright lights, like stars in an otherwise dark sky. Now you may very well not consider yourself to be a star, to be someone who has reached the heights of human achievement. But actually, if you are standing in a very dark place, even a little light will make a difference. And if we stand together in the unity of the Holy Spirit, each little light, no matter how feeble,

will contribute to a bigger illumination which will make a much greater difference than we can make on our own.

If every believer became a shining light through the power of the Holy Spirit, just imagine how the power of all those lights combining would drive back the darkness and make this world a place of light and life!

Pam



Church Annual Meeting

We have been unable to hold a Church Meeting since January 2020! Deacons have met each month, in person when possible and on Zoom when not, and they have thus been able to address essential church business on behalf of Church members.



Last year, we were unable to meet together for our annual meeting, so various reports and the financial statement were published in the Newsletter. None of this is the Congregational Way as the Church Meeting has authority under God for the conduct of church business,

and of course the annual meeting is a requirement of our constitution. But these are unprecedented times and Deacons have done their best.

This year, we hope very much that, at some point, we will be able to meet together to consider the financial statement for the year to March 2021. Should Stage 4 of the Government road map go ahead as planned on 21st June, we would plan to hold the

Church Annual Meeting on 27th June after morning service.

(4th July is the Kenilworth Road street party and we have a baptism on 11th July). If Stage 4 is delayed, we will plan to hold a meeting the minute we are allowed to do so.

Let us pray in faith that we may soon be able to revert to our usual “constitutional” way of running the church as the Body of Christ. Please also pray for the Deacons who have faithfully done their best to seek the will of Christ for his church during these most difficult of circumstances.



June 2021 worship themes

This month and into the start of July we shall be thinking about being the family of God. In the great and wonderful prologue to his Gospel, John writes that “To all who believed him and accepted him [Jesus] gave the right to become children of God.” So we shall look at various passages in the Bible, Old and New Testaments, which teach us what it means to be family.



Sunday 6th June: 1 John 3: 1-10. Living as children of God.

Sunday 13th June: Ruth 1: 6-22. “I will go wherever you go and live wherever you live.”

Sunday 20th June: Isaiah 49: 13-18. “I have written your name on my hand.”

Sunday 27th June: Ephesians 3: 14-21. Christ at home in our hearts.

Sunday 4th July: Matthew 12: 46-50. The true family of Jesus.

2nd Penge Rainbow Unit

We are back yippie!

After only one meeting since March 2020 we returned to our Rainbow meetings on the 20th April 2021. **We now have fifteen new Rainbows from age 5 to nearly 7 who have joined the four Rainbows we had left, the rest were 7 and have joined Brownies.**

So many new girls and we are gradually learning all their names. It is lovely to hold unit meetings again. We have had to cancel two **Rainbow Sleepovers** one in May 2020 and another in May 2021 as we were not allowed to hold any residential's for the Rainbows. A new booking has been made for **September 2021** when we hope to have our long awaited **Rainbow Sleepover**.

One mum who brought her daughter along to join our Rainbows said "**you used to be my Brown Owl**". She was one of our ex Brownies as **Caroline and I used to run the Brownie Unit many years ago**. Caroline and I felt a bit old then!

At times it is still difficult keeping the girls to observe social distancing in the meeting and we hope in the not too distant future we can go back to our meetings like we did with no masks and the girls can sit together and play and take part in activities where they need to be fairly close to one another.

We are lucky as some of the venues where other units meet in Penge and Anerley are still not open for units to hold indoor unit meetings, so the Leaders are running outdoor meetings in parks when the weather allows or using Zoom and running virtual meetings.

We are delighted this term to have the help of **Sophie known as 'Twinkleberry Squirrel'** who is one of our Unit Helpers and who is usually studying at university, but at the moment undertaking her course work from home. Another young helper who has just joined us is **Lizzie known as 'Pickles the Dog'** who is undertaking her service for her **Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award**.

If you are wondering why they have these names everyone who helps in our Rainbow Unit picks a character name from the **Beatrix Potter's** books. My Rainbow name is **Mrs Jemima Puddle-Duck**, Jemima to the Rainbows and **Caroline is Mrs Tiggy-Winkle** (Hedgehog), known to the Rainbows as Tiggy.



Diane Pask

Unit Rainbow Leader

2nd Penge Rainbow Unit

Thank You

I write on behalf of the church and users of this multi hall premises. During lockdown it became apparent that the wooden floors in the Kenilworth and Church halls had lifted in several places. This appears to have been because the wood flooring had expanded due to moisture getting under it. It appeared that it was going to be a very expensive repair by floor specialists until we had an unexpected offer from one of our organisation leaders.

Enter **Colin Denny**.

Colin is one of the leaders of the Scouting group at PCC and had seen the floor becoming more of a skateboard park of banks, humps and ramps than a flat dancing and badminton floor.

OK I exaggerate somewhat, but it certainly wasn't usable for doing the odd pas or pirouette.

Colin is also a leader at Men in Sheds across the road which is an organisation for men over 60, although I believe a lady section may also have a group.

They make and repair items for sale in a hobby environment. Colin has, amongst other skills, knowledge of carpentry and took it upon himself to investigate and set about repairing the floors. At the time of writing the Kenilworth Hall is complete and the Church Hall almost. Colin has spent many hours of his own time to carry out these repairs to have the halls up

and running in time for the return of hirers in June. If you see him a little acknowledgement of this great effort will I'm sure be appreciated. *Chris Parker*



DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Psalm 118 is the middle chapter of the entire Bible?

Psalm 117, before Psalm 118 is the shortest chapter in the Bible?

Psalm 119, after Psalm 118 is the longest chapter in the Bible?

The Bible has 594 chapters before Psalm 118 and 594 chapters after Psalm 118

If you add up all the chapters except Psalm 118, you get a total of 1188 chapters.

1188 or Psalm 118 verse 8 is the middle verse of the Bible

Should the central verse not have an important message? 'It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man' Psalm 118:8

I cannot claim fame to working all this out and I don't know who did.

Chris Parker

Where have all the Church Pews gone?

Chris Doran received the following email from our friends at **St James Mar Thoma** in **New Eltham** who have taken our our church pews.



Dear Chris and the Penge Congregation families,
Greetings from St. James families in the name
Our Almighty Lord.

Hope you and family are keeping well.

We are thankful for the beautiful benches offered for our Church. These have become a feature of our new

Church. I have attached a picture (opposite) of the inside of Our new Church along with the benches.

By the Grace of Our Lord Almighty, we are about to embark on a major milestone in our Parish history.

God Willing, Our Diocese Bishop will be dedicating our Church and Centre on 8th May 2021.

At this time, We request your prayers and virtual presence.

You can follow the programme via -

<https://youtu.be/9Mr9BBhpfoE>

Once the situation improves, we hope you can make some time to come and visit us.

With Prayerful Regards

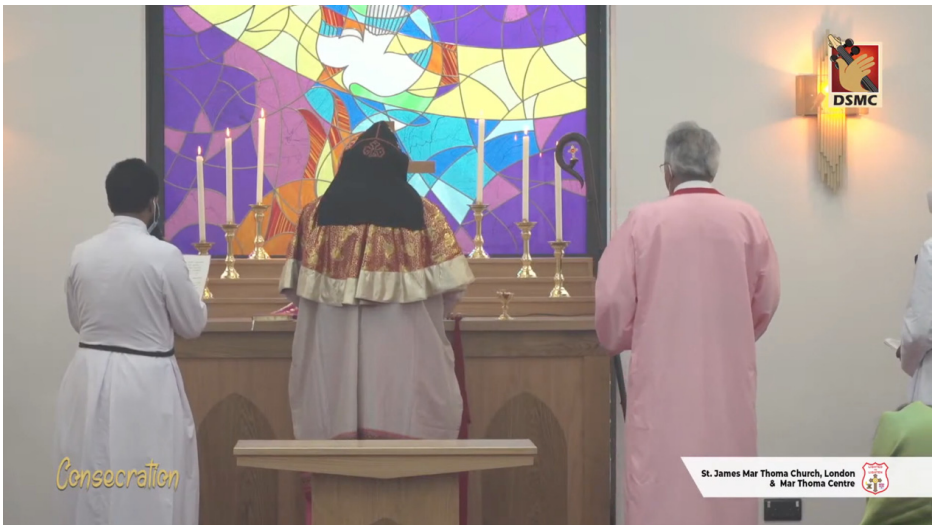
Sibu Thomas

Secretary, St. James Mar Thoma Church, UK

There are more photos over the page



Church Pews leaving our Church for their new destination - St James Mar Thoma



The Celebration in the new Church begins

Christian Aid Week

10-16 May 2021

Despite not being able to knock on people's door we had a good response to our Christian Aid collection.

£135 was given on the e-envelope (we will leave the link up a bit longer on our website pccweb.co.uk collections came to £510 including some donations from past members. The envelopes physically returned to Pam, Chris or my house came to £117.71.

Total collection was **£762.71**. Well done to all.

Lynn McShane (Treasurer)



A Cautionary Tale

My mother is an incorrigible magpie. She's always bringing home this little gem or that little treasure; things that she found in an alley way, or some bright piece of costume jewellery from the charity shop, or a piece of pottery someone else threw out. She also hoards. She can't throw away any of her little treasures, so the house is like one of those junk emporiums they like to call antique shops. You know, those places where you can get completely lost among collections of teddy bears, Victorian dolls' houses and pieces of furniture that seem to emerge from someone's dreams (or nightmares).

You'd think people would avoid our chaotic house. I would understand if they did. I often wonder why I'm still living here; I'm old enough to have left a few years ago. But there's something seductive about this world that Ma has created. It reminds me of a forest so dark and cool that fungus has grown on the trunks of the trees and around the roots, turning the familiar solid oaks into complex and wonderful shapes, so that it seems we have left our planet altogether and entered a realm quite unknown to us.

Speaking of teddy bears, we do have a pair of those that live in an alcove somewhere between the living room and the kitchen. I don't know where Ma got them. She found them before I was born and gave them sanctuary in our home – and they did look like they needed sanctuary. One had lost an ear in some kind of violent

incident, and gazed anxiously out from a rather threadbare little face. The other bear was a good head



taller, covered in luxuriant chocolate brown fur. His one arm was held protectively over his anxious little friend's shoulder and his nose poked belligerently from his rather short neck.

I remember, when I was a lot younger, I found those bears disturbing, particularly the little one with the single ear. It was something about the eyes. They were made of glass, and honestly, they weren't very convincing, more like buttons than actual eyes; but there was something compelling about them. I would find myself staring at them, caught like a rabbit in the headlights of a car, unable to tear my eyes away. It would seem to me that the teddy bear was about to say something to me, and I would wait for the words to come, but they

never did. I began to avoid that alcove, running past it before I caught sight of those quietly demanding eyes.

Of course, it couldn't go on. Little boys find it impossible to voice their anxieties; the words don't come; the anxiety grows daily until it becomes abject terror. Terror drove me to do a shameful thing. I planned it very carefully. No one could know what I did, no one would see this terror that unmanned me. I would end this terror quietly, without the shame of admitting my dark feelings to anyone else.

My mother always went to a book club on a Thursday afternoon. Anna, my sister came home late after a ballet class. So, for about two hours I had the house to myself. I had my own key, so on the Thursday, I walked from the school, crossing the high street at the crossing near the grey stone church with the looming bell tower. There was a storm approaching from the direction of London, signalled by clouds the colour of dirty engine oil. I turned in at the gate, heard my shoes crunching on the asphalt path to the front door. The door had a small window of green stained glass set into it, which glowed faintly, like the surface of a deep pool.

As I turned the key in the door, a cold breeze blew at my back. It felt like the wind was enveloping me in an icy cocoon, which stayed around me as I opened the door and entered the house. Terror was stalking me as I crept into Ma's bedroom and found her sewing basket in the tall wardrobe. When I felt the scissors in my hand, I ran to the alcove where the bears were and almost fell as I dragged a chair in front of the shelf, where I

could only see the feet of the big bear poking over the edge. It took all my failing will to get on the chair, reach up towards the small bear and feel for the eyes which had held me for so long. I would not look at the eyes; I grasped one of them between forefinger and thumb and cut the thread which held it on. Fearing failure, I immediately did the same with the other eye. There was a bin in the kitchen, so I climbed off the chair and flung the two beads into the bin. They were no longer eyes, just glass beads. The terror was gone. I was free.

I whistle as I left the kitchen, looking in triumph on the small bear, now with no ear and no eyes. It looked pitiful and powerless. The whole business had turned out very well. Ma wouldn't notice when she came back home and I was at peace. That should have been the end of a rather terrifying event in my childhood. I should have been able to put the whole nasty experience behind me.

But some things will persist.

Inkubus

Look forward to Part 2 of
A Cautionary Tale
next month...



Chris Parker shared the following thoughts recently. He was having a quiet time when he came across these words to a song. It followed up from Pam's devotion in our Deacons' meeting the night before. Pam read from Micah v 6:6-8 and asked what does it mean to walk humbly? It is not diminishing our spiritual gifts. It is remembering that God is in charge. We are working to establish what his will is, not storming ahead in our own strength.

It all comes down to this : What You require of me:
Love my neighbour as myself: And You above all things.

Act justly: Love mercy: Walk humbly: With You, God
In all things: In all ways: Walk humbly: With You, God

It all comes down to this: To be Your hands and feet:
Good news to all the world: All the truth will set us free.

Act justly: Love mercy: Walk humbly: With You, God
In all things: In all ways: Walk humbly: With You, God

It's beauty for ashes: It's mourning to dancing:
It's closer and closer: The Kingdom of Heaven:
It's beauty for ashes: It's mourning to dancing:
It's closer and closer: The Kingdom of Heaven

Then years from now we'll see:
The fruit our hands have sown:
Faith just like a seed:
The only way it grows:

Act justly:

Love mercy:

Walk humbly:

With You God

In all things:

In all ways:

Walk humbly:

With You God.

Last two clues for Clive's crossword on the following page...

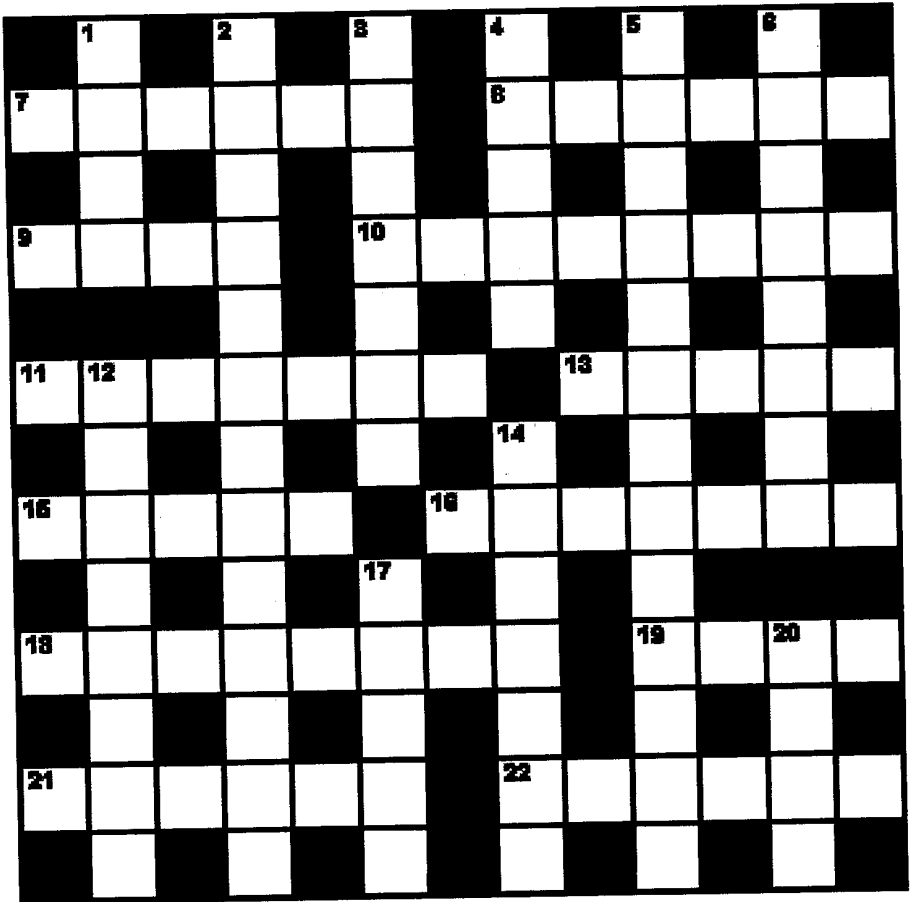
Down

17. Asking for more?? (5)

20. Literally meaning "birth", another word for Christmas (4)



Solution, if you really need it, will be in next month's Newsletter!!



Crossword by Clive

Four answers are remarkable women in the Bible and are not further explained.

Across

7. Nature's light show, seen in the north. (6)

8. You may cross them to exchange the Peace. (6)

9. A criminal (from the Hindi for chav!) (4)

10. Areas where they hide choirs... (8)

- 11. A remarkable woman (7) Modern spelling
- 13. Reverence - sometimes worn on one's sleeve. (5)
 - 15. Og was king here! (5)
 - 16. Nureyev kept her on her toes. (7)
- 18. Led Zepellin's means of getting to heaven (8)
 - 19. Holy place of spiritual retreat (4)
- 21. A pineapple, add a letter and it becomes a disciple!
(6)
- 22. A remarkable woman. (6)

Down

- 1. A remarkable woman (4)
- 2. Found in church, especially on Sundays, and even more so at Easter and Christmas. (13)
 - 3. John?, Tony? (Comedian), ? (7)
 - 4. A remarkable woman (5)
 - 5. Freud, Jung, Lishman (13)
- 6. Religious fanaticism, as shown by Simon (8)
- 12. Praising, literally meaning "from on high" (8)
 - 14. Compound e.g. plastic or starch (7)

Go back to the bottom of page 19 for the last two clues

Website:

www.pccweb.co.uk



To arrange a marriage service, funeral, baptism or similar event, please contact the Minister: Pam Owen on:

pamjowen@hotmail.com

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

pcclettings@outlook.com

Tel: 07900 518 537

For enquiries related to this website please contact Callum McShane on:

callum.mcshane@gmail.com

To submit articles for the monthly newsletter:

margaret@ecoharmony.org

Deacons at the moment are

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Douglas Rathbone

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