

Palmers Green United Reformed Church

May Magazine 2021

For all people who seek and share the Good News of Jesus Christ
Member of Churches Together in Palmers Green and Winchmore Hill



Christian Aid Week 10 - 16 May 2021



Give thanks for your vaccine through
CHRISTIAN AID – See page 32

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WORSHIP SERVICES - MAY 2021

Date	Time	Service	Worship Leader
Sunday, May 23rd	11am	Pentecost Service	Mrs Michaela Lawrence
Sunday, May 30th	11am	Morning Worship	Revd Jon Dean

Morning Worship is normally held every Sunday and includes Holy Communion on the first or second Sunday of each month. However, as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, services in the Sanctuary will not start again until Pentecost Sunday 23 May (see above). Also, our live Zoom service is now at 6pm, using the usual link. Christian Education for young people takes place during morning worship.

BIBLE READINGS FOR MAY 2021 WORSHIP SERVICES

2nd May	9th May	16th May
John 15.1-8 Acts 8.26-40 Psalm 22.25-31 1 John 4.7-21	John 15.9-17 Acts 10.44-48 Psalm 98 1 John 5.1-6	John 17.6-19 Acts 1.15-17, 21-26 Psalm 1 1 John 5.9-13
23rd May Acts 2.1-21 Ezekiel 37.1-14 Psalm 104.24-34, 35b John 15.26-27; 16.4b-15	30th May John 3.1-17 Isaiah 6.1-8 Psalm 29 Romans 8.12-17	



2021 CHURCH DIARY

Elders Meetings:

Tuesday 25th May at 8pm

Wednesday 21st July at 7.30 pm

Tuesday 5th October at 8pm

Wednesday 1st December at 7.30pm

Church Meetings, at 1.15pm:

Sunday 6th June

Sunday 12th September

Sunday 14th November (Annual Forum)

‘A Place for Coffee’ – (Opening Date to be announced)

Please also refer to the weekly **Bulletin**, available by email and by post, and to **NewsShare** email messages, for more up-to-date information about events.



HALLS LETTING: Contact Mikayla Coote, Bookings Manager

Tel: 01366 348190 | email: pgurcbookings@outlook.com

Please visit our website for more details -

<http://www.palmersgreenurc.org.uk/halls.html>

May Prayer Calendar

Here is our monthly prayer diary for May 2021, compiled by **Derek and Heather Wilcox**. If you would like to contribute and compile a list of prayers for June, please contact Melanie or one of the elders.

Editor's Note: The '*Praying Hands*' image is a pen-and-ink drawing by the German printmaker, painter and theorist **Albrecht Dürer**.



- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Sat 1st | We pray that you would help us to be kind to one another, showing each other mercy, forgiveness and understanding. Help us to share the love you've so generously shared with us. |
| Sun 2nd | We pray for our Queen and her family on the recent death of Prince Philip. Comfort them all at this time. |
| Mon 3rd | We ask for your blessing and grace on all who care for patients or relatives with Alzheimer's disease. Give each care-worker and every family member the strength, patience and grace to deal with this type of severe memory loss. |
| Tues 4th | International Firefighter's Day: Thank you God for all those who bravely risk their lives for others. |
| Wed 5th | Pray for protection, grace and courage for Tearfund's church partners as they seek to prevent the coronavirus from spreading among poor communities. |
| Thurs 6th | We lift up all of the rough sleepers and pray you will keep them safe and protected. |
| Fri 7th | We thank you for food and remember the hungry. |

Sat 8th	Pray for the safety and protection of people in Myanmar and that the peace of Christ may rule over the neighbourhoods and villages currently suffering violence.
Sun 9th	Christian Aid week: Give thanks for Christian Aid volunteers whose time and skills contribute so much to the cause of social justice.
Mon 10th	Give thanks for the different ways that we see and understand God and the ways we can share this with our brothers and sisters.
Tues 11th	Pray for “Just Scripture”, Christian Aid’s intercultural biblical dialogue, which seeks to bring people together to read God’s word from different contexts and viewpoints.
Wed 12th	Reflect on the way that access to vaccinations and medical treatments often highlight the inequalities and injustices in our society. God of all life, who values all people, help us to ensure that everyone has access to life-saving vaccinations.
Thur 13th	Feast of Ascension - The feast of Pentecost celebrates the account of the Holy Spirit coming on the disciples empowering them for mission. Give thanks for the work of God in the world today and the places where we see the Holy Spirit moving.
Fri 14th	“Thy Kingdom Come” is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus. Let us join with others today in that prayer.
Sat 15th	Holy Spirit, empower our lives to produce your fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
Sun 16th	National Children’s Day – We know the importance of a healthy childhood. We pray that the rights and freedoms of children be protected in order to ensure that they can grow into happy, healthy adults.

Mon 17th	Pray for opportunities to listen to what God is saying to us through the Holy Spirit.
Tues 18th	Lord, in these times of isolation, when we are apart from loved ones and distant from friends, thank you that there is nothing in all of creation, not even coronavirus, that is able to separate us from your love.
Wed 19th	We thank you for freedom and remember the enslaved.
Thur 20th	Pray for greater freedom for Belarusian Christians and for church leaders to see the importance of supporting Christian students.
Fri 21st	We pray for our Government leaders. Please give them the wisdom and understanding to identify the true needs of your people.
Sat 22nd	God of Pentecost, renew your spirit within us so we may show your love to one another.
Sun 23rd	Pentecost Sunday: Holy Spirit, empower our lives to produce your fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
Mon 24th	We thank you for friends and remember the friendless.
Tues 25th	Pray that China and Hong Kong will continue to waken spiritually and that many dark places will joyfully receive the good news of Jesus Christ.
Wed 26th	As we look around the world, we see so many areas without hope; Lord we beg you to breathe your resurrection power into those places.
Thu 27th	We pray that those searching for spirituality in their life will find their thirst quenched by Jesus.
Fri 28th	Pray for children in countries that have never known peace, particularly Yemen and Syria. May they soon experience the joys of a normal happy life.

- Sat 29th** We ask that you give courage, strength and hope to those whose children who are sick. Please bless the hands and hearts of all those who work in hospitals.
- Sun 30th** We give you thanks for all you have done and especially for the gift of Jesus.
- Mon 31st** Teach me Lord, to be patient in my prayers and to learn to wait quietly and trustingly for your perfect timing.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We are a group of different people looking for and finding, strength and meaning in God's love.

You will always be welcomed gladly.

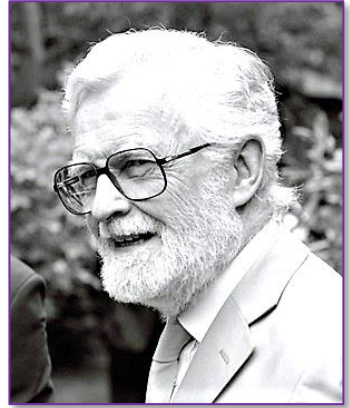
We worship and pray together.

We learn about God's love and forgiveness through Jesus, the Bible and with the help of each other.

Together we will work to make Jesus present by loving actions done, and by loving words spoken, in this church and beyond these doors.

FAITH AND LIFE (Part 3)

An Evening Service written and delivered on 6 July 2003 by **Brian Smith** (pictured right) a distinguished Architect and well-loved life member of our church who passed away on 21 January 2021 at the age of 93. Parts 1 and 2 of 'Faith and Life' were featured in the PGURC March and April 2021 Magazines.



It is often said that the language of the Bible is difficult to understand - and there is some truth in that. But read by people of understanding helps and this came home to me many years ago when we were listening to the Service of Lessons and Carols one Christmas from Kings College Chapel. The Dean read these words and I found out afterwards that he had been tutored in his reading by Laurence Olivier.

READING

The Gospel according to **St John Chapter 1 vs 1-14**

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of the Light.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Those are the words of someone who in recording what has happened is not only looking back but is also looking forward by recording promises that will affect those who will follow. The composer John Tavener is someone who, although looking back, also looks forward pushing himself and those who listen to understand and thereby move forward. As one commentator has written, "Tavener's musical language is timeless, ritualistic and predominantly reflective and deeply imbued with the spirit of the Orthodox Church". That view would certainly be shared by Peter Little's Father who gave this talk last month. The commentator continues, "With their accessibility and evocative atmosphere his works have found a responsive audience during the current renewal of interest in devotional music". We may have difficulties but the commentator goes on to write about this piece, "the opening melody is treated in various ways including being combined with its own inversion, though the resulting gentle dissonances do not detract from the work's intimate character". It seems to me that some understanding of the construction of the piece is necessary to the enjoyment of it or at least before it is rejected.

MUSIC

THE LAMB

John Tavener

Recorded by the Vasari Singers

With what I said so far it is perhaps not surprising that I consider that in

order to really enjoy anything that is designed, things other than its visual appeal must be understood.

There is the much-quoted phrase, now some centuries old, "Good building hath Commodittie, that is suitability for purpose, Firmness, that is structural soundness, and Delight, that is beauty". In the early days of the Modern Movement some thought that these qualities could be reduced to "If form follows function beauty will result".

There were other phrases such as "Less is More" which has some attractiveness for me. Some thought it essential to use a system of mathematical proportions. One was based on the Square and the Golden Section ratio of $1 : 1.618$. Another is the Fibonacci series in which the sum of two consecutive numbers supplies the following number, i.e. $1 + 2 = 3$, $2 + 3 = 5$, $3 + 5 = 8$ etc, giving a series of 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21 and so on.

Le Corbusier considered that a system of measure, Le Modulor, that he and his colleagues had worked out and was related to the human scale was the answer. And indeed there are examples of buildings using these systems which when seen do indeed lift the spirit.

On my first visit to Paris, I went to see Le Corbusier's Pavilion Suisse at the Cite

Universitaire (right), having seen illustrated articles about it some years earlier, and I still remember the sharp intake of breath at its human scale and the pleasure it gave me.





Other disciplines have had their effect. Looking back, it is clear that the Cistercian Order produced monastic houses, Fountains Abbey, or Rievaulx Abbey (left) is probably the best known

in this country, where the architecture was informed by the same rigorous simplicity as that which provided the standards for their daily life. The feeling of serenity pervades cloister, refectory and chapter house with a sense of harmony which is the result of a unique synthesis between the Order's insistence on the plain and unadorned and the natural bent of local craftsmen schooled in the style of contemporary Romanesque sculpture.

Many of today's buildings seem to reflect a troubled society governed by a technology that we do not seem to be able or want to control. However, it has been written of Sir Philip Powell, an architect with an enviable portfolio of good buildings starting with the Skylon (right) at the 1951 Festival of Britain and who died earlier this year, that his architecture was full of content, rather than form, and that that was due to his extraordinary charm, endless generosity and exceptional





modesty. Here maybe we are coming somewhat nearer values influencing for good. Powell also believed, in common with many others, in the capacity of architecture to improve people's lives. Architecture is about people. But it is not necessarily the architect's job to reflect life as many authors, poets, composers, painters,

sculptors and others consider that they have to. If one believes that, and I do, there is a world of difference between Renzo Piano's proposal for the London Bridge shard (above left) and Daniel Libeskind's proposal for the World Trade Centre site (above right).

The architect's job is to find ways of improving peoples' lives although I believe, in designing any building, there are obvious things to achieve – the number and size of spaces, and the relationship of those spaces to each other. In the case of a building for a Church the Church must be able to communicate its needs to the designer, the designer must have some understanding of, and sympathy with, those needs and be able to respond to them and communicate, by way of drawings, pictures and models, a solution to them. For everyone concerned there are matters of scale and character, space, i.e. volume, colour, texture, light, warmth, indeed everything that affects the senses must be considered. The design of the exterior of the building, its context, i.e. its relation to other buildings and its setting in the townscape and landscape are just as important if the Church is to be part of the community and speak to that community. The designer must seek to interpret what the Church sees as its connection with God, Christ and

the world. Personal and collective connections have to be made. The importance of the Sacraments has to be revealed and made obvious, the drama and the peace - stillness - have to be reflected; what goes on the building and what goes on outside it have to be related. Above all what is designed must provide the opportunity for an individual to develop his or her relationships in the ways which Christ did as revealed to us in the Gospel and the Epistles.

You will have noticed this evening that objects are not in the positions that they usually are. They have been re-arranged to reflect different theological attitudes. At the entrance to the building is the font, and in this instance, it is given emphasis as the entry to the Church by being placed in a space formed by screens and a lowered ceiling. After being received one goes into a much larger space which is focused on the communion table behind which at a higher level the coloured glass window of Christ offering the cup. It would have been better if the table had been three steps above the seating level, the steps being a reminder of the Trinity. The table is partly covered by two long strips of cloth indicating that Christ has risen - the cloths being representative of those taken from the tomb. The Minister's and Elders' chairs are arranged around the table just as they were at the Last Supper. I have placed the lectern at a lower level and if I had been able, I would have done the same with the piano. There is no pulpit - the lectern signals the centre of the Word, written and expounded. The carpet is green representing for us both the hill outside the city walls and the ground on which the five thousand were fed. It is appropriate that the informal meeting / library / refreshment / shopping area is outside the main worship area and is accessed and seen from that area and not from the entry. We are here to worship. Around the font area and fixed to the screens are photographs illustrating some of the significant aspects of the story of Christ, the Christian Year and images that are meant to be helpful to an understanding of the Christian message. These are seen to be a modern equivalent of the coloured glass windows in churches of former periods that were of visual assistance as reminders of the written word that was not always available to the people of those ages. The angled walls of the Apse are reflected in the geometry of the communion table and the font

enclosure. To some the octagon mediates between the circle, which being perfect stands for God, and the square which represents earth. Consequently, the octagon is another symbol for Christ. Coloured panels applied to the table and the lectern represent the liturgical period of the year.

Although the Architect is a facilitator, he is foremost a creator and humbly his job is to give his client something he didn't know he wanted until he got it! As far as I am concerned, pomposity, pretentiousness and triumphalism are not values that I aspire to. Recently a reviewer wrote about our office, "It is noted for its well-mannered, perhaps slightly cautious approach". I can live with that. But let us return to the theme of looking back and looking forward.

READING

The Gospel according to **St Luke Chapter 2 vs 25-32**

And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: the Holy Ghost was upon him and it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not meet death, before had seen the Lord' Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then he took him up in his arms, and said, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: mine eyes have seen the salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

I quote again Neil MacGregor, at the time the Director of the National Gallery, about Rembrandt's 'Simeon with the Christ Child' (right),



"The picture is a dialogue between the end and beginning of life – a picture of hope. Simeon holds the Baby not in his arms, but hands apart in a gesture of welcome and prayer and it is hard to say which of the two, Simeon or the Baby, is the more fragile, more vulnerable. Rembrandt painted not just the seeing of the Saviour but the continuing miracle of life renewed and restored, the promise that every new-born baby brings that death will not have the last word. It must have comforted Rembrandt as it can still comfort us and like the greatest Christian Art it speaks far beyond the bounds of any faith for it speaks of the nature of life itself".

If it has been appropriate to talk tonight about the beginning of life – and we started off with such beginning - then it may also be appropriate to be reminded about the ending of life on earth and the future; this is where I return to - Gerontius has just died and there sounds the Priest pronounces the 'Proficiscere' solemn brass chord: 'Go forth upon thy journey, Christian soul' and the chorus takes up the prayer at the beginning of the journey of Gerontius' Soul.

MUSIC

GO FORTH UPON THY JOURNEY, CHRISTIAN SOUL

(The Dream of Gerontius) Edward Elgar

Recorded by the City of Birmingham Chorus and Orchestra
conducted by Simon Rattle with Dame Janet Baker, John Mitchinson &
John Shirley-Quirk

EPILOGUE

Hymn 509 last verse

O guide us, call us, draw us,
Uphold us to the end;
And then in heaven receive us,
Our Saviour and our Friend!

Editor's Note: Photos of buildings and artworks courtesy of:

www.Google.com , www.wikipedia.org , www.designboom.com , and
<https://libeskind.com> .

PLANS FOR FUTURE IN-PERSON SERVICES AT PGURC

By PGURC Church Secretary

The Elders have agreed that in order for as many of us as possible to safely attend worship services in our Sanctuary, we should now wait until **Pentecost – 23rd May** – before resuming weekly in-person services. We are aware that this decision may disappoint some, but we feel that it is right to pause until we can all attend safely.

Also, our live **Zoom service will now be at 6pm**, using the usual link. Bulletins, magazines and printed services will continue to be sent out by post to those who have requested them.



MARTIN VAN STAVEREN

News of Church Family

From Barbara Crock

Please pray for:

Lynne Wells and her family following the death of her father on Monday 12 April.

The folk at **Ponders End URC** as they work to repair the fire damage to their building (see letter from Melanie on page 25).



Cheryl Slusser, one of our previous ministers, who has recently undergone surgery for cancer.

William Evans, who is now home from hospital.

Note - Contributions to the **Ponders End Fire Appeal** can be made online at <http://give.net/FireAppeal> .

Easter 2021 Communion Service

By Harry Goforth

Our inspiring and well-attended Easter Day Service in the Sanctuary on 4 April (the first since early November 2020) was led by Dr Paul Ashitey, a URC Accredited Lay Preacher and elder in our church.



Due to Coronavirus restrictions still in place, we had to observe the usual routine of face coverings, keeping our distance, sanitizing hands, avoiding loud singing and conversation with others and leaving the building immediately after the service. You might then ask, “why did we go?”; but it must be noted that worshipping God can be done under many adverse conditions, and Paul, Tina, Richard, John, Robert and Martin made it worth the effort that morning.

The focus of the theme was, of course, the risen Christ and our response to Him. Following Paul’s introduction and opening prayer, John Strange sang his first beautiful solo (while we quietly sang) ‘Though Easter Vict’ry seems far, far away’ by Revd John Campbell to the tune *Maccabaeus* by G. F. Handel (‘Thine be the Glory’) accompanied by Robert Evans on our magnificent organ. The first verse and refrain goes:



Though Easter Vict'ry seems far, far away,
even in our lockdown, You are here to stay.

Though our times bring dangers,
laced with fear and gloom,
You are here to help us, victor from the tomb.

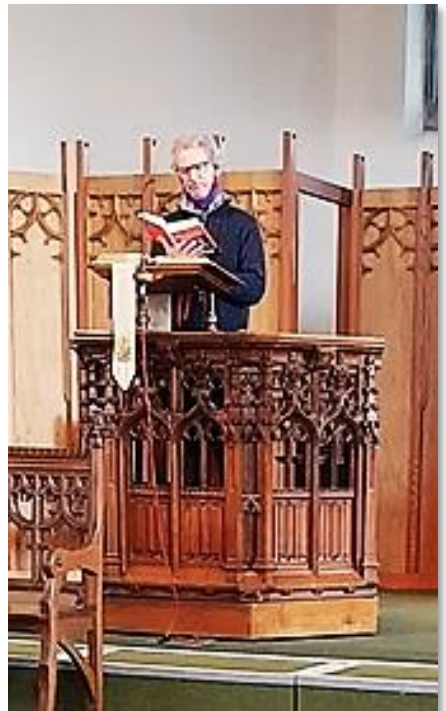
Though Easter Vict'ry seems far, far away,
Easter means You're with us, each and ev'ry day.

Richard Hill then read from **Mark 16.1-8** which tells the story of Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome visiting Jesus'

tomb and being shocked and terrified after being confronted by a figure in white who told them that He was not there and had risen from the dead! They were to go and tell his disciples and Peter that they would see him again in Galilee, just as he had told them he would.

John also sang again, this time the hymn 'Fear, failure and dismay' by John Campbell to the tune *Down Ampney* by Ralph Vaughan Williams, and the first verse is:

*Fear, failure and dismay
Looked set to claim the day,*





*yet hope itself have shouldered out dejection;
this empty undone tomb
somehow became the womb
that birthed a people sharing resurrection.*

Paul then led us in prayer, and, following his sermon, shared the Lord's Supper, assisted by Tina, with the congregation.

The last hymn, again sung as solo by John with Robert accompanying and inspired by **Mark 16.1-8**, was called 'Though raw fear had set them running', the first verse being:

*Though raw fear had set them running,
Sealed their lips each step they ran,
in this staggering awestruck silence
their one chance of life began.
Through that tomb so cold and empty
Sheltered lives might start to thrive,
Good at last could beat back evil,*

Christ, once dead, was now alive!

It was a very moving service which concluded with a postlude organ voluntary by J. S. Bach wonderfully played by Robert, but we were only allowed to nod our thanks to all who took part before leaving the building.

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Forest Church News - An Easter Journey

By Harry Goforth



Our first Forest Church Service of 2021 took place, as announced, on Easter Saturday 3 April at 12 noon at the Palin Ground Scout Field (pictured below) in Winchmore Hill.



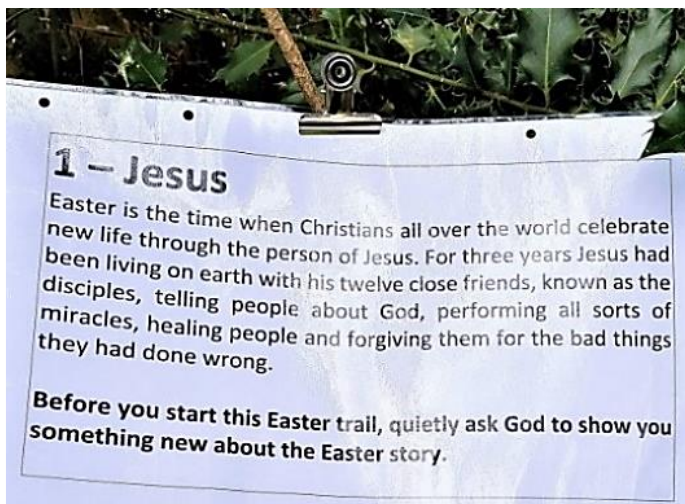
Led by Melanie and Mark, who gave us a Welcome leaflet and a piece of string when we arrived, it was well attended by both adults and children and the weather was good.



As pandemic restrictions were not yet lifted, we all still needed to keep our distance and wear face coverings. The service was preceded by an Easter egg hunt and volunteers were there to offer us

cups of coffee or tea and hot cross buns.

We started by quietly singing, to recorded music, a few Easter hymns printed on the Welcome leaflet, including Isaac Watts' *'When I survey the Wondrous Cross'*, Graham Kendrick's *'Led like a lamb to the slaughter'*, Stuart Townend's *'How deep the Father's love for us?'*, and *'In Christ alone my hope is found'* by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend.



Our **Easter Journey** then began with an invitation to follow the one-way footpath system through the woods carefully prepared by Melanie and Mark and described on the leaflet, which also included Bible readings hanging from the trees and

shrubs for us to follow, in the order listed below:

Gethsemane: As you enter the field, recall the garden of Gethsemane. Read **Mark 14.32-52**. As you are able, kneel or bow for a moment of quiet reflection and prayer...



The Courtyard: Enter the 'north' woodland where you will find the firepit. Read **Mark 14.66-72**. Sit and listen to your own inner voice – would you deny Jesus if you feared for your life?

Towards the Cross: Take your piece of string and find two sticks as you follow the trail through the woods, and try to lash the sticks together in the form of a cross. Read **Mark 15.21-23**. How do we carry the cross today?





The Mocking of Jesus: Back on the field, take a strip of cloth, wrap it around your hand like a bandage and reflect on what you need for human dignity, food and drink, shelter, work,

clothes. What does it mean if people remove those things that give you dignity? Read **Mark 15.24**. What can you do to help people regain their dignity?

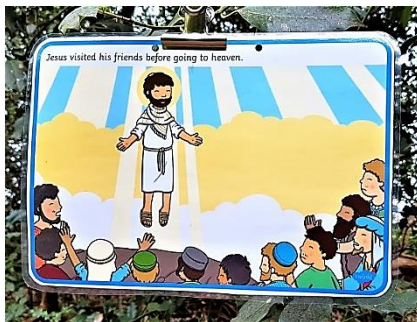


Golgotha: Enter the smaller wooded area and sit or stand at the foot of the cross. Read **Mark 15.25-39**



The Tomb: Out on the field, place a stone on a cairn, representing the tomb. Read **Mark 15.42-47**. On this Holy Saturday, when we know how the story will end, reflect on the weight of the burden we place on Jesus. Do we trust God to carry our burdens, or do we hold on to them, thinking we should be strong enough to make it on our own?

On these pages are some photos of the event which will be followed by another Forest Church soon.



Ponders End URC Fire on 6 April

From Revd Melanie Smith received on
Wed 7 April 2021

Dear Friends,

Sadly, I have to report a small fire at Ponders End URC yesterday late afternoon.

It was by the back doors to the small hall, where the homeless man has been sleeping. The police and fire brigade say the source of the fire is unclear, but reasonable speculation is that either it was a stray cigarette butt or other drug related spark on the sleeping bag of the rough sleeper. It is felt that it was not the rough sleeper who caused it, as he would not be there at that time of day. However, it could have been accidental, or a deliberate act of arson to destroy the rough sleeper's belongings. A neighbour who spotted the fire did not see anyone hanging around or fleeing the scene.

As well as the doors being completely destroyed, the fence is damaged, there is damage to a down pipe, electrics (new!), and water and smoke damage to the Derby Hall. There is probable smoke damage to the pantry food stock (tins will be fine, but the packets may well be unusable, and the teddies might need another wash!!! The repairs will cost a great deal and so Chris will be talking to our insurers this morning.

We are extremely grateful to the fire brigade and police who responded



very rapidly, but also to our wonderful members at our Bush Hill Park URC, Robin and Andrew, who responded almost as quickly with wood and tools to board up the door, to make it secure. I imagine that we will have a clean-up day at some point - including clearing the undergrowth away from the fence and we will keep you informed. We will also be putting some thought into a fundraiser, given that usually insurance covers like-for-like, and may not pay for the work that needs to be done to actually make the premises secure at the back – including replacing the doors that were broken through last year. But we will let you know as soon as we have any details.

Most importantly, can I ask for your prayers for the folk at Ponders End, for all who help with Pam's Pantry, for the person who started the fire, accidentally or deliberately, and for the two rough sleepers that had made that area their home, especially the one who lost his possessions. Yours in Christ's peace,

Melanie

Ponders End Fire Update

From Revd Melanie Smith received on 16 April 2021

Following the fire at Ponders End URC on the 6th of April, the church has been overwhelmed by the positive response by our churches and the wider community. The damage is serious, but not extensive, and there will be a lot for the congregation to contend with including insurance claims, quotes, repairs as well as the emotional toil. We do not know the cause of the fire.

If you feel able to help, please do pray for the church, the homeless man whose belongings were destroyed in the fire, and the local community. You can also visit the fundraising page: www.give.net/FireAppeal .



Pictured are the damaged doors and Ian Kane, of Winchmore Hill URC helping to cut down some of the foliage growing on the fire-damaged fence.

Melanie

Virtual Excursions and the Pentatonic Scale

From Estelle Müller

Please find below a short piece of what Clem did during the lockdown:

"Apart from going to work at the hospital and keeping our house ship-shape, I have spent a great deal of my time looking at numerous YouTube videos particularly guitar lessons and all aspects of Microsoft Flight Simulator 2020 which I have recently purchased. I have spent hours flying around the world particularly around and over Table Mountain, in Cape Town.



On my return from these excursions, I often find myself in the loft trying to put into practise what I have learnt about the Pentatonic Scale, the Chord structures and how to Solo play

Blues music on my loved Gibson guitar (previous page centre right). I recently replaced 6 missing strings on my twelve-string acoustic guitar (previous page bottom left) and have thoroughly enjoyed strumming the limited number of chords I had taught myself as a young man.

With regards to my guitar playing, I have a long way to go. However, when my enthusiasm waivers, I know that I will be able to fly anywhere in the world to see some interesting places in great detail, with my guitars by my side.

Let's hope normality will soon prevail and we will be able to resume our actual travels."

Clem Müller

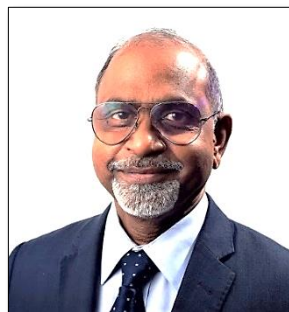
Editor's Note: More information about Microsoft Flight Simulator and the Pentatonic Scale can be found at <https://www.flightsimulator.com/> and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pentatonic_scale.

LETTERS

From **Revd Dr Andrew Prasad** (pictured right)
Outgoing Moderator of URC Thames North
Synod

The second reading is taken from my
paraphrased *biblion*.

The Letter of the **almost St Andrew** to the churches in the Thames North Synod



From Andrew, who was called by the will of God to be an apostle. To the churches in the province of Thames North, who are called to be God's holy people- in the union of Christ. Grace to you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

I thank my God who has chosen you as his witnesses, to the divine love and salvation in Christ. You have been faithful to your calling. You represent a mosaic of diversity: from a reformed Cathedral of City

Temple to a rural chapel in Walkern & Sandon; traditional to charismatic congregations; and from conservative to all-out liberals. The qualitative engagement of black and ethnic minorities in Thames North speaks for itself. I am delighted that worship is at the heart of your congregational life. Everything else is built around it. Whether a church of 10 or 200, worship is the top priority.

During the pandemic, many of you adapted to zoom, video, streaming, YouTube or, just a printed sermon distributed through your door. You miss singing, coffee mornings and that mingling with a touch of gossip, and customary complaints about weather, and the synod, the fizz and zest of church life!

Local identity, pastoral care and, may I add, your passion for the environment and charity, pretty much defines who you are. Local churches are like tight-knit extended families. A great attribute, but watch out, you may miss out on new members who do not feel at home. We all benefit from an infusion of new blood, even if it's old!

You have fewer stipendiary ministers than before. Therefore, lay leaders, itinerant preachers and local worship teams fill the pulpit. We are reminded of the days when Paul preached, but made his tents too. I thank God that history repeats itself and numerous lay leaders, preachers, and non-stipendiary ministers already follow this example. No judgement on the stipendiary ministry; it plays a critical role, but I also enjoy my fishing!

You are truly a free church people. VERY FREE! Each one has one's own opinion about any subject under the sun. You argue your position, especially theological, well. Sometimes, it gets out of hand, but that is acceptable. I'm reminded of Moses and his flock! It is the joy of arguments that matters, rather than finding a solution.

My faith grew over conversations on the beach, or in people's homes. With friends we discovered how to be 'God's people'. I guess you'd call us house churches.

I am amazed to see your large stunning church buildings, symbolizing God's glory, and your pride. You should maintain them. But should

you put dis-proportionate time and money to keep them? House churches might not belong only in the past. History repeating, again?

The Church is God's holy people, not the edifice. Would you wish the URC to be known more for bricks and mortar than for its people?

I have heard your debates about synod money, mission projects, and M&M Fund and recently URC pension schemes. I appreciate that you take the stewardship of God's resources seriously. Wealth is not the same as rich: it's a gift to cherish.

So, a final about me, your outgoing Moderator! What can I say? My weaknesses are many. I work long hours, hardly ever take days off and read my email even on holiday, which I rarely take. No one should ever follow this example. My excuse is, I quote, "most of my people are volunteers, I should be available to them whenever they need me". Humm. He sounds like a URC minister.

I've sometimes felt wanting when it comes to expertise and smartness. I have not pretended to specialise in any one field but have done a bit of this and that! I have luckily been surrounded by very able and supportive colleagues, staff, and church leaders, more than filling the gap.

I've attempted to initiate a process of 're-visioning' and rationalising the **precious** resources of people, buildings, and finances, for the Kingdom. I leave this question:

Not what has been achieved but does the re-visioning journey continue? Nothing stays the same ... the pandemic has surely taught us that. God works in miraculous ways, yes, but God also throws spanners into things to challenge us.

In the past 12 years, we have shared our joy and laughter, and also our frustration and disappointments at this forum and throughout the synod.

Serving a complex and diverse synod, where things happen in extremes, is an art form, like synchronising various rhythms and sounds into music, like providing a purpose and meaning to diverse and dispersed activities. But the process ultimately polishes and

bestows a deeper wisdom upon us all. We should not be too hard on ourselves. I think we've learnt that together.

Successes and failures are mere perceptions. There is only one lens through which to see the truth: Have you been faithful to your God, your people and yourself? I have tried!

At my induction, you promised to support me, and you have remained faithful and patient. So, I thank you. I have received a lot more from you than I have ever given you. There is a time for everything, **a** time to come and **a** time to leave. And time will test the remaining legacy.

So, it's time to welcome **George**. Offer him your love and care! He is called by God to serve you. God has yet more things in store for you.

Now to the only wise God, be glory for evermore through Christ Jesus, **Amen.**

Editor's Note: URC Thames North Synod reports that **Revd Dr Andrew Prasad** retires as Moderator on 31 May 2021. The new Moderator, **Revd George Watt**, will be inducted on 5 June 2021. (See also PGURC December Magazine 2020 page 18)

Did you receive a Christmas gift from the children?

(April issue p.2)

Reply from Barbara Crock

Dear Nathalie,

Such a thoughtful and caring idea that you, Tina, Keezia and Jo created and crafted by our children for us to enjoy. As one of the lucky recipients to receive a beautiful, but totally unexpected, Christmas decoration it was a real treat.



Mine came from Edith complete with a signed Christmas card too! It was even more treasured as we add a new decoration to our tree each year but because of lockdown this hadn't been possible.

So, thank you again to Edith and to you all for delighting us this Christmas!

Love, Barbara X

GIVE THANKS FOR YOUR VACCINE (Cover article)

From Martin van Staveren

Many of us will by now have received at least one dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. But for the poorest and most vulnerable communities across the world, there is little hope of a vaccine rollout. The URC's



Commitment for Life programme is inviting those who have had the vaccine to show gratitude by helping to protect global neighbours, who often lack the basics of clean water, food and the healthcare they need to protect themselves, while the vaccine is out of reach.

To make a donation through Christian Aid, please go to:

<https://giving.tapsimple.org/page/christian-aid/united-reformed-church-supporting-a-just-vaccine-rollout>

Martin

Zoom to Zimbabwe

From Suzanne Pearson

Dear Friends

Commitment for Life in partnership with Christian Aid are organising during **Christian Aid Week**, on **Tuesday 11th May at 2pm**, 'Zoom to Zimbabwe'. We do hope that you are able to join us for an afternoon of updates, music, fellowship and more.



Please do put this in your diaries and circulate the attached poster amongst your congregation. The link for the event is below:

Global & Intercultural Ministries is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Zoom to Zimbabwe CFL in CA Week

Time: May 11, 2021 14:00 London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93023982876?pwd=QlRhTStDcGhtQ29vWUMybFdWLys4Zz09>

Meeting ID: 930 2398 2876

Passcode: 750863

One tap mobile

+442034815237,,93023982876# United Kingdom

+442034815240,,93023982876# United Kingdom

Dial by your location

+44 203 481 5237 United Kingdom

+44 203 481 5240 United Kingdom

+44 203 901 7895 United Kingdom

+44 208 080 6591 United Kingdom

+44 208 080 6592 United Kingdom

+44 330 088 5830 United Kingdom

+44 131 460 1196 United Kingdom

Meeting ID: 930 2398 2876

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/abkl3WEwi4>

We look forward to welcoming you on 11th May.

With best wishes

Suzanne Pearson

Administrative Assistant - The United Reformed Church, Commitment for Life

86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT

020 7916 8638 Suzanne.pearson@urc.org.uk and www.urc.org.uk/cfl

(Tuesday and Wednesday)

NOTICEBOARD

What's Going on Here?

Live Morning Worship in our Sanctuary is currently suspended until Pentecost Sunday 23 May (see page 2), due to the current lockdown, but a recorded version is still available every week online and includes Holy Communion on the first or second Sunday of each month. If you would like to access our online Sunday Worship for the first time, please contact our Minister so you can receive her email notifications each week. If you do not have Internet access, there is still an alternative that some of us have been using. Melanie and Mark are recording a short 7-minute message for each Sunday which you can listen to by ringing **020 3389 6021**. There will be a new message every Sunday. The cost of making the call is the standard local call rate, which is often free in most peoples' phone packages.

We will continue to send out copies of our weekly Sunday Bulletin and Monthly Magazine by email. If you don't currently get these, please ask Harry Goforth to add you to the mailing list. This will help us all to keep in touch with news of our Church Family and maintain our Church community life. Items to include in the Bulletin or Magazine can be sent to Jean and Harry, respectively.

Eco Church – 'Churches Count on Nature'

From **5-13 June 2021**, in partnership with Caring for God's Acre and the Church of England Environment programme, A Rocha (Eco Church) is asking churches to run a **wildlife-count** in their churchyards or nearby land.

A Rocha hopes that this project will facilitate churches taking action for nature where they are.

For more information about this initiative and about Eco Church, look on these websites: (next page)



<https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/expression-of-interest-in-churches-count-on-nature-2021/churches-count-on-nature-faqs/> and <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/how-eco-church-works/> .



Be part of the transformation...

We're appealing for £10,000 to continue life-transforming work including purchasing a new digital facility for an existing X-Ray machine, enabling remote assessment by qualified radiologists. Visit: give.net/IndiaAppeal2021

Your donations are transforming healthcare at the KSN Hospital in rural West Bengal, providing safe accommodation to children at risk, and training vulnerable women in Kolkata.





Cathedral Relief Service
Kolkata, India



Quizoom

India Appeal 2021

Church of North India, West Bengal

7.30pm Saturday 1st May
Please contact revd.meatcher@gmail.com for link

Entry Donations
give.net/IndiaAppeal2021



Cathedral Relief Service
Kolkata, India



ABOUT OUR CHURCH

WE SHARE OUR PASTORATE WITH THE PONDERS END and WINCHMORE HILL URCS. Listed below are their main contacts:

Ponders End Church Secretary: Mrs Pat Lewis

Winchmore Hill Church Secretary: Vacant



We are part of the Thames North Synod in which there are 120 United Reformed churches in six Areas, headed by a Synod Moderator. The United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom has approx. 1,330 local

Churches, 13 Synods and 43,200 members. It meets every two years in General Assembly and has its central offices at 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1 9RT. Through our membership of the Council for World Mission we belong to the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ. This is a Reformed and Congregational body for international exchange in Mission. The United Reformed Church is one of 32 member Churches.

We are a member of Churches Together in Palmers Green, Winchmore Hill and Grange Park (CTPGWHGP). In partnership with Church of England, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Baptist churches in our neighbourhood, we aim to explore the Christian faith together, and witness to the Gospel.

Minister – Revd Melanie Smith

e-mail: minister@palmersgreenurc.org.uk

Telephone: 0208 374 0509

Secretary - Mr Martin van Staveren

e-mail: secretary@palmersgreenurc.org.uk

Treasurer (Interim) - Mr Brian Hosier

e-mail: brian@hosier.eclipse.co.uk

Palmers Green United Reformed Church is at the corner of Fox Lane and Burford Gardens, London N13 4AL and online at both www.palmersgreenurc.org.uk and www.facebook.com/PGURC/. Our magazine is published monthly and is printed by 'Office Interiors' in Palmers Green using approx. 85% recycled paper.

MAGAZINE COPY DATES FOR JUNE 2021 ISSUE

Publication is scheduled on or before **Saturday 29th May 2021.**

All copy, including Church Diary information, to be sent to **Harry Goforth** (preferably by email to: hbg@goforth.myzen.co.uk) by **Friday morning 21st May 2021.**