

# **Penge Congregational Church**



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## **March 2020 Newsletter**

## An initiative of Hope Together

We are asked to pray where we are, that God will give us opportunities to witness to Christ, at 8pm (20.00 hours) on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, for 20 minutes.

The Prayer for Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March:

Read John 6: 35: Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

And pray:

Abba Father, thank you for the gift of the Bible, your living word to us today. Give us the confidence to give your word to those who don't yet know you so that they can hear you speaking to them. Help us to read it with them and help them to know you for themselves.



*Pray ... that God  
will give many  
opportunities to  
speak about Christ.*

**Colossians 4:3**



### **From the Minister**

As usual, during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity we had our united Café Church at PCC. It was very well attended and, as part of the worship, we looked at Acts 28, the coming of the Gospel to Malta, and particularly at the verse where Luke remarks that the people there treated Paul and the shipwrecked crew with “unusual kindness”. We thought about what that phrase might mean, and I talked about the musical I saw last year, “Come From Away”. This is a little known true story from the events of 9/11:

At the time the planes hit the Twin Towers, 38 planes were heading across the Atlantic to US airports. When the US closed its airspace, the planes were diverted to land at Gander, a large airport in Newfoundland that had been extensively used in the days when trans-Atlantic flights needed to refuel but in more recent times had become little used. This big airport was next to a town of 10,000 people, which suddenly found itself called upon to feed, accommodate and comfort 7,000 frightened passengers of many nationalities. The musical tells the story of how the townsfolk stepped up, turning public spaces into dormitories, calling in food and supplies from all over the region, putting in phone lines so the passengers could contact their families; and going the extra mile to help and support during the five days the planes were stranded there.

At first the passengers were taken aback by the uncommon hospitality they encountered and by the refusal of the townsfolk to take any money- one planeload alone ran up a phone bill of 13,000 dollars. Gradually, however, they relaxed into it and friendships were forged that are still kept up. Ten years on there was a reunion, and when the musical was written, groups of Newfoundlanders and passengers travelled the world together attending premières. Passengers have over the years founded scholarships at Gander Community College

and one passenger actually gave up his business and started a charity working with refugees in the USA.

One of the passengers has said that the first night in Gander he wrapped his laptop bag round his leg and put his wallet in his sock. This in a town where people leave their doors unlocked and clear each other's driveways of snow! Tom, the passenger says the people of Newfoundland taught him to be more trusting of others.

The Mayor of Gander at the time has said, "Long after I am gone, this story will be told because it is about human kindness and we do that very well in Newfoundland".

So, at the Café Church we thought about this and someone mentioned the reaction of the local community to the Grenfell fire. The way in which volunteers, organised by the parish church and the mosque, cared for residents, and started an appeal that brought in such a generous response that they had to ask people to stop sending things! We thought about Mother Teresa's "small acts of kindness done with great love". And we thought about the butterfly effect, from chaos theory, where the analogy is of a wing movement in Chicago causing a tornado in Tokyo- that is, one small incident can have a big impact in the future. We concluded that we are all capable of small acts of kindness and that, as the Body of Christ, we are called to work together to make big changes.

At the time of writing, the late Caroline Flack's remark, "in a world where you can be anything, be kind", gives this topic of unusual kindness added resonance.

In Romans 12, St Paul said "Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection and take delight

in honouring each other". Perhaps this Lent, instead of giving something up, we should commit ourselves to practising this. What a difference it would make!

**Pam**

## **Flower Rota**

### March

1: Jean Sumner  
8: In memory of Maureen Sawkins  
15: Pat Clarke  
22: Melanie Cogan  
29: In memory of Heather Cragg

### April:

5: David Nye  
12: Easter. Flower Fund  
19: Melanie Cogan  
26: Pat Clarke

### May

3: In memory of Joan Sole  
10: Kathleen Sewter  
17: Joyce Perry  
24: Melanie Cogan  
31: Currently available

## **Lent readings 2020—Lent began on 26 February.**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
			Ash Weds 26/2 <b>Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21</b>	27/2 <b>Acts 7: 30-34</b>	28/2 <b>Acts 7: 35-42</b>	29/2 <b>John 12: 27-36</b>
1/3 <b>Luke 4: 1-13</b>	2/3 <b>1 John 2: 1-6</b>	3/3 <b>2 Peter 2: 4-21</b>	4/3 <b>Luke 21:34-22:6</b>	5/3 <b>Philippians 3:2-12</b>	6/3 <b>Philippians 3:17-20</b>	7/3 <b>Matthew 23:37-39</b>
8/3 <b>Luke 9: 28-36</b>	9/3 <b>Romans 4:1-12</b>	10/3 <b>1 Corinthians 10:1-13</b>	11/3 <b>Luke 13:22-31</b>	12/3 <b>Revelation 2:8-11</b>	13/3 <b>Revelation 3:1-6</b>	14/3 <b>Luke 6:43-45</b>
15/3 <b>Luke 13:1-9</b>	16/3 <b>Romans 2:1-11</b>	17/3 <b>Romans 2:1-16</b>	18/3 <b>Luke 13:18-21</b>	19/3 <b>2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5</b>	20/3 <b>2 Corinthians 5:6-15</b>	21/3 <b>Luke 15:1-10</b>
22/3 <b>Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32</b>	23/3 <b>Revelation 19:1-8</b>	24/3 <b>Revelation 19:9-10</b>	25/3 <b>Luke 9:10-17</b>	26/3 <b>Philippians 2:19-24</b>	27/3 <b>Philippians 2:25-3:1</b>	28/3 <b>John 11:45-57</b>
29/3 <b>John 12:1-8</b>	30/3 <b>Hebrews 10:19-25</b>	31/3 <b>1 John 2:18-28</b>	1/4 <b>Luke 18: 31-34</b>	2/4 <b>Hebrews 2: 1-9</b>	3/4 <b>Hebrews 2: 10-18</b>	4/4 <b>Luke 22:1-13</b>
Palm Sunday 5/4 <b>Luke 19:28-40</b>	Holy Week 6/4 <b>John 12: 1-11</b>	Holy Week 7/4 <b>John 12: 20-36</b>	Holy Week 8/4 <b>John 13: 21-32</b>	Maundy Thurs 9/4 <b>John 13: 1-17, 31b-35</b>	Good Friday 10/4 <b>John 18: 1-19: 42</b>	Holy Saturday 11/4 <b>Matthew 27: 57-66</b>

Daily readings from the Revised Common Lectionary.

## **Signs and Miracles**

Our services during March are on the theme of miracles: the Old Testament story of Elijah and the Widow's son; and two miracles of Jesus: the Syrophenician woman from Matthew 15; and Blind Bartimaeus from Mark 10.

But our first service on the theme looks at Mark 6: 1-6. Jesus was in Nazareth, his home town; when he began preaching in the synagogue, people were asking where he got such power to perform miracles. But then they scoffed at him and refused to believe in him. "And because of their unbelief he couldn't do any miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their unbelief".

Jesus performed miracles(John calls them signs) to demonstrate the activity of the living God. Later, filled with the Holy Spirit, the apostles and other Christian leaders performed them. The miracles offered tangible evidence of the power and truth of the Christian message.

The greatest miracles of all were the coming of Jesus Christ into the world as the Word of God in human flesh, and his glorious resurrection from the dead. These miracles show us how much our God loves us and give us a living hope. The person who puts their faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord receives eternal life.

Miracles remind us of the truth, declared in the Gospels, that "nothing is impossible with God".

## **Church Diary March 2020**

Sunday 1st:

10.30 am: Jesus in the desert, led by Jannett.

6.30 pm: The Lord's Supper, led by Lynn and Chris.

Tuesday 3rd:

9.30-11 am: Café Church

7-8pm: Prayer and Praise

Friday 6<sup>th</sup>:

7.30 pm: World Day of Prayer service in the Church

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>:

10.30 am: Jesus in his home town, led by Chris M.

6.30 pm: Bible discussion, led by the Minister.

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>:

7-8pm: Prayer and Praise.

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>:

10.30-Midday: Friendship Club: The Vestry.

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>:

7.30 pm: Deacons' Meeting. The Vestry.

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>:

10.30 am: Elijah and the widow. Including the Lord's Supper.

Led by the Minister.

Followed by Church Meeting.

6.30 pm: Evening Worship, led by Marilyn.

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup>:

7-8pm: Prayer and Praise.



Sunday 22nd:

10.30 am: Jesus and the Gentile woman, led by Chris P.

6.30 pm: Evening worship, led by the Minister.

Tuesday 24th:

7-8pm: Prayer and Praise.

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>:

10.30 am: Blind Bartimaeus, led by Marilyn.

6.30 pm: Taizé service, led by Callum.

Faith is not about  
everything turning  
out okay.

Faith is about being  
okay no matter how  
things turn out.

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