

Penge Congregational Church



May 2019 Newsletter

Sunday 12th May is our 111th anniversary, and also our Spring Gift Day.

We know people already give generously to the church, but a special gift on this day would be put to good use.

Our building is hugely expensive to run and maintain, and we do our best to keep it in good shape. Over the last year we have had to replace the cooker again, and we have renewed some of the sanitaryware. Following the extensive work to the drains at the Kenilworth end of the building, we have replumbed and redesigned the Disabled toilet. In the summer, we will redecorate in there to finish off this work.

We do not however want to spend all our money on the building. The church is not the building but the people who worship in it, and our work is with the community around us. Over the winter, we have donated the use of a hall and the kitchen to the Night Shelter team on a Friday as one of the 6 local churches providing meals to local homeless people. We hope to be able to do the same next winter. We also hope to continue subsidising various community groups who use our building to do valuable work with vulnerable local people.

As a worshipping church, we need to spend money on worship resources and on making as many people as possible aware of what we do.

If you would like to give us a Gift Day donation, please contact our Treasurer, Lynn. Contact details are on the back of this Newsletter.

From the Minister

We are still in the season of Easter throughout May. On the front cover is a photo of one of the flower boxes Lynn gave us during our Easter Day service; chocolate eggs had been hidden round the church and the children and young people (and some older people too) enjoyed finding them. Lynn also gave us a little picture of an angel to colour in and place in our box. She encouraged us to think about the angel at the tomb telling the women, "He is not here but has risen"; and asked what we would like the angel to say to us.

It's a good question for every Christian to ponder. Jesus died on the cross to purify us all from sin and his resurrection promises us new life, transformed life, in the Kingdom of God. One day, when we have run the race and reached the goal, we may rest surrounded by God's eternal love and care, but right now we live in the Kingdom on earth and Jesus has reminded us that we must take up our cross and follow him. Jesus has paid the price of our sins but he asks us to be disciples and to carry his light out into the world around us.

Sometimes being a disciple has a cost. Paul compares the Christian life to running a race and that is hard work. At the time of writing the London Marathon is coming up; I remember when my daughter ran it a few years ago. The race was gruelling and, half way round, she began to have trouble with her feet. Runners always talk about getting a second wind but, carrying an injury, that didn't happen, and by the time she was in the final stages of the Marathon she wasn't so much running as hobbling. But she finished. Her time was slow but she gritted her teeth and crossed the line.

The race metaphor is useful. As Christians we begin the race full of faith and the joy it brings, filled with the Holy Spirit, our hearts on fire just as were those of Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus. But life's journey, even with Jesus as our goal, eventually requires that second wind. To endure, tired

weary people need God's help. We remember the words of Isaiah 40: "God gives power to those who are tired and worn out; he offers strength to the weak... Those who wait upon the Lord will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint". These comforting words remind us that God isn't distant and uncaring: he notices when we are flagging. And more than that, the comfort and reassurance of these words remind us that God's power is limitless just as is his love for us.

What Isaiah 40 describes is a second wind. Whatever our burdens, whether physical, financial, emotional or spiritual, we can regain strength from the Scripture and from prayer. Such renewal is there for all who wait upon the Lord.

Pam

Every Tuesday evening from 7-8pm, we gather in the church for a time of praise and prayer, to help us to renew our spiritual strength. Just the thing to charge your spiritual batteries! Please join us!

Pam's day off is Monday. Please don't contact her on her day off unless you have a pastoral concern that is really urgent. As ever, issues concerning the building- bookings or maintenance- should be notified to Bernie on pcclettings@outlook.com or pccmaintain@outlook.com. If it is an urgent matter, please phone Bernie on 07900 518537

Worship Theme for May and June: Philippians

Starting on 19th May, our morning worship services until the end of June will be based on St Paul's Letter to the Philippians.

The Services will be as follows:

19th May: Philippians 2: 1-11- Life in Christ.

26th May: Philippians 1: 27-30- Worthy of the Gospel.

2nd June: Philippians 1: 11-26- Be bold for Christ.

9th June (Day of Pentecost): Phil 2: 12-18- Shine brightly for Christ.

16th June: Philippians 3: 1-11- Rejoice in the Lord.

23rd June: Philippians 3: 12-21- Press on to the goal.

30th June: Philippians 4: 1-9- Putting it into practice.

What I would really love is for the church fellowship to read the Letter to the Philippians during this time, either reading each passage before the worship service based on it, or the whole letter (which is 3.5 pages long in the pew Bible) in advance.

St Paul wrote this letter to the church at Philippi at a time when they were being persecuted for their faith. He wrote it when he was in prison, also being persecuted for his faith, but he wrote with joy, demonstrating that a Christian can be passionate for Christ regardless of their circumstances.

The theme of the letter is one that is very much relevant for us as Christians living in a secular society which regards us at best as irrelevant and at worst with hostility. The Letter doesn't address thorny theological questions: it is a warm letter of encouragement sent to a church suffering for its faith. It poses questions which we do well to ponder ourselves:-

How do you live as a Christian in a non-Christian world?

How do you respond when those around you are indifferent or even hostile to your faith?

As the Letter closes, Paul encourages the Philippians to fill their lives with joy, prayer and thanksgiving; and to focus their minds

on God's good gifts. He tells them that he has learned to be content regardless of his circumstances and encourages them to live in the same way. As is usual in his letters, he closes with greetings to all who belong to Jesus Christ, whose spirit lives within each one of us and connects us directly to God; and with a final invocation of the grace of Christ which saves and sustains them: "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

I pray that you may engage with these seven services, not just as an hour spent in church each Sunday morning, but with the message of encouragement and of joy in the Lord that is so vital and so relevant to our lives as Christians today.

Pam



Nadine Dunn

After many years of dedicated service to our Scout Group, Nadine has retired. The Scouts gave her a special send off with many cards and gifts.



Nadine's letter of thanks to the Scout Group ends:

"I have seen many Scouts grow up to become wonderful young people; some of them now have children of their own. I am so proud of them. I wish you all the best for the future."

PCC sends Nadine our very best wishes. She will be sadly missed not just by the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts but by those of us who have been used to her cheery presence in the church building on a Thursday evening.

Flower Rota for the next three months

June

2: Flower Fund

9: Diane Pask

16: Jean and Rosemarie

23: Marilyn Nicholson

30: Pat Clarke

July

7: In memory of Mollie Johnson

14: Jean Sumner

21: Friendship Club

28: Flower Fund

August

4: Melanie Cogan

11: Margaret Collins

18: In memory of Maureen Sawkins

25: Joyce Perry in memory of Rex



Church Diary May 2019

Sunday 5th:

10.30 am: The Road to Emmaus, led by Jannett.

6.30pm: Lord's Supper, led by Chris M.

Tuesday 7th:

9.30-11 am: Café Church

Wednesday 8th:

10.30-noon: Friendship Club. The Vestry.

12th-18th: CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Sunday 12th: CHURCH ANNIVERSARY AND SPRING GIFT DAY

10.30am: Parade service with a Christian Aid theme

6.30pm: Bible discussion, led by Siobhan and Sherelle.

Thursday 16th:

7.30pm: Deacons' Meeting. The Vestry.

Sunday 19th:

10.30am: Philippians- Life in Christ, including the Lord's Supper, led by the Minister.

12.30pm: Christian Aid lunch.

2pm: Church Annual Meeting

6.30pm: Evening Service, led by Lynn

Tuesday 21st:

7.30pm: Worship Team meeting. The Vestry.

Saturday 25th:

3pm: Wedding in the Church: Gemma Keville and Gary Kitchiner.

Sunday 26th:

10.30am: Philippians-Worthy of the Gospel, led by Marilyn.

6.30pm: Taizé service, led by Callum.

Penge Congregational Church

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Church gathered May 1908

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