

Penge Congregational Church



March 2023



From the Minister

During January and February, our worship themes have come back repeatedly to the upside down values of the Kingdom of God. The things we value in our world - such as wealth, celebrity, status, power - are the very things that are valued least in the Kingdom of God. The **Beatitudes**, with which Jesus began his **Sermon on the Mount**, show us those regarded as most important in the Kingdom. He says God blesses those who realise their need for him, those who mourn, those who are gentle and humble, those who long for justice, those who are merciful, those whose hearts are pure, those who work for peace, and those who are persecuted for their faith.



None of these characteristics are ones that were much valued before Christ came into the world. Humility, in particular, was seen as a sign of weakness. The religious leaders and indeed many of the ordinary people in Israel found it hard to accept that Jesus was the promised Messiah precisely because he was humble and because he came to serve. Their expectation of the Messiah was based on their perception of what it meant to be kingly.

We might cast our minds back a thousand years or so before Jesus when the people demanded to have a king just like all the nations around them. The first king was Saul whom God chose precisely because he was a stereotypical kingly figure - he was from a prominent family, he was handsome, he had great physical presence and he was trained in all the finer points of war. And he was a disastrous king. So then God chose “a man after his own heart”: David, who was the youngest son of 7 and whose chief occupation was looking after his father’s sheep. David listened to God and always tried to be obedient to him.

Humility was a weakness in the ancient world which prized men of honour who boasted about their achievements. But Jesus, in very nature God, came as a servant and humbled himself to die for others. Today humility is a virtue, not a sign of weakness. Every time we show humility, we are subtly witnessing to Jesus, we are revealing the humble nature of God himself. So, next time someone makes you feel humiliated by their reaction when you reveal your faith, remember what Paul tells us in his letter to the Philippians:

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

rather, he made himself nothing

by taking the very nature of a servant,

*being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death —
even death on a cross!
(Philippians 2: 5-8)*

***SOUTH LONDON SINGERS present
MUSIC FOR LENT AND EASTER***

The concert will be on **Saturday 25th March 2023** at
7.45pm at **Beckenham Methodist Church**,
Bromley Road BR3 5JE.

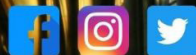
The main work will be **Messe Solennelle by Vierne**
and there will be other music by **Mozart, Bruckner,
Ireland, Rutter and Stainer.**

Nicholas Wibberley will conduct with **Jack Stone** as
organist.

Tickets will be available online in advance at www.southlondonsingers.org.uk or on the door (by card or cash). Prices are standard entry £15, children under 12 years free, 12-18 & students half price, Friends of the SLS free or £10.

More information about the concert and about singing in the choir is on the choir website. ***The next concert will be on Saturday 15th July.***

The poster is on the following page ...



follow us on social media or find us online:
www.southlondonsingers.org.uk

The South London Singers present

Music for Lent & Easter

featuring

Messe Solennelle by L. Vierne
plus music by Mozart, Bruckner and Rutter

Join us for a concert of choral favourites and seasonal music
for Lent and Eastertide.

Saturday 25 March 2023 at 7:45pm

Beckenham Methodist Church

Bromley Road, BR3 5JE

Nicholas Wibberley *conductor*

Jack Stone *organist*

Standard entry

£15

Gold & Silver SLS Friends

FREE

Bronze SLS Friends

£10

Tickets available on the door or in advance via our website.

Julie Taylor wrote in the **February** issue about the **World Day of Prayer** - the following is just to remind you!

I am very pleased to say that Pastor Andrew Jones and the deacons at Avenue Baptist Church have kindly agreed to host the **World Day of Prayer** service this year.

World Day of Prayer service

will be held on

Friday 3rd March 2023 at 7.30pm

at Avenue Baptist Church,

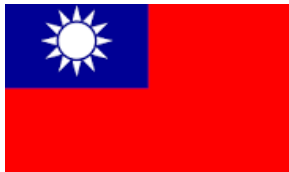
Avenue Road, Beckenham BR3 4RX.

The service has been prepared by the Christian women of **Taiwan** and the theme is

"I have heard about your faith".

Please come along and join in this service of praise and prayer. All are welcome.

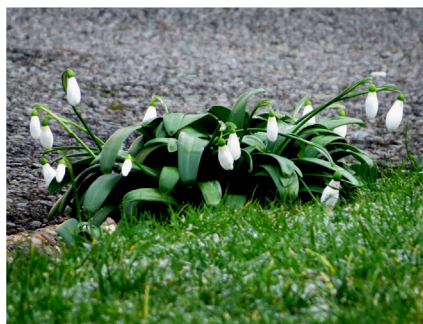
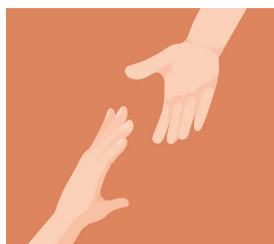
Julie Taylor



Lenten Devotions

Last Autumn, our Breaking Ground daily prayer words encouraged us to develop our relationship with God as individuals and as members of the Body of Christ. Lent is a time when we practise some type of extra daily devotion to focus our minds and hearts in preparation for Easter. In previous years we have given out a daily Scripture reading for Lent. This year, we thought we would instead give 40 ideas for prayer.

Lent began on Wednesday 22nd February. There are 40 ideas listed opposite: you can either use them as daily focus for prayer during Lent; or you can pick out some for a longer period of devotion. Each of us will probably be drawn more to some than others. Feel free to use them in whatever way you find most helpful.



Temptation

Feeding on the Word

Being tested

Worshipping false ideas

Focusing on God

Keeping your eye on the prize

Being true to oneself

Reaching out

Opening your heart

Using your strengths

Using your weaknesses

Compassion for the displaced

Putting others first

Small acts of kindness

Listening to God

Praying for those facing discrimination

Humility

Renewal

Spiritual nourishment

Serenity

“I am with you always”

Thirsting for Christ

Leaning on God

Courage

Pursuing peace

Your gift from God

Charity

Patience

Generosity

Self-control

Wisdom

Teaching others

Encouragement

Conquering evil

Grace

Loving one another

Rejoicing

Praising

Victory

Transformation

Contacting the Minister

When I first became Minister, I made an incautious decision to allow my landline number to be used on the back of the Newsletter and on other church communications. This has unfortunately resulted in a situation where I have had for some time to leave my telephone on permanent voice mail to avoid all manner of marketing and other unwanted calls.

I have now decided to have my landline disconnected. From the middle of March it will no longer be in service. Most of our church family will already have my mobile number. If you haven't got it, please ask me in person or via email to tell you what it is. The church email address is on the back of the Newsletter. If you already have my personal email, please feel free to use it, but the church one is accessible to the Deacons as well so you are more likely to receive a quick reply on that.

Pam



2023 Churches Together in Beckenham (CTiB) Lent Courses

***A Programme of FIVE evening sessions (which start
on the 28th February)***

Format of the Evening

7.30pm Arrivals, Coffee and Fellowship

7.50pm Welcome and Opening Worship

8pm - 9pm Lent Course Workshop

9pm - 9.15pm Closing Worship

Course 1: Come and Sing led by David Storey

Course 2 Lent Art led by Chris McShane

***Course 3 Keeping the Earth led by Paul Kunert and
John Blakely***

Course 4 Unity in Diversity led by Andrew Jones

The programme (above) takes place on Tuesday evenings which means that our usual Tuesday evening

***‘Praise and Prayer’ group sessions will move to
Thursday until after Easter.***

If you haven't signed up but would like to attend the sessions in March, please do speak to Pam or Lynn, or just turn up at St John's in Eden Park Avenue for 7.30pm.

March readings

On 5th March, we will round off our February theme of mission by looking at David's song of praise when he brought the Ark of the Covenant up to Jerusalem. Then we will approach Easter by looking at Scripture passages about Hope.

5th March: 1 Chronicles 16: 7-24. David's song of praise.

12th March: 2 Kings 6: 8-23. More on our side than theirs.

19th March: Daniel 3: 8-27. The fourth figure in the flames.

26th March: Isaiah 35: 1-10. Hope for restoration.

And into April...

2nd April: Palm Sunday **St Matthew 21: 1-11.**

The triumphal entry into Jerusalem.



Easter Services

Maundy Thursday, 6th April

7.30pm: Praise and Worship, and a celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Good Friday, 7th April

11am: Short service at St Edmund's, Village Way, Beckenham, followed by the Walk of Witness along Beckenham High Street.

Then gather on Beckenham Green (inside St George's if wet) for a short act of worship and witness starting at approx 11.45.

6.30pm: Good Friday Taizé service at PCC.

Easter Day Sunday, 9th April

10.30am: Easter Day service, including a celebration of the Lord's Supper.



“In my beginning is my end”

(T.S.Eliot)

***“But hope could rise from ashes even now
Beginning with this sign upon your brow”***

writes Malcolm Guite in his Ash Wednesday poem (from The Word in the Wilderness).

In some Christian traditions the start of Lent sends worshippers out with a forehead bearing a cross of ash, burned from the previous year’s palm crosses. (I remember in 2020 my son Matthew was horrified to think that, with St. George’s closed for Palm Sunday during the pandemic, there would be no ashes for 2021!)

This year as I heard the familiar “you are dust and to dust you shall return” I thought about the Syrian baby born with the dust of earthquake ashes on her head, her lifeline still connected to the mother who gave her life but lived no longer.

Rescuers marvelled at her drawing breath, the world rejoiced at her survival but for her there was no comfort from the voice she had heard *in utero* now stilled, or from the arms that reached out to her but were not those of her parents.

As newsprint showed, this little rescued newborn orphan slept with eyes tightly shut and a furrowed brow as nurses named her Aya (Arabic for “a sign from God”). A humbling sight. But now photographs reveal a tranquil infant in a pink bonnet, safe in the arms of her uncle who is adopting her into his own big family, knowing that her precious presence will keep alive the memory of her parents and siblings, lost in the quake. She is now named Afraa, after her mother.

The fact that from the devastating rubble came this new life is a story that speaks of stamina, of survival, of loss, of suffering but above all of patient hope. A gift from God indeed and proof that hope can arrive from ashes, in many different ways.

Jenny Froude (CTiB Rep.)

What is missing?

Anne let the council know that the church bench needed to be repaired ...

So watch this space.



Hymns and songs of Praise

In the many different church magazines I have read over the years, there is sometimes a space where readers are invited to choose their favourite hymn and to share the reasons, and their thoughts and feelings of why it is their favourite. This often provides interesting and very enjoyable reading. There are so many reasons why we love a hymn: we love the tune; we know a back story about how it came to be written; perhaps there is a memory, sometimes going back to childhood; the words speak to us in a special, direct, way.

Many years ago, I was in the congregation at Westminster Abbey for a service of Choral Evensong. An important part of the Office of Evensong is the Magnificat, the glorious outpouring of Mary's joy when she is told by the Angel Gabriel that she is to be the mother of the Saviour - "My soul doth magnify the Lord...." They are beautiful words to say, and to sing, and to listen to. There are many beautiful musical settings. It is easy to be carried away by the beauty of the words and music, and that evening, listening to an excellent choir singing beautiful music in the superb Abbey building, I was indeed carried away. And then as a final hymn, congregation and choir sang one I had never heard before - **Magnificat Now**, with words by **Fred Kaan**.

It begins thus:

"Sing we a song of high revolt,



Make great the Lord, his name exalt.....”

That really startled me! The words go on through each verse, putting starkly in modern words the well-worn beauty of the Authorized Version. The final verse reads:

***“ He calls us to revolt and fight
with him for what is just and right,
to sing and live Magnificat
in crowded street and council flat.”***

Suddenly I realised what a strong story Mary sings: God has favoured her, poor and meek, but sent empty away the rich and powerful.

It was some time after this that Margaret, our present editor, preached a sermon in St.George’s telling us that in India (when the country was fighting for independence) the Magnificat was virtually banned in the churches. It was thought to be too revolutionary.

After the Westminster Evensong, it took me some time to find out more about **Fred Kaan**. (It was long before Wikipedia!) He was born in **the Netherlands in 1929**. In his teenage years he became a committed Christian, **a Congregationalist**, and was ordained in England in 1955.

A man of great faith, he served as pastor and in the worlds of **ecumenism, human rights, inter church relationships and communications**.

And he was a prolific hymn-writer! Of the many that he wrote I know only a few: some of my favourites are **Magnificat Now;**

For the Healing of the Nations;

Into the World;

The Sacrament of Care;

Communion Calypso.

But it is impossible to choose one favourite; and I know only a few of his many hymns, and only the words.

One day perhaps I'll hear them sung!

Dorothea Jessop (CTiB Rep.)

Dorothea has given us a challenge!

What is your favourite hymn? How about telling us why you like it. Do you remember when you first heard it?

I have only sung one of the hymns that Dorothea lists.

How about you?



We are still praying for Ukraine



Ukrainian children with their teacher.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/kidsandartforukraine>

If you would like to support this initiative, the link is above. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development EBRD will triple your donation!





Beckenham
Chorale

SPRING CONCERT

DURUFLÉ - REQUIEM

and works by LILI BOULANGER,
PARRY & SAINT-SAËNS

CONDUCTOR
MARK GRIFFITHS

ORGAN
AERON PRESTON



SATURDAY 18 MARCH 2023, 6PM

St. George's Church, High Street, Beckenham BR3 1AX

Tickets: £15 & £10 (inc. free drink) Online from Tuesday 21st February

www.ticketsource.co.uk/beckenhamchorale

www.beckenhamchorale.org.uk

Registered Charity: 262048

BECKENHAM CHORALE SPRING CONCERT.

The Beckenham Chorale Spring concert will be on Saturday 18th March 2023 at 6pm at St George's Church, High Street BR3 1AX.

It will include **Durufié's Requiem, Hymn to the Sun** by **Lili Boulanger** and **Hear my words ye people** by **Parry**.

The conductor will be **Mark Griffiths** with organist **Aeron Preston**.

Tickets, priced £15 & £10 to include a programme and a free drink after the concert, will be available at the door (card or cash) or in advance online at

www.beckenhamchorale.org.uk.

More information about the concert can be found on the choir website.

The Beckenham Chorale offers a warm welcome to **new singers**. Rehearsals for the next concert on June 17th will start on **Tuesday 21st March at 7.45 pm at St George's Church**.

Exciting Opportunities in Music

Exciting music opportunities are opening up in PCC. A number of people (Alan, Vicky, Jess) have got together to work on **promoting music in Penge**.

At the Organ recital on Saturday 18th February we had 8 organists from South East London and Southwark Organ Society performing and had an enjoyable event together. I'm sure they missed Marilyn who is now in Scotland. They are keeping the organ fire going!

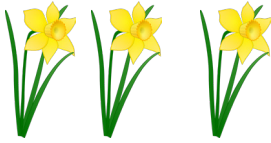
First of the "Open Mic" Music Mondays took place on 20th February. We had an "eclectic mix" as Jess put it.

This included Guitar and violin (I think country and western style), Guitar solo, Classical guitarist who was the youngest performer,

We had a violinist from America (doing an Irish gig I think), Flute piece written by early 20th century composer on a pentatonic scale. My favourite was the French horn and piano playing a short piece from the Carnival of the Animals called the Swan. Jess was accompanied on the piano for a French song, followed by another singer with a song by Adele. A Quintet with no name (yet) played a medley of California Dreaming and One for sorrow, two for joy.

These informal music evenings will be every third Monday of the month so put them in your diary. If you can't come out in the evening, we also have a lunchtime concert each month for everyone to enjoy. The next

one will be on Saturday 25th March at 1pm - a flute concert led by Vicky Rockport.



Friends' News



I was walking across Royston Field on a misty morning and had a chat with a friend from our road about the daffodils. My friend had been feeling very low that morning until she came across these splashes of yellow. We thought together about how they come up when the air is still cold, the clouds are grey and the ground is hard. **God gives us signs of hope in the flowers.**

It is so good to be able to pray for each other. Don't forget to ask for prayer from friends when you need it!

We pray for **Anne** whose husband passed away in February. Also heard from **Melonie** that her father-in-law passed away and we pray for all that family.

Rosemarie Baker has moved successfully to her new flat in Orpington. She is starting to settle in.

We have two new church members - **Khadija** and **James** were formally welcomed with the right hand of fellowship as church members in February.
(Galatians 2:9)

Lynn McShane



Website:

www.pccweb.co.uk



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

Pam Owen on:

pccprayer@outlook.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
Callum McShane on:

callum.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