

Hampton Methodist Church News

June 2019



Hampton Methodist Church

Percy Road

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Dear Friends

On Palm Sunday, we had a fun, All Age service which included Father Christmas distributing Easter eggs. It was designed to help us reflect on how strange it must have been to those first disciples when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey with shouts of Hosanna! and palm branches waving – something associated with Hanukah when Judas Maccabeus triumphantly reclaimed the temple on behalf of the Jewish people. To have symbols of Hanukah appear during the Passover season was as unusual as it was for us to have Father Christmas distributing Easter eggs.

This strange conflation of traditions has continued this year in the Teddington Circuit which saw the Circuit Panto premier in May – one of the many busy and exciting things that have been going on across the five churches. Several people thought it rather odd of us to have a panto in May but in the end there was too much going on at Christmas and it seemed wise to avoid clashing with the many excellent theatre groups in the area which were doing pantos at more traditional times. As you will see later in the magazine, it proved to be a good choice and I know that many of you came and had a great time.

However, it left me thinking about the rhythm of the year. As a child, I remember teachers and ministers waxing lyrical about such rhythms, but time goes slower in our youth and I didn't really understand. Age has crept up as it's wont, and I have a greater sense now of what they meant. There is something that both consoles and energises us in the annual round which for Christians begins with the first Sunday of Advent in either the last week of November or the first week of December. Christmas follows with all its complicated joys and sometimes sorrows, and then the New Year and the Covenant Service. We have a few short weeks to recover before Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Week and Easter, Pentecost and then the gradual acceleration towards the end of the academic year, punctuated by exams and the making of plans for the summer holidays in August and the summer holiday clubs which churches will be running. In an ideal world, August is a time to rest from meetings and gather oneself together for the new administrative and academic year in September; Harvest follows, then a season of Remembrance with All Saints, All Souls and Remembrance Sunday and then, almost before we know it, it is Stir Up Sunday and we are about to head into the whole cycle again.

The church year has had a tremendous impact upon the secular one, dictating our main and school holiday periods and splitting the year into ordinary time and festival time. This year we celebrate Pentecost – the birthday of the Church – on the 9th of June. The date coinciding as it sometimes does, with the first day of Shavuot, the Festival of Booths, when the Jewish community remembers the forty years spent wandering in the desert after the escape from Egypt. As the summer unfolds, I hope that you are able to rediscover some of the sense of the rhythm of the year and that long, lazy days, picnics with the family and cold drinks in a sunny garden are a reality and not a distant, rose-tinted memory of a bygone era.

It is a fact constantly reflected upon that we are over-stressed, over-worked and over-stimulated in our modern world. Perhaps re-engaging with the rhythm of the year will help us in both religious and secular life to recharge and replenish ourselves. May this summer bring rest and relaxation; exam success and holiday fun each in their season.

God bless

Vicci

Circuit Panto

A year ago in January, a flippant Facebook exchange about whether or not one of our men could get away with wearing a skirt and heels resulted in the idea of putting together a Circuit Pantomime. Mentioning it rather hesitantly to playwright Geoff Buckingham, long time member at Sunbury Methodist Church, I discovered that he had been playing with the idea of writing a new Panto based on the children's nursery rhyme "Old King Cole" for some time and was very happy to be given a reason to set to and write it. A flurry of emails produced a number of people from across the Circuit who were happy to be involved and by August of last year, a small steering group gathered in Geoff's house to make plans and to read through the initial script.

By October we were in weekly rehearsals and although Christmas interrupted us a bit, work continued through most of the first part of this year.

By the 11 May, the cast and crew were as ready as they could hope to be for the single day, two show premiere of Old King Cole featuring such well-known Circuit members as Bron our lay worker (the Queen), Naomi our student minister (the Princess), Tim, Mark D, Geoff, Denise, Sarah and me as various buffoons and baddies, as well as a good fairy and an orangutan; youngsters from Sunbury and Hampton as the scene setter, the giant mouse and the magical interlude and additional help from local am-dram doyens, ALOUD!! and the Hanworth Methodist Church Community Choir who also assisted with props, reading in and ensuring that all step and clap type choreography went in the same direction at the same time! A special mention has to be given to Jo S at Sunbury who prompted valiantly as an exuberant audience left the cast occasionally wondering "Where are we?"

The results in terms of friendships formed, audiences totalling over 200 and funds raised for Circuit charities Baby Basics and The Extra Mile (in excess of £1500) made it all worthwhile but anyone wondering what they can possibly do now that they have got all this lovely time back only need speak to me. I can assure you that the summer has enough going on to fill all your diaries three times over!

I briefly wondered if this was to be my last show in the Circuit as the combination of a sabbatical next year and my leaving in August 2020 seemed difficult, but luckily someone who shall remain nameless was able to help me figure out a way to squeeze in a Christmas show and a summer concert so keep your eyes peeled!

Vicci



Tears of sadness, tears of joy, tears of love

I thought it was just me. Then I spoke to Wendy and it was the same for her too. We had encountered a spiritual experience! Was it a pilgrimage trip we had been on or maybe a retreat weekend? No, it happened at our Church on a Saturday night in the big hall. Let me explain. Our sister Doris' Mum, Rebecca, had died suddenly back home in Ghana. The funeral was planned for the 11th May so that was to be the day of the Memorial Service here in the UK. The venue for the Memorial was our Church. People travelled from across London, up from Kent and down from the Midlands and the north of England. Over 120 filled the large hall, which was stunningly decked out in red and black. Despite the clash of dates with the marvellous Circuit Panto there was a healthy contingent from our Church at the service. We were able to support Doris, Jeffery and the boys at a difficult time. Death has become a taboo subject in a health-conscious society, yet we know that there is nothing quite like the pain of grief when a loved one dies. The shock, the numbness, the tears, the regrets, the emptiness. It has been compared to losing a limb – in the end you adjust, but life is never the same again. Bereavement is something Christians have to face just like everyone else. Grief is normal, grief is biblical, it is a necessary part of bereavement. BUT because of our faith we do not despair, we raise our voices for departed fellow Christians like Rebecca and Jim Stockley and cry out "Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory".

Rebecca's Memorial Service had a real presence of the Holy Spirit, that powered out from the hymn singing and the traditional dancing. There was also massive pride that this special service was happening in our little church. It underlined just how much we have changed as a faith community over the past few years. These sorts of changes are not new. One of the things that the early church found was when a church reaches out the outside reaches in. The Apostle Paul took the Gospel across the known world, engaging with peoples of many different parts of the Roman Empire. He gets to Macedonia where at Philippi he meets a very special woman, Lydia, who becomes the first Christian convert in Europe. The nature of the early Church changes, for it reflects the diversity of its believers. When we undertake outreach, be it the Bike Hub, Messy Church, The Extra Mile or even Breakfast Church, that outreach changes us. Praise the Lord! Indeed, our developing partnership with our Baptist friends has opened up many new things for us. I, for one, have learnt so much from Paul (Barker, not the Apostle!) about his role as Chaplain at the Football Club, and elsewhere in the magazine he shares details of that ministry. There are a vast number of Christians working with sports clubs as Chaplains, so perhaps next year we should celebrate National Sports Sunday as part of our Worship.

Sport is one of the ways in which we can learn how to deal with both winning and losing. We all know that life can be an emotional roller-coaster ride. One time you're high and happy and then a moment later you are crashing down in hurt and tears. We Christians are no different, take Saturday the 18th May as an example. The small hall at church was buzzing as people crowded in enjoying a delicious breakfast raising funds for Christian Aid, while just up the road at the Shooting Star Hospice 13-year-old Beatriz' life was slipping away. Her Mum and Dad stayed over that night at the hospice and came down to our church the following morning to pray at our 10.30 am service. That morning we had the great news about the fund raising the day before and the amazing evidence of the work of The Extra Mile alongside raw pain and hurt. Just as we drew on our faith in making the Big Brekkie a fun-filled success we reached out to those grieving parents. Did it matter that they were strangers? No, of course not. Did it matter that they were not Methodists or Baptists? No, of course not. We sent our money off to Christian Aid with our love and we gave that same love alongside our hugs, our tears and the flowers from the communion table to Beatriz's parents. When times are good, when times are bad, we draw on our faith in the Lord, and we reach out in compassion to others as he commanded, sometimes with tears of sadness, sometimes with tears of joy, but always, always with tears of love.

Mark Gilks



Christmas in the Southern Hemisphere

For this trip to NZ I was travelling out to spend Christmas with my daughter Fiona and her family and left on the last day before the fares went up. I arrived in Auckland on Saturday 8 December and spent five days in Devonport, a small town across the harbour from Auckland, time to recover from the journey in a lovely location. Fiona flew up to join me for two days in Auckland and then we caught the scenic train for a 12-hour journey to Wellington where she lives. Of note for railway enthusiasts is the Raurimu Spiral which was built in 1898 to raise the track 139m up to the volcanic plateau, regarded as a notable feat of civil engineering.

Although the common perception of Christmas in NZ is sunshine and BBQ the reality this time was different as it poured with rain most of the day. We still enjoyed a happy day with Matt's parents and managed to get out for a walk in the afternoon. On the Sunday before Christmas I attended a local church service and was interested in the minister's remark that some of the traditional carols such as 'In the bleak mid-winter' tend not to be used now and there are some new NZ carols, two of which we sang that morning: 'A Pohutukawa Carol' and 'Carol our Christmas.' (The Pohutukawa Tree is called the NZ Christmas tree and has striking red blossom.) It did seem strange to celebrate Christmas in the middle of the school summer holidays and Fiona is still not used to it, but Matt and the children take it as normal. It would be rather like us celebrating Christmas now.

There was still time for a week's holiday with the family at Mahia Beach further north on the East Coast in the Hawkes Bay area. Lovely sandy beaches, some hot springs to visit on another rainy day and fresh crayfish delivered to us already cooked by the neighbours, which the kids weren't too enthusiastic about. This provided time for me to travel independently and spend time in both Napier and Gisborne. It was also good to be able to fulfil my Nanny duties by spending time with Felix and Eva while they were still on holiday and parents back at work.

I had hoped to visit one of our previous pastors Janet Brown and her husband Peter who now live in Masterton, which I found that I could reach by train. The commuter train from Silverstream to Upper Hutt and then connect with a more powerful train to take me through the Rimutaka Ranges and into the Wairapa region of mainly agricultural land. Peter met me at the station and I was pleased to see that Janet, although still suffering some of the effects of her serious fall two years ago, looked and sounded like her familiar self. We went out for lunch and had a good catch up with news on both sides. They send their greetings to everyone who remembers them at Hampton Church. It was a very hot day and the journey back took longer because of the heat affecting the rails! The time to depart arrived with mixed feelings as always but as Fiona and family are hoping to come to the UK for a holiday next year it didn't seem such a wrench.

Margaret Thorn

Carol our Christmas, an upside down Christmas;
Snow is not falling and trees are not bare.
Carol the summer, and welcome the Christ Child,
Warm in our sunshine and sweetness of air.

Sing of the gold and the green and the sparkle,
Water and river and lure of the beach.
Sing in the happiness of open spaces,
Sing a nativity summer can reach!

Shepherds and musterers move over hillsides,
Finding, not angels, but sheep to be shorn;
Wise ones make journeys whatever the season,
Searching for signs of the truth to be born.

Right side up Christmas belongs to the universe,
Made in the moment a woman gives birth;
Hope is the Jesus gift, love is the offering,
Everywhere, anywhere, here on the earth.
By Shirley Murray



Woman to Woman Conference 2019

On a bright sunny Saturday at the end of March four of us from Hampton Methodist Church: Liz, Pam, Wendy and Eunice set off for Methodist Central Hall in Westminster for the 2019 Woman to Woman Conference. The title of the conference this year was 'Be Real'. We had a very motivational day listening to various speakers with their ideas on how to be true to ourselves and how to be real. Although it was slightly marred by some organisational issues by Premier it was a lovely day enjoyed by our little group and about 2000 other women. Lou Fellingham led the worship.

We listened to Rachel Hickson talking about her life and the importance of not being false but keeping grounded. Then we had our first taste of the day of Terri Savelle Foy, a Texan larger than life character who gave us plenty of practical tips and methods regarding having dreams and setting life goals to achieve them. She had a little bag of props and told us to write our dreams down and then have them visually around in front of your eyes i.e. on a notice board or on a calendar so you see them every day and can review them, this is how eventually they get to become reality.

She also said that the secret of the successful future is hidden in a daily routine and suggested five things to do before breakfast:

1. Pray or meditate, 2. Read books, 3. Listen to motivational messages, 4. Write and review dreams and goals, 5. Exercise.

The overall message from her was that you cannot move on if your vision is impaired; where there is no vision the people perish, so, clear your mind of clutter and obstructions. You should also keep the right company and surround yourself with the right people. We then headed outside for lunch in St. James's Park in the sun.

Sheila Walsh was after lunch and gave a good testimony about her life and how she has overcome difficulties. Then before we had a second helping of the lively Terri, we had a young rising star, the very energetic Esther Bonsu. She had a colourful beginning to life, but is a local preacher and has been since age 17. Her main message was that 'the shepherd knows where to find you'. For such a young woman she certainly made you stop and think about things.

Overall the message seemed to be to have high expectations of yourself, surround yourself by the right kind of people to support you and ensure you meet your dreams and goals, as well as practical suggestions to help you achieve well in your life. This is not about materialistically achieving well, but spiritually, and leading a purposeful life.

Pam Harrison



Reflections on 'Living Lent' (or 'the joys of a naked cucumber')

Since Lent began, nothing in our kitchen has been quite what it seems. Cake tins are stuffed with fusilli, jam jars are filled to the brim with raisins and nuts, and anyone prying open a tube of Pringles might be surprised to find themselves confronted with spaghetti.

This year, Luke and I decided to take on one of the six 'Living Lent' climate-related challenges suggested by the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) and to give up (buying) single-use plastics. Like many people, we'd become increasingly aware of the volume of plastic we were generating and its impact on the environment (thanks in no small part to David Attenborough!).

Lent has, for us, been full of surprises and new discoveries. We soon discovered the challenge of trying to buy plastic-free cheese, yoghurt, cucumbers, chocolate, cleaning products, cereal and shampoo. But we also discovered how easy it is to go plastic-free at our local greengrocer, the joy of solid bars of shampoo and conditioner – and how to clean the toilet with bicarbonate of soda and lemon juice!



Our much-reduced weekly shop at Tesco. Still a work in progress – who knew teabags contain plastic?!

Early on, I began to worry about how 'spiritual' my chosen Lenten discipline really was. Traditionally, of course, Lent has been a time when Christians prepare to remember Jesus' death and resurrection through a season of penitence and self-denial. In the past, when I've given up something for Lent, I've tried to give the money I've saved to charity and the time or mental energy I've saved to God, through Bible study or prayer. But giving up single-use plastics took up *more* of my time, as I found myself cycling round a wider range of shops in search of plastic-free rice and conditioner. Plus, there was the vexed question of Sundays – a day when Christians traditionally set aside their Lenten discipline, in celebration of the fact that Christ *is* risen (alleluia!). But it seemed perverse to celebrate God's good works by, say, wrapping myself in clingfilm every Sunday.

The daily resources provided by JPIT and the wonderful 'Living Lent' online community helped me to wrestle with some of these questions, and gradually to see some of the ways (sketched below) in which going plastic-free was helping me to understand more about God and what it means to live well as part of God's creation. As a community, we've shared our insights, our joyful discoveries, and our frustrations with the impossibility of buying plastic-free halloumi. JPIT has reminded us of the words of political author Helen Keller: 'Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much.'

So, what lessons have I learned? How might I live differently from Easter Day onwards?

First, I found a perverse enjoyment in not always being able to have what I wanted, when I wanted it. We switched to having milk delivered in glass bottles on certain days, rather than buying it in plastic cartons when we were running low. This meant that we occasionally ran out of milk and had to wait for the next delivery. Buying snacks on the go (other than fruit) was also near-impossible, and sugar cravings often went unsatisfied until we had time to bake a batch of cookies or flapjacks. I was reminded of the time I spent Shabbat with a Jewish family and saw the ways they observed the commandment to rest and to keep the day holy. What seemed at first, to me, to be frustratingly restrictive rules (not being able to cook, for instance, or retrieve something from a locked car) were experienced by the family as a source of liberation. They found it healthy to be reminded that we are *not* entirely in control and that the world is *not* entirely dependent on us; that God is sovereign, and will one day renew heaven and earth, whether or not we've ordered the right number of bottles of milk. Being reminded of my own limitations was a healthy reality check – and waiting that little bit longer made my next milky cup of tea, or sugary snack, all the more delicious. Many of us care deeply about the environment, but might feel uncomfortable (for whatever reason) taking part in the current 'Extinction Rebellion' protests. But we can all rebel, in small ways, against a culture of instant gratification. Waiting, or going without, can be an act of holy protest.



Our (rather wonky) homemade attempt to replace our usual plastic-wrapped frozen pizzas...

During Lent, I have been struck by our calling to love the Lord our God with all our mind, as well as our heart and soul (Matthew 22:37). I have been tempted, on many occasions, to accept what feels like the right answer without interrogating it in any depth. But making environmentally-friendly decisions can be complex. Plastic has many disadvantages, but it also prevents a huge amount of food waste. Glass bottles and tin cans also take energy to produce. Which is better overall – plant-based yoghurt bought from a shop in a recyclable plastic container, or dairy yoghurt delivered to my doorstep in a reusable glass jar? Such decisions also have financial implications which, for an increasing number of families in the UK, make ethical decision-making all the more fraught. (Interestingly, we found that although some items – like soap – became more expensive, the cost of our shopping decreased overall, as our options became more limited and we cooked more recipes from scratch, majoring on items that were readily available without plastic, such as vegetables and grains.) Loving God with our minds means wrestling with decisions in all their complexity and taking the time (where our resources allow it) to weigh up the pros and cons of each option, and not simply to take the easiest (or most attractive!) path.

But as well as thinking critically, Lent has also served as a reminder to me that there isn't (or shouldn't be) a gap between faith and the physical 'stuff' of life. What we do, how we travel, what we eat, and where we shop doesn't just *reflect* what we think about God and God's creation – it shapes it. JPIT shared a quotation from Richard Rohr – 'we do not think ourselves into new ways of living. We live ourselves into new ways of thinking.' As I've found myself shopping in new places, meeting new people, cooking more from scratch, and thinking more intentionally about what containers I should carry with me – I've felt these ways of living shaping my mindset. In God, we live and move and have our being (not just our thinking).

Finally, Rachel Lampard from JPIT has reminded us that the personal is political – that our actions as individuals, however small, have an impact, especially when businesses begin to respond to consumer trends and politicians to what matters to voters. By changing our patterns as individuals, we can be salt and yeast in our communities.

On a very practical level, I wanted to share some of my favourite discoveries:

- [The Refill Larder](#) in Teddington – a small, plastic-free shop in a florist. Bring your own containers and buy pasta, dried fruit, cleaning products, chocolate and so much more by weight.
- [What Plastic?](#) – an online business run by friends of ours. We were so pleased to find plastic-free toilet paper on their list of items!
- [Whole Foods](#) in Richmond (and elsewhere) – gravity dispensers (see photo) in their downstairs shop let you fill up on cereal, grains, nuts, fruit and so on using paper bags.



One of several orders from the excellent 'What Plastic?'



We're still in the process of working out what changes will continue after Easter Day. Some – like our milk deliveries – have already become a part of our weekly routine, while others – like the absence of halloumi! – we're more eager to leave behind. But I hope that the mindset of living more slowly, intentionally, and with greater appreciation of the gifts of God's creation, will continue.

Naomi Oates

From New York to Washington D.C. (Part 2 of Sally and Andy's Big Adventure)

We spent two days in New York and did lots of touristy things - being as we were tourists. Went up the Empire State building - and felt it swaying! Went and saw the play 'Wicked', which was, well, wicked! Did an amazing mini-bus tour all around the City seeing things such as the water fountain used in the opening titles of the 'Friends' TV show, to the Flat Iron building that Spiderman climbed up! Also visited Ground Zero, where we saw an amazing 'Survivor Tree' that was rescued from the rubble and saved by the New York Botanical Gardens. It has messages left tied to its surround. At Strawberry Fields we saw the 'Imagine' mosaic, a memorial to John Lennon. Both very poignant.



Then we packed our bags (something we got very good at!) ready to head on to Washington D.C. We caught the Acela train from Penn Station and arrived in Washington D.C. that afternoon 40 minutes late - later we would look on this as 'nothing' - after losing power from one of the train's overhead connectors. Washington was a city leading the country in mourning as this was the week in which Senator John McCain was to have his funeral here - all flags were at half mast. We were only in Washington for just over 24 hours so we had to pack in all we could. That evening we did a dinner and sight-seeing cruise up the Potomac River. It was memorable for several reasons. One was that a waitress dropped a glass of Prosecco over me, the second was the joy of watching some adults with special needs enjoying the trip, two of the ladies really enjoyed dancing to the disco music. The staff on board gave me a beautiful bunch of flowers as an apology for the wine mishap which was a lovely gesture. However, despite my packing skills developing, I knew the flowers would be a goner so I gave them to the 'Dancing Queens' instead.

Next day we did a brilliant whistle stop tour of Washington with a company called 'Tours by Locals' (I believe they are worldwide), where a local driver chauffeurs you around their city and shows you the sights. Our driver Eddie was brilliant and made the most of the short time we had. We started at the Capitol building that was readying itself for Senator McCain's funeral, passed the Supreme Court on our way to the White House, where Eddie dropped us off telling us where to meet up later. We got good photos of the Ellipse of the White House as there were few tourists about and we looked in at an exhibition all about the White House and its occupants over the years. This was very welcome as not only was the exhibition really interesting but the exhibition hall was air conditioned and the temperature outside was 33° C. We then 'did' monuments. First we walked past a black marble wall with the names of all the soldiers who died in the Vietnam War engraved on it, quite chilling. Then we saw the memorial to the fallen of the Korean War. This I actually found more moving as it showed 18 statues of soldiers walking through undergrowth, one soldier for each of the Battalions that served in that war. Eddie then drove us round to see the Franklin D. Roosevelt memorial. Roosevelt was wheelchair bound, which I didn't know, and his Scottie dog, 'Fala', was trained to jump on his lap so that the president didn't have to bend down. The memorial had beautiful waterfalls, statues of both the President and his wife Ethel (and of course 'Fala'). There were polished granite walls engraved with some of the President's most famous quotations (the present incumbent should perhaps go and read them!) We then walked alongside the lake to see Martin Luther King's memorial which was equally awe inspiring. Our final stop was to one of the 17 Smithsonian museums, this one being the Museum of Air and Space, where we saw planes from the Wright Brothers' days to models of the Star Ship Enterprise. Eddie then took us back to our hotel where we grabbed our luggage and he then kindly drove us to the station - next stop Chicago!

Sally Knight

W - H - A - T!

W h _ t _ r _ y _ _ b _ y _ n g f r _ m t h _ s h _ p s t _ d _ y ?
No problems with that then?

What about this?

_ _ o a _ e _ o _ _ e e i _ _ _ o i _ _ _ a _ _ e _ _ o _ _ ?

You will have noticed the first sentence is missing the vowels, the second the consonants. (There being approximately one vowel to every five consonants.) Why the vowels and consonants are so difficult for the hearing impaired is because they are high frequency sounds, the first to affect age related hearing loss.

If it took you a second or two to make sense of the first few lines, imagine what it's like to have this problem every time someone speaks to you.

'HELLO' AND WELCOME TO OUR WORLD.

Sadly, hearing aids although assistive are not the answer. "**W h a t** - can't hear me, **turn your hearing aid up then**" - is what most who have near normal hearing *think* is the answer. Little do they realise that nothing is further from the truth. As yet there is NO hearing aid that can detect these subtle nuances. They only amplify the voice, and *everything* else.

To admit you have trouble catching the occasional word - is to some - embarrassing. Personally, 'profoundly' hearing impaired for 36 years, without my aids I wouldn't hear a screaming jet engine, standing next to it. Deafness, to the more knowledgeable, is not a mental disability, but a sensory impairment. I'm surprised you've read down this far; such is the interest shown by contemporaries who think hearing aids are for lesser mortals. A white stick, a wheelchair, or perhaps even a prominent bandage, attract more sympathy.

Involved with Lip Reading Classes now in my third year, I was introduced to the Surrey Inclusion Officer who was and is, seeking interested persons to join their merry band of "*Communication Facilitators*." Working alongside Audiologist and Sensory Inclusion Advisors we receive regular training, certificated to service every aid supplied and funded by the NHS in our geographical area: Surrey with 80 certificated technicians, staffing 72 regular clinic venues every month and Middlesex NHS Foundation Trust have now been co-opted to do the same.

Dependent on my aids, I know how others equally dependent benefit from a local hearing_aid workshop. Advice, regular servicing, parts replacement, batteries, or just to have a moan about problems with their aids, or perhaps advice on contemplating a hearing aid.

Avoid a 16 week wait, - where you see our - **HEAR HERE** - signs, drop-in on a free walk-in-Clinic, maybe for a GP or Audiologist referral or to request a home visit for someone less mobile. We don't take names or addresses and It matters not which hospital you, or they attend. For further advice, or date and time of the next nearest clinic, consult your church notice board. If more convenient phone or email our Sensory Advisor.

Sensory Advisor: Tel: 01483 790327 - Email: tracey.wade@cofeguildford.org.uk

David Thompson

You will find David at our monthly **Tea and Memories** on the first Friday between 10.30 am and 12 pm. The group offers refreshments and social activities for people living with dementia and their carers, and for any older person in the community. We received this lovely feedback recently, 'Just wanted to let you know that you have another VERY happy customer. It's a really lovely happy group.'

Spring Harvest 2019

You may have heard of Spring Harvest and don't really know much about it? I will endeavour to enlighten you and possibly inspire you to attend if you have never been before. Spring Harvest (probably best described as an 'all embracing week long Christian Conference') started in Prestatyn in 1979-so this year was celebrating 40 years of relationships, teaching, themes and experience. A number of the original team members were there this year-Clive Calver, Graham Kendrick, Ishmael to help celebrate all that God has done through Spring Harvest over the last 40 years.

Spring Harvest is held at Butlin's (Minehead and Skegness) and more recently at a new venue-Harrogate-however at Harrogate you have to arrange your own accommodation. At Minehead and Skegness you stay on the Butlin's site with a choice of self-catering accommodation - (standard, silver or gold apartments) which is basic but comfortable. You can also opt to stay in catered accommodation, some are known as 'chalets'! (Bedroom and bathroom) with breakfast and evening meal provided. You have access to all the Butlin's resort facilities, which include swimming/splash pool, play areas, fun fair (all free) plus golf, cinema, go karts, climbing wall, bowling, spa, quasar and many more-for which there are charges.

The focus of the week this year was Prayer-with the aim to deepen our relationship with God and grow our own prayer life. You are given a Programme Planner that tells you everything that is happening including the venue on site and the time. You would be lost without it!! It also gives information about the site (with a useful map at the back) details about all the speakers and details of the exhibitors.

A typical day would be as follows:

7.30 Early Morning Stretch and Jog-for the energetic!

8-8.30 Communion for all who wish to take part

9-9.30 The 'Big Start'-unpacking the daily theme and Bible passages with drama, singing etc. -an all age extravaganza (mainly aimed at the children)

10-11.15 Bible teaching

11.45-12.50-Exploring the Bible passage of the day-(6 different venues that cover this in a variety of ways)

2.15-2.45, 3.00-3.45, 4.15-5.00-various seminars around the main theme.

6.45-9.00-Main celebration-worship and a different main speaker each evening.

9.15-11.00 (if you have any energy left!!) After hours

There are children's groups for all ages: Under 5s 'Harvest Springers', 5-7's 'Whizz Kids', 8-11's 'Imaginators', 11-13's 'Distinctive', 14-18's 'iScape'. The children cover the same main theme as the adults but obviously at an age appropriate level.

The Bible teaching this year was led by Pete Greig. Pete is a bestselling author (his books include 'Dirty Glory', 'God on Mute' and the latest one 'How to Pray-a simple guide for normal people'), church planter and senior pastor of Emmaus Road church in Guildford, Surrey. He was part of the senior leadership team at Holy Trinity Brompton in London for seven years. He is also the instigator of the 24-7 Prayer movement (www.24-7prayer.com) which has now reached more than half the nations on earth. The Bible passage that Pete preached on was Matthew 6 v 5-24, covered over 3 days.

Pete taught a useful way of praying (amongst many other things)

P-R-A-Y

P-Pause-learning how to stop, slow down and centre.

R- Rejoice-adoration and thanksgiving.

A-Ask-petition, intercession and perseverance.

Y-Yield-contemplation, listening, confession and spiritual warfare.

We need to be willing, persistent and intentional in our praying. This is further explained in the book 'How to Pray: a simple guide for normal people.'

The worship for the week was led by Lou Fellingham (Christian worship leader, singer and song writer from Brighton) and her band-one of my favourite worship leaders! There were numerous excellent seminars to attend and late night 'After hours' including Phillipa Hanna, Graham Kendrick and comedian Paul Kerensa.

I went to Spring Harvest with my sister, niece and two great nieces. One big highlight of the week was my great niece Tabitha (age 17), a young people's group leader (14-18 years group), giving an amazing testimony about all that God had been doing in the young people's group throughout the week-in front of around 4000 people in the Big Top-which is where the Main celebration is held each evening. I also bumped into Jenny Chubb during the week!

If you have never been to Spring Harvest I would encourage you to try it next year-when the theme will be 'Unleashed.' Dates are: Minehead 1: 4-9 April 2020, Minehead 2: 13-17 April 2020, Skegness 13-17 April 2020.

Booking opens 8.00 a.m. on 26 June 2019. www.springharvest.org Accommodation goes quickly so book early to avoid disappointment. If you would like to look at the Programme Planner for this year to see everything that went on, just ask me!

Wendy Salmon



Spring Harvest Christian Holidays in France

Having volunteered at Minehead Spring Harvest for many years (leading the team for 0-1-year olds) I would see the LPO stand in the market place and kept hoping I could go one day. Jenny Chubb and I had both wanted to try Le Pas Opton, which is where Spring Harvest hosts holidays in France. Thank you Lord we went in 2018 to the adults only house party and have booked again for 2019.

We flew to Nantes. A House Party coach picks up from various points in the UK including Bristol and Portsmouth. As usual our flight was delayed and sadly we missed the welcome party! We threw our bags into our mobile home and legged it to catch our first paid for meal. The welcome meal was wonderful and good Merlot flowed. We soon forgot our delayed journey and a lovely evening was enjoyed.

There are various accommodation options from large tents to luxury mobile homes. We chose the budget mobile home which had two bedrooms (one each end of the home).

The next morning we took the optional trip to the hyper market to stock up on French food for the mainly self-catering week. (All trips are optional and cost extra but are reasonably priced.) There is a small shop on site for gorgeous French bread etc! There is also a take away for a break from self-catering and a small cafe for breakfast/ coffee / cake etc. Every lunchtime there is a bring and share lunch at the large meeting area. Lots of singles went and they really enjoyed that lunch meet. (There is the option to share a tent / mobile home for single travellers.)

So now stocked up for our self-catering week together we went for a wander. The nearest village (with an excellent patisserie) is a half hour walk along a rather busy road with no pavements but we did that, mindful of the traffic.

The teaching and worship took place in the morning and evenings, varied and interesting with lovely sung worship. There are plenty of optional excursions and activities. Jenny and I did a lovely craft afternoon (I made Jenny her 70th birthday card there but she didn't know until December!) We went to the nearest big town and coast and we shopped at the local market.

We loved sitting outside our mobile home chatting in the sunshine (our weather was glorious) and by the swimming pool - a lovely warm pool to swim in. We relaxed, laughed and shared our love of Jesus. It was such a lovely week, time together away from the busyness of life.

On the last day we had a street party- we all took food and shared lunch in the sunshine. A large street party was enjoyed by all! We had such fun and I would highly recommend LPO.

For more information look at www.springharvestholidays.com

Sue Croucher

Jim Stockley

Jim Stockley was our much-loved pastor from 1996 to 2002 and both he and his wife Grace were at the heart of our church family, always seeking to share the love of Jesus and make Him known both inside and outside the church. He was very enthusiastic and seemed to have the knack of getting things done, arranging children's holiday clubs and parenting courses and taking part in Hampton Carnival processions from St James's Church through the streets to the carnival field.

At that time, we had a bookstall after the morning service, selling new Christian books and cards from the bookshop based at Holy Trinity Church in Hounslow and Jim was always very supportive of this. I will never forget how Jim stepped in at short notice when my husband wasn't able to escort me home from Moorfields Hospital in London after one of several operations for detached retina. I hadn't known anything about this change of plan but it was a lovely surprise and so typical of Jim's practical caring.

After Jim and Grace left Hampton, John and I visited him in Bournemouth several times when we were holidaying in Dorset and he and Grace, and then Diana, made us very welcome, always asking after everyone he knew in Hampton. He would have been so thrilled that we have 'found' Ian again! Gloria and Ken also visited them and loved spending time with them.

Jim went to be with his Lord on 2 April. Fourteen past and present members of Hampton Methodist Church (from Hampton plus Devon, Dorset, Essex, Surrey and Sussex) joined the packed service at Strouden Park Chapel to celebrate his life. The first hymn, 'Crown Him with many crowns' had also been the first hymn at Grace's memorial service at Hampton. Tributes were given by Jim's daughter Christine, and son-in-law Tim read Elizabeth's as she was unable to travel from the USA. One of Jim's former colleagues also spoke about Jim's working life. Much was said about his enthusiasm, including fund-raising for the seats we were sitting on! One of the final observations was that Jim was quite simply a good man.

I hope you enjoy the following memories of Jim, even if you never knew him. Many details I had forgotten and much of it made me smile!

Liz Windaybank

The arrival of Jim Stockley as pastor at HMC was like a breath of fresh air. His energy and enthusiasm seemed to know no bounds and his dynamic ministry has a lasting legacy.

One of the first things he did was to instigate the formation of a band to play in Sunday services and there are many (particularly those who were youngsters at the time) who, encouraged by Jim to take part, not only helped to enhance the worship but felt included, valued and fulfilled in the life of the church as they played various instruments and contributed to the music.

Jim extolled the value of church members meeting in house-groups for prayer, Bible study and discussion and it speaks volumes that the one he set up in 1997, appointing Ros and me as leaders, continues to flourish and benefit those who meet together over 20 years later.

Jim's 'get up and go' attitude also broke through the barriers that had caused plans for the much-needed replacement of the old church kitchen to stagnate. He revived the project and oversaw the installation of a new modernised kitchen. It was as a result of this that we were able to start Friday Focus lunches where people from the community enjoyed a short talk given by Jim in his inimitable way, always interesting and with a touch of humour, followed by a two-course meal prepared and cooked using the new kitchen facilities. Again, thanks to foundations laid by Jim, those lunches continued for many years after he left Hampton.

Now that I've started my thoughts about Jim, it's hard to stop. The warmth of his personality and his infectious faith resonate to this day and I look back with gratitude for the ministry of Jim at HMC, together with the whole-hearted support of his dear late wife, Grace. Examples of lives totally devoted to their Lord Jesus Christ, to whom I know they would wish to give all the glory, as expressed in the chorus of their 'signature song', new to us at Hampton when they introduced it, but soon a firm and enduring favourite. "We will glorify, we will lift Him high, we will give Him honour and praise".

Hilary Everitt

It will not surprise you to know that my fondest memories of Jim are from his preaching. When Jim became our Pastor, he was required to undertake the "Faith and Worship" course for Methodist Local Preachers. This course included 19 modules, 18 essay assignments and several exams. It normally took about four to five years to complete. However, Jim already had a Theology degree from the London Bible College, and to the amazement of Circuit Tutor, Jill Harker, Jim did the course in 18 months!

Jim brought to his preaching not only all his study, but his vast experience as a family man, a business man, a prison visitor and a Gideon. Perhaps my favourite sermon illustration that I heard Jim use goes something like this (now, imagine a Dorset accent!):

There's a noisy family row going on at the home of Joseph of Arimathea.
Joseph's wife is really letting rip at him.

"What do you think you're doing using our new, expensive, unused tomb! It's a family tomb, it's not meant to be used for strangers!"

"Don't worry love" replies Joseph, "he only wants it for the weekend!"

Mark Gilks

My memories of Jim are linked to his enthusiasm and sense of humour. I remember him acquiring the drum kit for the music group - and have memories of Michael, Alison and Ian playing the drums in many services. I remember the time he invited some Swedish guests to the church service and to make them feel welcome talked about 'ABBA' and Ikea (which he called the yellow and blue cathedral!) One time in church we'd just sung the praise song 'Majesty' when Jim announced 'You did that SO well that I think we'll do it again' . . . so we did!

Jim was instrumental in arranging for the church sign to be lit - nearly falling out of the loft area whilst checking it out. To me he was such a warm and caring person and when we 'got' Grace with him too I reckon we got a double whammy! The fact that he drove up from Bournemouth to be at Lorna's wedding shows how, despite having 'moved on', he cared about his HMC 'family.'

HMC was so blessed to have Jim as our spiritual leader for six years, his Thanksgiving Service was amazing and I'm quite sure he'd have been astounded at the turn out for he was a humble man - but I'm sure he'd have approved of the singing (even if he might have liked some drums as an accompaniment!)

Sally Knight

Jim and Grace were two of the most friendly, encouraging and supportive people I have known. They both encouraged my family, and as a church community I think we all felt we were in 'safe hands' with their pastoral care for all. My daughter Anna remembers going to Easter People in Bournemouth one weekend with a group from Hampton Methodist Church. We stayed in a bed and breakfast with several people from our church including Jim and Grace. She attended the sessions for young people and bought a CD from one of the bands that played. Maria remembers Jim getting her name wrong every time he did a children's address. When she was in Brownies and we had parade services he would often get some Brownies, including Maria and her friend Sarah Carter, to come up to the front during the children's address; he would then refer to Maria as Sarah and Sarah as Maria - quite funny really and she has never forgotten it, even though she did not like to correct him at the time. They also remember the bear he had.

I remember Jim's services as being really good and always relevant to the time. When my mother passed away in 1999, Grace sent me a card from both of them depicting one of her paintings of Hampton Church. A very talented couple in lots of ways.

Pam Harrison

I remember Jim for being immaculately dressed in his grey suit, and always having, and making sure he had, the time to talk with everyone. Of a quiet happy demeanour. Close my eyes and I see him, now together with his Grace. I didn't know him as others knew him, but still he made that impact, and will not be forgotten.

Liz Lucie

To me the arrival of Jim at our church heralded a modernisation of our church services. Jim started to use an overhead projector and acetate slides, many of them hand drawn, and Rupert Bear was introduced to the congregation, complete with Boys Brigade uniform! However, one of the main improvements was the purchase of the Songs of Fellowship hymnbooks and getting us to learn them, which we seemed to do easily. Many of these have now become firm favourites - among many are Abba Father, Alleluia Alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord and A new commandment. When we sing these now I think yes, that is a 'Jim number'! Jim's style was always relaxed, making the congregation feel at ease.

The modernisation of the church kitchen had started just before Jim arrived and he was very supportive to me personally as I oversaw this project and he continued our modernisation with upgrades to the halls and flooring. In the church he oversaw the removal of the centre part of the communion rail, removing the barrier between the preacher and the congregation and enabling the preacher to step forward during the service. The pews that the choir used to use were removed to make way for a larger music group. At Hilary's instigation we started the Friday Focus lunches and both Jim and Grace were enthusiastic supporters of these lunches. Housegroups were started and Jim basically divided the congregation into three and allocated them to a housegroup. These ran for many years and one of them is still running.

It was Jim who introduced me to being a steward - straight in as a circuit steward and I recall asking him what it involved - oh just a few meetings a year he said. I think we took on two ministers and sold and bought two houses during my time as a circuit steward in addition to the regular business!

Jim officiated at our younger daughter's wedding, he wrote to them every year at Christmas and was always interested in their family.

We were saddened by the death of Grace, Jim's first wife, very shortly after Jim retired. However, we were delighted that Jim found happiness with Diana, whom he married a few years later and several of us were pleased to attend his wedding and subsequently visited them both in Southbourne.

Jim was a truly sincere Christian, living his life in the service of others, always cheerful and happy to lend a hand, serving our Lord. How true the wording on the front of the order of service for his service of thanksgiving, 'There are some who bring a light so great to the world that even after they have gone the light remains' (author unknown).

Hazel Greasby

Among many memories of Jim's time with us, one in particular stands out. That is of when, in 2000, he led a group from around the circuit to attend the Oberammergau Passion Play. The holiday began with a week's stay in a very traditionally styled hotel in an attractive village in the Austrian Tyrol. We enjoyed beautiful mountain views from our hotel, and were able to explore the surrounding area by bike or on foot. We also explored the facilities offered in the village, including a cafe which served delicious apple strudel. This is where Jim's love of strudel became apparent, and from then on, I think he sampled one everywhere we stopped for refreshments! The photo shows the first apple strudel of the holiday.

From Austria we moved on to Germany and were fortunate enough to spend two nights staying in the village of Oberammergau. Most visitors stay in accommodation in the surrounding area and are brought in by coach to attend the Passion Play. However, we were spread out in small guest houses and private homes. Some people even stayed with members of the cast, all of whom are village residents. To attend the play and to be in the village in the evening, when most visitors have left, was a unique experience, and one I think those of us who were there will never forget.

Janice Thompson



Ian Ross

It was lovely to see so many old friends at the celebration of Jim Stockley in Bournemouth at the end of April, many of whom I have probably not seen in 17 years. One thing that struck me is how quickly time has passed, yet everyone was instantly recognisable (and a little greyer!)

I first got involved at Hampton Methodist Church in the early 1990s through attending Boys Brigade, led by Bryan Woodriff. In 1996 the church welcomed Jim Stockley as the new Minister. I remember writing to Jim to enquire if I could use the church hall (free of charge) to hold a Blue Peter bring-and-buy sale to raise money for the elephants in Africa. I would have been aged 10 (I am now 33). Jim agreed but imposed terms and conditions: I would need to join the church music group and play the drums, which I did for about four years. It wasn't the best deal in hindsight for one free rental of the church hall! (The bring-and-buy sale raised £45.)

Then there were the coach trips, which many of you came on in the late 1990s. I organised seven coach trips to places such as the Isle of Wight, Cotswolds and New Forest. I enjoyed enterprise as a child, such as organising events and fundraising. I still have the old photographs of the coach trips in a box somewhere.

I left the church music group in 1999, as I joined the Surbiton Royal British Legion Youth Marching Band to pursue my new hobby of playing the trombone. I had some incredible experiences, such as playing at the Royal Albert Hall and in France. I still see many of my old 'band friends' on a regular basis, who now run the band with forty young musicians. I still play the trombone and, until recently, played for the Britton Ferry Silver Band in Neath, South Wales.

After leaving school almost twenty years ago, I worked for three years in the civil service. I started with the Department for Work and Pensions in Kingston, processing change of circumstances to state pensions, before being seconded to HM Treasury in Whitehall as a Diary Secretary for two of Gordon Brown's Special Advisers. I had many surreal experiences, the most memorable, eating an Indian takeaway in the Number 10 flat whilst watching the BBC1 ten o'clock news on the evening of the 2005 Budget with Gordon and Sarah Brown, along with other private office colleagues.

In 2005 I moved away to read economics at Swansea University, my degree choice being heavily influenced by my time at the Treasury. After completing my degree and teacher training I ended up teaching A Level Economics at Coleg Gwent, a further education college in south east Wales, for five years. During this time I was married for five years, but this sadly did not work. I also dabbled in a little politics, standing for the Labour Party in the 2010 General Election in Worthing West, and being elected as a Councillor in Wales for five years (too many!) These days I despair at all of our political parties and the mess with Brexit.

So, this now brings me to the present. In 2012 I started my own business, providing education and social services programmes for the public sector. One example is helping unemployed individuals to retrain and achieve new qualifications so they can progress into work (you can read more at www.wrecltd.co.uk) In the last few years the business has expanded with offices in Neath, Swansea, Dorchester, Brighton and Swindon, employing 27 full-time staff.

I have a passion for aviation and achieved my private pilot's license (aeroplane) in 2004. I have 300 hours in my log book. In February I started my helicopter license at Lee-on-the-Solent airport, near Portsmouth. I had a trial lesson and decided to enrol for the full course; I don't know why as I am petrified of heights (and helicopters) and am paying for the pleasure of being terrified in a small glass capsule at 2,500ft!

My young brother, Gary, is now aged 31, married with two children, and lives in Hampton Wick. My parents divorced 10 years ago; my Dad (Peter) lives in Twickenham and my Mum (Lynn) remarried in 2016 and lives in Laleham. I now live in Brighton with my partner.

Ian Ross

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The Bike Project

The Bike Project has now been running for a year at Hampton Methodist Church. On Friday 10 May a further 21 bikes were collected. This brings the total number of bikes donated to the project over the last year to **166**. This very worthwhile project is helping refugees and asylum seekers in London.

You can donate your bikes (adults' and children's) on any Sunday between 11.45 and 12.15. Take them to the halls entrance behind the church. Bikes can be in any condition as they will be refurbished by the mechanics at 'The Bike Project.' Find out more at www.thebikeproject.co.uk
Wendy Salmon

The Extra Mile

At our Palm Sunday Service, we were invited by Vicci to give testimony and to ask ourselves a question: 'Where is God in this?' Since then The Extra Mile team has had this in the back of their minds as we go through our work helping local professionals support vulnerable families. Two weeks before, we realised that the enormous donation we had from the Hygiene Bank had all but depleted due to having so many referrals over the past four or five weeks, so we contacted them for some more resources. At the same time Curves in Hampton had offered to support us and collect items for us for one month. In the week before Easter we collected the Curves donation and also the Hygiene Bank donation. See below the pictures of the donations displayed in church to show the congregation on Easter Sunday.

Last week we supported a family due to arrive from Syria, who have been displaced for many years. We were able to supply toys, games and books for a toddler and a seven-year-old plus bedding and a new cot bed mattress. Mary from Sunbury collected and delivered this for us. We received a message back thanking us for our generosity and we were pleased to have contributed positively to the family's new start in life. The same week we gave clothes and other items to a family with twins and heard back that the family was 'jumping for joy and thrilled' when they received it.

We often worry about spending money buying things like stairgates and mattresses; so, when one of our contacts said they needed a double buggy we had to think carefully about buying one from a charity shop; could we afford it? It was only last month when we were down to our last £100. After consideration we took the decision to buy it anyway, after all we had made £92 at a recent Mum2Mum sale. Then something amazing happened. St. Francis de Sales in Hampton Hill has a charities group which raises funds throughout the year by organising events and they contribute to various charities each year. The Extra Mile had been put forward as one of the charities by staunch TEM supporter Anne Starkie. This week we received a cheque from them for an incredible £1729.20! This along with some of the proceeds from the 'Old King Cole' panto - we certainly feel that we are doing the Lord's work at this church and are blessed by the Holy Spirit in our work.

Thank you to all church members who have been patient with us trying to clear donations. With the bank holidays we have lost 3 or 4 days of sorting, but we are on to it now and will soon cleared all the bags from under the pews and hopefully the social workers will collect their referrals on time. We are so fortunate to have the support of local organisations as well as individuals who also buy us resources and take the time to drop them in to us. So, I think we can truly say that God is definitely in this.

Pam Harrison



Hampton and Richmond Borough Football Club

Hampton & Richmond Borough FC is our local community football club and plays in the Vanarama National League South. The 2018/19 season finished at the end of April, with the team finishing in 15th place, which wasn't too bad considering they started the season under new management and a brand-new set of players.

The average attendance for matches is just over 600, making it the largest "congregation" in Hampton. Unlike the big professional teams, the supporters are mainly from the local area. This leads to a real sense of community at the club.

This sense of wanting to play a part in serving the community has manifested itself by collecting for the local foodbank. This was started in September, following an away match against Dulwich Hamlet. Dulwich were collecting for their local foodbank, so our club's Supporters Trust thought they would follow suit. The collections, which continued up until the end of the season, totalled over 1.1 tonnes, which is a staggering effort. The donations were delivered to Hampton Foodbank at the White House Community Centre by the lads who attend the club's academy. Donations of clothes for a Red Cross appeal were also received.

The community spirit is also evident by the amount of work that is done by a band of willing volunteers, who carry out a range of duties. These include manning the turnstiles, producing the match day magazine and emptying the bins after a game. That's just on match days. During the week there is always someone around working hard. The club, like many other organisations, is always in need of more people to lend a hand. Maybe you could help!!

I am also a volunteer. I take a turn in doing the PA announcements on match days, but my main role is Club Chaplain. I am supported by "Sports Chaplaincy UK" who have over 400 chaplains in professional and non-professional clubs. The role is a ministry of presence and to offer pastoral and spiritual support to those of any faith and those of none. I am available to the whole club, including the board of directors, players, officials and supporters.

During my time in this role I have taken several funerals of supporters or their family members. This is an opportunity for me to be able to show compassion and sympathy during a time of bereavement.

I try to attend one training session during the week. This gives me an opportunity to have a chat with the players and team management. Gary McCann, team manager, allows me to go into the changing room before a match to wish the boys well. I also have the privilege of leading pre-match prayers for those players who like to join in.

Several seasons ago, I was asked if I would like to contribute to the match day magazine. This I do under the heading of "Chaplain's Corner". I try to relate, with God's help, a topical footballing matter, with a biblical message. These articles are generally well received and appear on the club's website.

You can follow the fortunes of the club on their website: www.hamptonfc.net

Paul Barker

Club Chaplain

Hampton & Richmond Borough FC

Books

Niteblessings: Meditations for the end of the day.

This book is written by Malcolm Duncan who is a pastor, preacher, leader and theologian-in-residence for Spring Harvest, which was where I first heard him preach. He is passionate about helping people experience God's love. He is an international speaker, author, broadcaster and government adviser. He leads Dundonald Elim Church in Belfast and was a previous pastor of Gold Hill Baptist Church.

The book has a short (only a couple of sentences) meditation for the end of each day.

Here are a couple of recent ones: -

31 January-As you come to the end of the month, may your worries about tomorrow be lifted by the presence of Jesus; may your disappointment in yourself be outweighed by your knowledge of God's love for you; may you be given the gift of seeing tomorrow as a new day.

15 May-At day's end, may God remove the strains and stresses from your soul. As dawn breaks, may you rise refreshed and renewed in God.

Published by Lion £9.99-do get a copy, you will be blessed by reading it each day. You can also receive a meditation with accompanying photo by 'liking' Niteblessings on Facebook.

Wendy Salmon

Give the best away by Rosemary Lancaster MBE

I don't like Christian biographies that make me feel a failure - this isn't one of them! As I read it, I kept thinking, 'Is this really true?' It is just so incredible. Rosemary was born into a poor Clitheroe family in 1945. The book title is based on a treasured memory of her mum giving her the yolk of an egg. She loved Rosemary so much that she gave her the best bit. This became her life's principle.

Her husband, John, had no qualifications but was a great inventor and entrepreneur, eventually producing a hugely successful conservatory roof system that was worth £136 million when it became a public company in 1997! Rosemary says, 'We wanted our entire workforce, now numbering 550, to own shares and we wanted to give them away free. The truth is, we gave away £13 million to our employees on that day, because we felt very strongly that this was what God had told us to do. He had blessed us beyond our wildest dreams, but he hadn't blessed us for our own sake. And we knew that He had a purpose behind this staggering windfall, which was meant to bring healing, hope and joy to many people.'

After this the Lancaster Foundation was born. 'John and I realised that we had to pray more deeply for the needs of the world, because we had been given a very great responsibility. We knew that we were stewards of God's money and our task was to serve the poor and needy, to honour our commitment to share God's heart wherever we went.' So, they pinned a map of the world on the wall...

You can read about how they came to buy three planes for Mission Aviation Fellowship, each dedicated to one of their grandchildren, and how they fell in love with Africa, supporting the first AIDS village in the world in South Africa, and the Open Arms Village in Kenya including two children's homes dedicated to two more grandchildren. Rosemary says, 'I can truly say that, from the moment of our first trip to the Maasai tribes onwards, Africa was in my soul and the people of Africa were in my heart.'

They also supported many innovative projects for young people in the UK and in their home town of Clitheroe, where they bought the ailing Grand cinema and turned it into a 'centre of life and celebration for the whole community once again' and even paid for a skate park in the historic Castle Gardens in Clitheroe! Life was not always plain sailing and they had other adventures in very tricky situations and realised the importance of making mistakes to gain knowledge and develop character.

Rosemary started writing about all these things as a long letter to her grandchildren, then realised that it is a story of blessing for many people. It is also very funny! She concludes the book with, 'We are all on a journey,

we all have a story to tell that can touch the life of another – God has a plan that includes you, dear reader, your life is precious to him. Dare to dream; I did.’

I decided to read this book after hearing about it in ‘Woman Alive’ monthly magazine. This is an excellent ‘magazine for today’s Christian woman.’ Fortunately for us, Pam subscribes to it and brings it to church for us all to enjoy. Just tick your name on the front and pass it on to someone else when you have read it.

Don’t forget we also have books you can borrow in the narthex. Just write the title, your name and the date in the book on the table. When you bring it back add the return date. Paul Barker has recently added a few more books – thank you Paul.

Liz Windaybank

Christian Aid Big Brekkie

Over the last few years there has been a steady decline in the amount we have been able to raise from door to door collecting during Christian Aid Week. We have had fewer collectors so have covered fewer roads, and, consequently, collected a dwindling number of envelopes year by year. In the year 2000 there were 411 envelopes compared to 94 in 2018. Therefore, we needed to think of other ways to boost the amount raised.

Last year the possibility of hosting a breakfast was suggested, and this year we decided to try this out. Christian Aid provided a wealth of materials and ideas for the organisation of a Big Brekkie, which proved very helpful. We advertised our event in as many ways as possible - online, invitations to all the churches in the Circuit and Churches around Hampton, posters, word of mouth and by delivering flyers to houses and flats in Percy Road. Even if the flyers did not produce a response, it was good to make our presence known.

We had no idea of how many people would come, or how much this event would raise. So, it was with some trepidation that we opened for business on Saturday 18 May at 9.15 am. It was not long before the first customers arrived and soon the hall was almost full. In fact, we needed to bring in extra tables. There was an amazing buzzy atmosphere, with most people staying on to chat as well as enjoy the deliciously healthy breakfast. (We had decided that cooking a traditional breakfast would be too difficult.) Christian Aid provided a quiz, which no one managed to answer completely correctly, and we had a bookstall and chocolate raffle. The raffle prizes were in stark contrast to the healthy choices on offer for breakfast!

If we had voiced our hopes, we might have thought that £200 would be an excellent outcome. However, the result was an incredible £476.55 raised and, with the addition of Gift Aid, increased to £575.69! So many people offered to help, that it would be too many to name and possibly miss someone out. But, on a personal note , I would like to thank everyone involved - in the publicity, preparing the hall and front of the church with bunting and balloons, setting up the tables, buying and preparing the food, washing up, providing raffle prizes and books, selling raffle tickets, clearing up afterwards, and , last but certainly not least, Bron’s Magical Me group for coming in to entertain us with some of their magic tricks. Everyone seemed to enjoy the event and we have appreciated the very favourable comments from people who attended.

Janice Thompson



Dates for your diary around the circuit and beyond

Saturday 8 June – Hampton Carnival from 12 noon - 5 pm on Nursery Green in the Avenue.

Saturday 8 June- Café Arts at Hounslow Methodist Church. An evening of stand-up comedy with Paul Kerensa, who has written for 'Miranda' and Lee Mack's 'Not going out.' Doors open 7 pm for 8 pm start. Tickets £8 in advance or £9 on the door.

Sunday 9 June- Thy Kingdom Come Christian Prayer Festival at Trafalgar Square. 12 – 4 pm Family Festival; 4 – 6 pm Main Service. Matt Redman, The Kingdom Choir, Lou Fellingham, Sounds of New Wine. Free event. Register at www.thykingdomcome.global/trafalgarsquare

Sunday 9 June- St Francis de Sales RC Church Charities Group Open Garden at 35 Wolsey Road, East Molesey. 2.30 – 4.30 pm. Entrance £2. Teas, coffees, cakes. Proceeds to several worthwhile charities.

Sundays 9 June and 14 of July at 3:30 - #kidzclub@SMC our fun, interactive children's service at Sunbury for children up to around 8 years old, accompanied by an adult.

18 – 22 June- Wintershall Life of Christ. Hundreds of actors bring the story of Jesus to life in an open-air epic production set in stunning Surrey countryside. Young and old from all walks of life will be mesmerised as the story unfolds across three captivating acts from 10 am to 3.30 pm. Call 01793 418299 to book. For full details see www.wintershall.org.uk

Saturday 6 July- Afternoon tea party at Hanworth Methodist Church to raise money for 'Nailed it', Hanworth's project for girls aged 11 – 16 and Macmillan Cancer Support. We will also be saying farewell to Naomi Oates, who will be leaving the circuit in August to serve as a probationer minister in North Kent. Starts 3 pm.

Wednesday 17 July - the monthly "Insights" Bible Study at Hampton will take a break from the Gospel of John and explore the resource "Talking of Jesus" which has been released by the Methodist Church's evangelism group. 7.45 – 9.30 pm.

1 – 29 August- Summer Thursdays play and craft activities for under 7s at East Molesey Methodist Church. 9.30 – 11.30 am every Thursday in August.

Monday 26 August- Family Fun Day at Hanworth Methodist Church - all welcome. Events to include a chance to meet Shetland ponies and a "Not the Crufts' Dog Show" with such categories as "most waggly tail" and "cuddliest older dog". 11 am – 2pm.

Tuesday 27 August- Messy Church at Hampton. 10.30 am -12 noon.

Launch the Summer at Hampton Methodist Church

What would it look like if we had a Messy Church, a Coffee Morning, magic, singing and a Church fete all on the same day I asked myself one morning while the kettle was boiling? Later, while waiting for another kettle to boil at the Hanworth Stay and Play, I asked Bron the same question and still later (probably also while waiting for kettles to boil) I asked Pam and then the stewards. We decided it might look rather wonderful and "Launch the Summer" was born.

The plan is to have Messy Church activities on the front lawn (we'll move them if needed into the large hall); soft play borrowed from Hanworth, singing, magic and the usual story time in the large hall; coffee, stalls and a light lunch offering in the small hall and the chance to go into the church and see Abraham's Tent. It will be an opportunity to engage with the community, showcase some of what we do, have fun with our children and young people and ... well, "Launch the Summer". We hope to see you there on **30 July between 10.30 am and 2.30 pm**.

Vicci, Bron and Pam