

# Penge Congregational Church



**November 2021**



The two top items on the front cover were made by youngsters attending the Remembrance Service many years ago!

## Letter from the Minister...

**O**n 14th of this month, we shall, God willing, be able once again to have a Remembrance Sunday service. I would, however, resist the temptation to say “Phew, we can go back to normal.” We are at present in the latter stages of a collective experience that is undoubtedly the biggest shock since the days of the Second World War. That war affected the people who lived through it in enduring ways. Had it been possible to put it behind them, valuable life lessons would have been lost. To take perhaps the most extreme example, were we to forget the Holocaust and its horrors, would we not be in danger of history repeating itself?



**T**he pandemic has brought with it similar life lessons. For some, it has brought resentment and even violent reactions to what is perceived as an intolerable loss of civil liberty. For others, and I hope very much the majority of people, it has taught the importance of looking after one another and of kindness. This is why, in planning our October and November services, we decided to stay with the theme of King David as “a man after God’s own heart” and choose the account of David’s kindness to the grandson of Saul, a man who persecuted him for many years.

David's son, Solomon, in the Book of Ecclesiastes wrote these words:

*“There is a time for everything, a season for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest. A time to kill and a time to heal. A time to tear down and a time to build ... A time to tear and a time to mend. A time to be quiet and a time to speak up. A time to love and a time to hate. A time for war and a time for peace.”*

This not-quite-post pandemic time is seeing a lot of discussion about the way we treat people of different ethnicities, people with mental illnesses, people who question their sexuality and gender identity, women in our society. For many years, certainly for a lot of my lifetime, those discussions tended not to take place openly because they weren't considered “nice” topics. And that resulted in a great deal of unhappiness for people affected and also a great deal of injustice.

Silence can be a virtue in some situations. But silence in the face of bigotry and injustice can only cause harm and damage. Most of us, I'm sure, are aware of the words of Pastor Martin Niemoller, jailed in WW2 for speaking out, in a poem published after the war. “First they came for the Communists but I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist.” Then they came for the Jews, the Catholics and others, “but I didn't speak up.” Finally, “they came for me - and there was no one left to speak up for me”.

It takes courage- and love - to speak up against injustice and intolerance. We wouldn't have got through three lockdowns and months of restrictions on our lives without the knowledge that we must all act together for the good of all; we wouldn't have survived without the kindness of others. Seeking God's help, surely we recognise that now is the time to speak up against injustice?

*Pam*



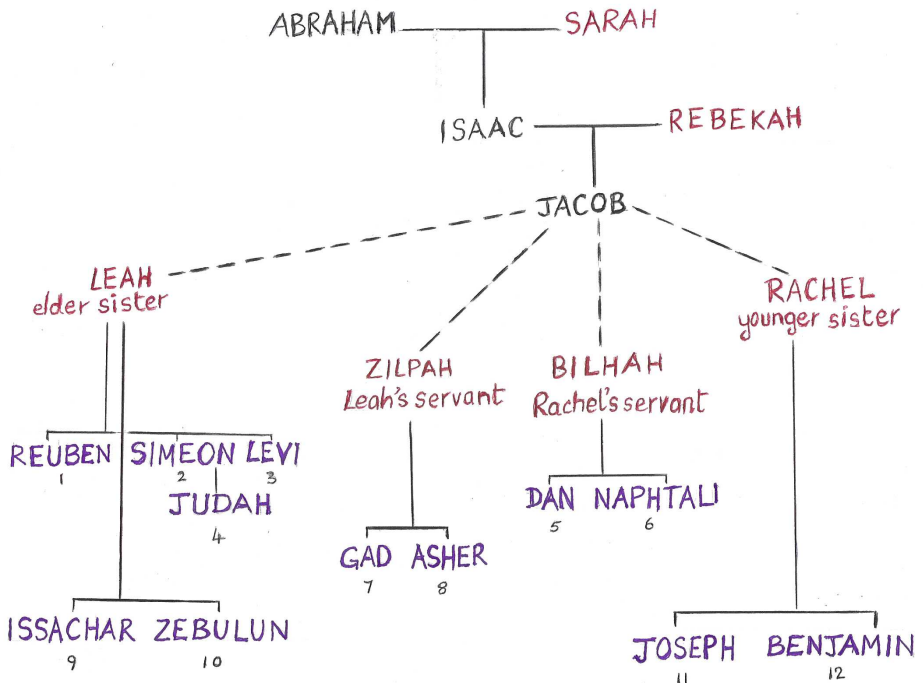
## The 12 tribes of Israel

**L**ast month, I wrote about the Exile. Lynn, Chris and I were discussing this and we realised that, when we talk about the return from exile, we tend to forget that those who came back were Judeans. So what about those who were taken into exile in 722BC from the Northern kingdom of Israel?

We remember that the people who settled in the Promised Land after the Exodus were divided into twelve tribes, named after the twelve sons of Jacob. Tribes were allocated areas in which to settle under Joshua: but Levi, being the tribe of priests keeping the Ark of the Covenant and performing offerings etc, was

given no land. So, to keep the number of tribal “regions” up to 12, land was given to the descendants of **Joseph** not in one allocation but in the names of his two sons, **Ephraim** and **Manasseh**, who had been blessed back in Egypt with the birthright by Jacob (perhaps we’ll look at the concept of birthright another time!).

So the tribes that settled in the Promised Land were Reuben, Simeon, **Ephraim**, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, **Manasseh**, and Benjamin. For a few generations, these tribal areas were each ruled by the Judges. They only came together to be ruled as a nation under the kings: Saul, David and Solomon.



On the death of Solomon, the kingdoms split. One of Solomon's sons, Rehoboam, became king of the southern kingdom which comprised the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Jeroboam, the first northern king, ruled the other ten tribes but wasn't of the house of David. God promised him (1 Kings 11:34-38) that if he was faithful and obedient to Him, his dynasty would endure in the same way as the House of David. But he wasn't. He prevented his people going to worship in Jerusalem, instead setting up two places of worship in Dan and Bethel, where the people worshipped Baal in the form of golden bulls. Unlike in the south where pagan worship was widespread but not official, Baal worship became the state religion.

Israel was finally conquered, by the Assyrians, in 722BC. Judah endured until 586BC: 2 Chronicles tells us many of the Northern people fled to Jerusalem; it is estimated the population of Judah increased fivefold at this time. But the rest were taken north and settled by the Assyrians in the region of the Medes, and there is no record of any sort of organised return. Hosea, prophesying to Israel before they were conquered, has the Lord saying this: "The people of Ephraim sinned by worshipping Baal...therefore they will disappear like the morning mist, like dew in the morning sun, like chaff blown by the wind, like smoke from a chimney." The tribes of Israel are still referred to by Jews today as the Ten Lost Tribes.

The southern nation of Judah, after the death of Solomon, continued with Temple worship although worship of Baal was widespread and the kings often “did evil in the sight of the Lord.” I wrote last month about the gradual conquest which was begun by the Assyrians and completed by the Babylonians in 586BC. So the people who were eventually allowed to return from exile were primarily of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, although there were some descendents of other tribes who had fled to Jerusalem on the demise of the northern kingdom.

In the book of **Revelation**, John talks of the 144,000 divided into 12 tribes, which don't match up exactly with the original ones\*. Ephraim and Dan are missing, possibly because their pagan practices were more extreme than most, but **Joseph** is listed, as is **Levi**. I think we are to conclude that God knows who his faithful people are!

{\*see *Revelation 7:4-8*}

*Pam*





## November readings

**F**rom **10th October** right through to **Advent Sunday on 28th November**, we will be focusing on David. Not so much the usual readings - Goliath, Jonathan, Uriah, Absalom etc. - but rather the aspects of his story that prompted ***Paul to say God called David a man after God's own heart***, finishing on Advent Sunday with Isaiah 9: "For a child is born to us... He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity."

During **November** our readings will be:

**7th November:** 2 Samuel 7: 1-17. The Lord's covenant promise to David.

**14th November:** REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY. 2 Samuel 9: 1-13. David's kindness to Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul, David's predecessor and adversary.

**21st November:** Jeremiah 33: 10-17. A righteous descendant for the throne of David.

**28th November:** ADVENT SUNDAY. Isaiah 9: 2b-7. "He will rule forever... from the throne of his ancestor David."



For those of you wishing to travel to Spain, this may be useful:

## **El Genero de una Compuadora**

Subject: What gender?

A Spanish teacher was explaining to her class that in Spanish, unlike English, nouns are designated as either masculine or feminine. House, for instance, is feminine: *la casa*, but pencil is masculine: *el lapiz*.

A student asked, “What gender is ‘computer’?”

Instead of giving the answer, the teacher split the class into two groups, male and female, and asked them to decide for themselves. Each group was asked to give four reasons for its recommendation.

The men’s group decided that ‘computer’ should definitely be of the feminine gender (*la computadora*) because:

1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic;
2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else.
3. Even the smallest mistakes are stored in long term memory for possible later retrieval.
4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your wages on accessories for it.

**THIS GETS BETTER!**

The women's group, however, concluded that computers should be masculine (el computador) because:

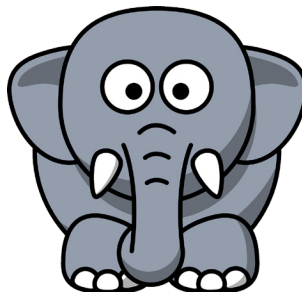
1. In order to do anything with them, you have to turn them on;
2. They have a lot of data but still can't think or themselves;
3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time they **are** the problem;
4. As soon as you commit to one, you realise that if you had waited a little longer, you could have got a better model.



The women won!!

*Martin Walter*

*(from a Bromley newsletter)*



# The Penge Chamber Choir

**T**he Penge Chamber Choir gave their first concert of 2021 on **16th October**.

The superb singing of the **Chamber Choir** was interspersed with instrumentalists; the excellent **11 year old flautist Oscar Holland**, and talented **cellist, Zain Lam**. Both were accompanied by **Mark Smith**.

As soon as lockdown was over the choir started rehearsing again in the church on Wednesday evenings. They are lead by **Jess Blake** who seems to have tireless energy in making these things happen.

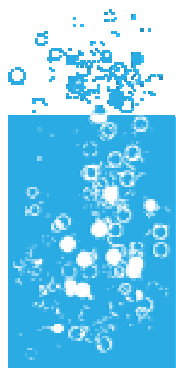
The concert ended with an organ piece by **Nick Bland**. He said that maybe people would feel that it wouldn't go very well at the end of a Communion Service, for which it was written. However, I thought that it would be brilliant - a real celebration ***of the life and freedom Jesus*** gives us. And our organ sounded beautiful.

This is a really excellent choir. I particularly liked **The Blue Bird** which makes me think of sitting by a mountain lake in the setting sun. Jess let us all join in at the end in singing **Jerusalem** and we raised the roof.

If you missed this concert, you might want to know that they will be joining us at our **candlelight Christmas Service in mid-December**.

*Lynn McShane*





# Living Well Bromley

As ever, our Harvest gifts will go to Living Well, However, the need is year round and so great that they can't keep up with it. Items urgently needed at this time for the Food Bank are:

UHT milk

Shower gel and shampoo

Tinned Pulses

Tinned Vegetables

Tinned Fish

Tinned Fruit

Tinned Rice pudding and custard

Tinned Tomatoes

**Donations to Living Well at Holy Trinity Church,**  
Lennard Road on Tuesdays between 11am and 1pm  
and Thursdays 12.30 - 2pm, Saturdays 10:30-12:00.

You can also put donations in the box behind the checkouts at Sainsbury's, Penge. (There's more than one box so check it's the right one.)



# Remembrance Sunday, 14th November at 10.30am.



We invite our uniformed organisations to parade with us on this day. And of course, all are welcome.

We shall lay a wreath in remembrance of all who have lost their lives in war, and we shall also observe a two minute silence. A collection will be taken for Combat Stress, the charity which looks after the mental health of veterans.

Our focus this year will also be on those for whom our soldiers, sailors, aircrew and civilians laid down their lives, that they might live. In this time of great difficulty for so many, we shall once again ask for donations of food and basic toiletries for the Food Bank at Living Well. A list of the most urgently needed items is shown on the opposite page...

# Hymn Writers

I sometimes have difficulty getting back to sleep if I have woken at night and the hymns that I learnt at school come flooding back word perfect - and I can sing myself to sleep! With that in mind, I thought I might write something each month about hymns or songs of praise.

If you have a special hymn, spiritual song or writer - how about writing something? Or maybe write about a Carol you love, for next month?



## Frances Ridley Havergal

Frances was the daughter of a Worcestershire clergyman and was born in Astley in 1836. She was proficient in several modern languages as well as Hebrew and Greek. During her relatively short life, (she died in 1879), Frances wrote over fifty hymns and many poems. One of her best known hymns is “Take my life and let it be..”

The hymn asks God to take us for his service, suggesting in each verse ways in which this can be achieved. It forms a lovely prayer as we prepare for the coming of Advent.

Take my life and let it be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee.  
Take my moments and my days;  
let them flow in endless praise.





Take my hands and let them move  
at the impulse of thy love.

Take my feet and let them be  
swift and beautiful for thee.

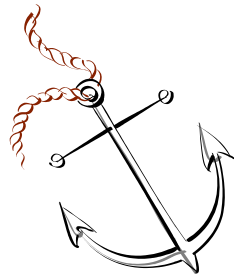
Take my voice and let me sing  
Always, only, for my King.

Take my lips and let them be  
filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold;  
not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my intellect and use  
every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine;  
it shall be no longer mine,  
Take my heart it is thine own;  
it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour  
at thy feet its treasure store.  
Take myself, and I will be  
ever, only, all for thee.



# What do you know?

What does **COP** stand for? It's been in the news lately. It stands for **Conference of the Parties**.

**The Parties** are the signatories of the United Nations Framework Convention on **Climate Change** - a treaty agreed in 1994.

COP 26 is the 2021 edition of the **United Nations Annual Climate Change Conference**.

More than fifty religious leaders signed the Glasgow Multi-Faith Declaration which calls for those in power to put the 2015 Paris Agreement into effect.

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Thinking about Computers



Do you know what **PDF** means?

PDF stands for the **Portable Document Format**.

PDF is used to display documents in an electronic form *independent* of the software, hardware or operating system they are viewed on.

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**Test** - name the **sons of Jacob** (without looking back!) (the Editor wants to check that you have read this newsletter from cover to cover...!!!)

A **daughter** is mentioned in Genesis chapter 30. What was her name? Who was her mother - the elder or the younger sister?

## Do you recognise?

If you cannot understand my argument, and declare, "It's *Greek to me*", you are quoting Shakespeare.

If you claim to be *more sinned against than sinning*, you are quoting Shakespeare. If you recall your *salad days*, you are quoting Shakespeare; if you act *more in sorrow than in anger*; if your *wish is father to the thought*; if your lost property has vanished *into thin air*, you are quoting Shakespeare; if you have ever refused *to budge an inch*; or suffered from *green-eyed jealousy*; if you have played *fast and loose*; if you have been *tongue-tied*, *a tower of strength*, *hoodwinked* or *in a pickle*; if you have *knitted your brows*; *made a virtue of necessity*, insisted on *fair play*; *slept not one wink*; *stood on ceremony*, *danced attendance* {*on your lord and master*; *laughed yourself into stitches*; had *short shrift*; *cold comfort*; or *too much of a good thing*; if you have *seen better days*; or lived *in a fool's paradise* - why be that as it may, *the more fool you*, for it is a *foregone conclusion* that you are {*as good luck would have it*} quoting Shakespeare.

*from the writings of Bernard Levin (1928 - 2004)*

## Rainbow Rhymes

# BARGAIN

Poems and Promises to cut out and collect.

The worst thing in the world

The worst thing in the world  
Is when we have to go shopping.  
The worst thing about the worst thing in the world,  
Is that when we *do* go shopping  
There is always someone my mother knows  
Who goes shopping at the same time,  
And we always bump into her.  
Sometimes by the sugar,  
Sometimes by the organic broccoli,  
Sometimes by the quilted toilet rolls,  
(Twelve for the price of nine,  
in Rose, Grape, Snowflake, Buttercup and Blueberry)  
But it always happens, without fail.  
And then they talk, they talk, they talk.  
And we wait, we wait, we wait.  
We might wander around for a while,  
Trying to take an interest in the thrills of the supermarket,  
Trying not to poke holes in the sugar bags,  
Or rub the seedy bits off the broccoli,  
Or demolish the toilet roll mountain.  
Hoping that whoever she meets  
Will have laryngitis and can't talk,  
Or diarrhoea and have to dash.  
Longing for the day everyone shops on the Internet,  
So that holidays and Saturdays  
Won't always be ruined  
By the worst thing in the world.



# SPECIAL OFFER

BUY ONE  
GET ONE FREE!



Sol says:  
"Forget shopping—what's  
the **BEST** thing in the  
world?"  
'God saw all that He had made  
and it was very good.'  
Genesis 1:31 NIV

## Quiz - what Colour springs to mind?

1. Sails in the sunset .....
2. Beatles submarine .....
3. Fruit .....
4. The rest room in a theatre .....
5. ....People Eaters
6. Senior service .....
7. Rhett Butler's lady - love .....
8. What colour did Mick Jagger paint it?.....
9. Wilkie Collins' woman's dress?.....
10. 'Itsy-bitsy teeny-weeny polka dot bikini .....
11. A dark girl dressed in .....? (Stanley Holloway)
12. House that William Morris lived in? .....
13. Female neighbour of 'Just William'? .....
14. Prime Minister (1830 - 1834) .....
15. Sad? .....
16. Smoke from the Vatican when a Pope is chosen?....
17. Top of the milk? .....
18. Death from the plague .....
19. The picture in the attic is growing old? .....
20. Ireland's flag is green, white and .....

*Turn the page for the answers!!*

## Quiz on Colour (answers!)

1. Red
2. Yellow
3. Orange
4. Green
5. Purple
6. Navy
7. Scarlett
8. Black
9. White
10. Yellow
11. Blue
12. Red
13. Violet
14. Grey
15. Blue
16. White
17. Cream
18. Black
19. Grey
20. Orange



The picture on the previous page could be coloured in. Adults are allowed to colour in pictures - I know many who love to colour in! If you don't fancy doing so - how about finding a child to do it for you??

Otherwise you are invited to write an article for this newsletter - that would be gratefully appreciated by the Editor (as she is plum-tuckered out!)





**Website:**

[www.pccweb.co.uk](http://www.pccweb.co.uk)



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

**Pam Owen on:**

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

[pcclettings@outlook.com](mailto:pcclettings@outlook.com)

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