



Baptists and Methodists together at Hampton Methodist Church

November 2019



21 July 2019 - The lighted candle from Bethany Chapel is brought to Hampton Methodist Church

Isaiah 43 v 19 - See, I am doing a new thing!

Friends

Well, what a busy spring, summer and early autumn it's been and yet it has been incredibly difficult to focus on one thing to talk about in this letter – perhaps because there has been so much happening across the Circuit. There are many new things to look forward to and many old things to remember with nostalgia, pride or sadness. November, with All Saints Day, All Souls Day and Remembrance Day is a month of remembering and with the last of the summer days over, we may also look back to the warmth of the summer, perhaps time away, and the whole of the winter stretches before us.

At Hampton, we have embedded new ways of doing Messy Church, Insights Bible Study, Tea and Memories and Magical Me. We have forged strong friendships between the two congregations which form the Hampton Mission Partnership, we have launched our Godly Play classroom (Bethany Corner) and we have done all this while passing through and by stacks of bikes, children's equipment, nappies, tinned food and empty coffee packs; surrounded by our response to the needs of the world through The Extra Mile, the Bike Hub and our donations to Baby Basics, the Foodbank and the URC recycling efforts. Then there is our work for MHA, for All We Can, for the Leprosy Mission, for the Baptist Mission Partner, for Action for Children and the individual work carried out on behalf of smaller charities by members of our congregation. Even with our joint numbers somewhere between 66 and 77, there is an activity for every four to five people and that ignores our core work – the incredible amount of work required to run Breakfast Church (now so popular we have to have it in the large hall), morning worship, finance, property, stewarding, room hire, pastoral care and fellowship, membership classes for young people and quite a lot of music and football! In many ways, this is a magazine about new beginnings. Yet new beginnings happen because solid foundations are built upon which they may stand. So I thank you, all of you, for the tremendous work that you do, for the love that you bring and for the witness that Hampton Mission Partnership gives to the world in this place.

Why do we do it? We do it because we love and we love because God first loved us. As we spend time this month remembering the people we have loved who have gone before us and settling into the daily rhythms of all our activities, let us remember that we don't do this out of duty, or fear or even hope, but out of love and may the witness of that love pour out into the streets of Hampton and beyond as we move forward, a new congregation united in love, a new people bound together in a shared faith.

Christians were not called Christians by themselves but by others who noted that they were people who followed Christ. Baptists were not called Baptists by themselves, but by others who mocked their practice of full immersion baptism. Methodists were not called Methodists by themselves but by others who laughed at their methodical way of carrying out their Christian faith. Whatever name others give our partnership in the future, may it reflect our faith, our hope, our joy and our love in our God and in each other and mocking or otherwise, recognise that in this place, among these people they see the face of God.

God bless

Vicci

Going out with joy

Sunday 21st July 2019 could have been a very sad day for the fellowship at Hampton Baptist Church. 27 years after being planted by Teddington Baptist Church we were holding our last service at Bethany Chapel in Beards Hill. Although there had been some dark and troublesome days during those years, God was always faithful to us, providing for us financially, calling people with the giftings which we needed and giving us times of great blessing and 21st July was one of these especially as our long term friend and beloved Moderator for the previous 20 months, David Priddy, led our service and preached.

We began with a time of worship singing our praise (“Jesus is King” and “Jesus is the Name we Honour”) followed by thanksgiving for Hampton Baptist Church and all that God had done for us – “Great is Thy Faithfulness” before David’s sermon.

He began by reminding us of the words God had given to us when we started to explore His future purpose for us in the autumn of 2017 – from Romans 15 “Encouragement, Endurance and Unity” – a message which had led us to seek a partnership with another Church in Hampton so that, together, we might pursue God’s mission for us and explained that from this God had led him to Revelation 3, verses 7 to 11, the portion about the church in Philadelphia.

God always has His eye on us and wants the best for us - the Hampton Mission Partnership is here and He has brought us to this point. As a fellowship we have been encouraged and are now moving on in the life of Hampton Baptist Church.

At the start of his sermon David had asked us to turn our chairs around so that we faced the main doors of the chapel echoing verse 8 of his text, “See I have placed an open door before you that no one can shut”, and now challenged us to go through these open doors to follow the apostle Paul, “that we make it our goal to please Him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it”, echoing his previous message at both churches that we should be shoulder to shoulder as we live, love and serve God in the Hampton Mission Partnership.

We sang “You shall go out with joy” and taking a lighted lantern symbolising our faith and life at Bethany Chapel processed to the Church in Percy Road. There we were welcomed by Mark Gilks, the Senior Steward, and the lighted lantern was placed on the communion table by Paul Barker, the Elder of the Baptist Church. In his welcome Mark emphasised that Hampton Methodist and Baptist Churches have joined together in a partnership to further the expression of Jesus’ love for the people of Hampton and this was emphasised by David in his response. Together they prayed for the outreach activities and projects supported by both partners and introduced the Partnership hymn which we used to celebrate our joining.

There is a redeemer
Jesus, God's own Son
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
Holy One

Jesus my redeemer
Name above all names
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
Oh, for sinners slain

Thank you, oh my father
For giving us Your Son

And leaving Your Spirit
'Til the work on Earth is done [Chorus]

When I stand in Glory
I will see His face
And there I'll serve my King forever
In that Holy Place [Chorus]

There is a redeemer
Jesus, God's own Son
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
Holy One [Chorus]

And leaving Your Spirit
'Til the work on Earth is done

Barbara Spittle



New Beginnings, Again!

This time last year I wrote an article for the church magazine about a new start for me personally as I was newly retired from full time work. This year we have another new start, but as a church this time. During one of our morning services on a sunny Sunday in July our friends at Hampton Baptist Church sadly had their last service at the Bethany Chapel in Beards Hill and processed the short distance to HMC with a lantern 'lighting' their way. This was to symbolise that although they were not meeting as they had done any more, their light was continuing in their new home. I cannot tell you how moving it was; I am sure those that were present on that Sunday morning as they joined us for the last part of our service, and their lantern was placed on the altar, will testify to what an amazing event to witness in the history of HMC.

I feel, and I am sure I am not alone, that although it is a sad situation to see a church close, we are fortunate that we have been able to welcome the Hampton Baptist congregation into our church and together have been able to form Hampton Mission Partnership – where we can work together and continue to worship and serve God in our local community. In just a short time we have seen integration of the two congregations at work with new people on door rotas, coffee rotas and helping at Messy Church and The Extra Mile. One of the preachers made a comment that at the first service he took it was obvious the new additions sat together, but at a recent service they were all dotted around the church – sitting near old/new friends and getting to know others. I am confident that this will work very well for both congregations and will be an asset to Hampton as a whole, so look forward to the difference we can make together.

By the time this magazine comes out you will notice that we have four new stewards. Many thanks to Mark, Liz and Willem for their excellent service as stewards over the years, even staying over their 6-year term to ensure we had a steady hand during an important time. Welcome to Eunice, Doris, Jeffery and Joana and we look forward to your service in our church. Being a steward is not an easy task and I would ask everyone to support your stewards as sometimes things do not go to plan and it takes a lot of time ensuring that your Sunday service happens and is enjoyable and relatively problem free; there is a lot to organise so please support where you can if you see anyone struggling.

At our small church we have been very blessed with a now healthy sized congregation and willingness to serve to ensure that we thrive in our service to God.

Pam Harrison (Senior Steward)

Sunbury Court: The Salvation Army International College for Officers

What a pleasure it was to receive a group from Hampton Methodist Church to our beautiful house in Sunbury Court, for afternoon tea in early July. The house is used by The Salvation Army for officers from all over the world to come because they have been identified as possible national leaders in their own countries, and they come for spiritual retreat and for a greater understanding of the Salvation Army around the world and leadership development. They come from wealthy nations and very poor nations although more from the latter because our mission has always been to the very poor.

A Salvation Army Officer is called by God and commits their whole life in service. They promise that they will go wherever The Salvation Army feels that they are needed, and at short notice they move to a house that belongs to the Salvation Army to a role that has been assigned to them. For many years an officer could only be married to another officer so that they were both mobile and available. That has changed now but mobility and availability has always been vital to our effectiveness.

Neil and I have been married for 35 years and usually served for four years in a place, and then we were sent to another assignment. In 2010 we were called to meet the International Leader of the Army and asked to move to Papua New Guinea. We had no idea even where Papua New Guinea was!! We served there in a culture so totally foreign to our own, in a climate of 32° all day and all night, in a most primitive setting where The Salvation Army is providing schools, clinics, churches and projects to help provide water and sanitation and income generation. We were certainly out of our comfort zone! Few people get the chance of adventure in their mid-50's and this was certainly the ride of our lives. We are so grateful to God and The Salvation Army for allowing us this amazing experience.

In the glorious way God prepares us for the next task, that PNG experience prepared us for the role we now have as leaders of this college, taking care of officers from all over the world many of whom come from a similar setting to the one we lived in. With that understanding we are able to help to prepare them for the tasks that will be theirs in the future. We have six weeks to bless them and provide this beautiful place for rest and learning. If you see a group of many nationalities walking the streets around here there is every chance they will be our delegates. As you know, we feed people well here and you need to walk that off from time to time!!

Colonel Chris Webb

Chris will be giving a talk at Ladies Guild on 19 November entitled, 'Lessons along the way - Life with the Salvation Army.' Everyone welcome to come along.

Our young people

Over three weekends in July, Vicci and Bron met with some of the circuit youth to prepare them for confirmation. Here is their response to the three weeks we had together and what we're planning to do next:

God is powerful, and over three weeks we as young people in the circuit explored God's power, peace and presence in our lives as we prepared ourselves for confirmation.

We found it useful to learn from each other and appreciate what's so special about being a part of the Methodist Church.

We appreciated the time given in strengthening our faith and being able to learn from experienced members and church leaders. We challenged ourselves with questions such as "What is a Methodist?" "Does God really love us?" and "What does it mean to commit ourselves to God?"

We've enjoyed being together so much we have decided to keep our commitment to God and each other by starting a new project called The Hang Out, where we will meet and have fun, and talk about God, life and the universe.

Johanna, Cameron, Ivan, Isaac, Vuyiswa and Vianna

The Hang Out will be at Sunbury Methodist Church from 5:30-7pm on the second Sunday of the month. We are open to all high school aged circuit youth, and meetings will include a short Bible study, snacks and games. Contact Rev. Vicci or Bron for more information:

Rev Vicci: rev.vicci@mail.com

Bron: layworker.tmcc@gmail.com

Cameron, Ivan, Vuyiswa and Vianna were welcomed into membership at Hampton on 22 September. It was a very moving service, especially as we have watched Cameron and the girls grow and mature over the years, and Ivan has quickly become part of the HMC family since coming from Ghana.

Lord for the years

The year 1959 has for many of my generation a tragic connotation. In February of that year a light aircraft crashed near Clear Lake, Iowa; among the dead were Ritchie Valens, the Big Bopper and the legendary Buddy Holly. It was in Don Maclean's words "the day the music died". However, something very positive also happened that year, because it was then that a young Brian Goodwin became a Methodist Local Preacher. That's sixty years of service to the Lord!

In a delightful Circuit Service at Sunbury MC on the 22nd September we gathered with Brian, his family and friends to celebrate this amazing milestone. In fact, we had a double celebration as at the same service we marked Revd. John Salmon's 65 years of ordained ministry. Yes! That's 125 years in all- a massive achievement.

It was only fitting that such an occasion should have a very special guest preacher. Indeed, we were blessed by having Revd. Michaela Youngson, who has just stepped down from being the President of the Methodist Conference. Michaela had been ill in the week running up to the service so it was a joy to see her well again. In keeping with long established Methodist tradition, we had tea and cake before the service, co-ordinated by the team at Sunbury MC, with every Circuit church making their contribution. Michaela preached about Christians being salt to the world reflecting on our Gospel reading Matthew 5:13-16. She then presented Brian and John with their hard-earned long service awards. The Circuit's Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, many of whom played a part in the service, laid hands on Brian and John in a moment of powerful prayer.

John and Brian both told us a little of their own story. Brian was keen to highlight the enormous debt he owed to Ernest Bolam, former Minister at Rivercourt Church, Hammersmith, one of Methodist's experts on pastoral care. He also regaled us with the problem of needing to pass "O" Level Latin, an essential requirement in those days to study at Cambridge University. Despite his dyslexia, Brian overcame the hurdle at the second attempt, made it to Cambridge to read chemistry and the rest is history!

It was important that Brian's family were able to enjoy (yes, that is the right word) this special service, with some really uplifting hymn singing. I always think of Brian and Pam as a team and it was a joy to see Pam at Brian's side.

All of us have a ministry, even if we don't put our collar on back to front; all of us preach, even if you don't use words; so, it is good for all of us to celebrate what God has done in and with our lives. No one wants an Oscar for being a Christian, but we can all take inspiration from the testimony of those who worship with us. Thank you, Lord, for the years.

Mark Gilks



Hampton & Richmond F.C. Football Club Service - 29th September 2019

Historically Hampton Baptist Church (HBC) has hosted an annual service for Hampton & Richmond F.C. (HRFC) as Paul Barker is both an elder of HBC and HRFC club chaplain. As Hampton Methodist Church (HMC) and HBC have now formed the Hampton Mission Partnership, this year the service was held at Hampton Methodist Church which is the new meeting place for the Hampton Mission Partnership. Breaking with tradition coffee, tea and refreshments were served from 10:00 a.m. before the service, and attendees were able to bring their drinks into the service.

First Half - Kick Off 10:30 a.m.

Paul Barker gave the Welcome and an introduction to the service. There were readings from Job and Psalm 95 - "Let us sing to the Lord". During the course of the service Paul interviewed. Richard Parsons (Club Secretary and Operations Director), players Luke Ruddick (Club Captain) and Shaun McAuley, and Adrian Mann (Club Shop Manager). This gave us an insight into how players (who are semi-professional) cope with the life, work and football balance and also the amount of work that goes on behind the scenes in running a small football club. Semi-professional means that the players support their income by employment and in some cases by running their own businesses. Many also have families with young children and therefore rely on the support of their life partners. Life is a logistical puzzle as, if the team is playing far away from home during the week, it means that players and club officials may not get home until the early hours of the morning with the requirement to get to work the next day.

The sermon was given by Danny Sitton taking a text from Acts chapter 8 vv. 26-40 and posing the question - "Do you believe in coincidences?" and how this is related to faith. This was illustrated with the account in this chapter of Acts of Philip offering an explanation of a reading from Isaiah to the Ethiopian eunuch. I am pleased to report that during this first half there was no chanting and no yellow or red cards were shown!

Second Half - Kick Off 12:30 p.m.

We were all invited back to the Football Club in Beaver Close, Hampton, for a buffet lunch following the service. A sumptuous spread was prepared by Tricia Barker and her team of helpers and the buffet was laid out in Hammonds Bar at the Club. So we continued our fellowship during lunch and were able to continue to get to know each other, as Hampton Mission Partnership is a comparatively new venture.

Although the morning service and the buffet lunch were a departure from our usual Sunday worship it was a very exciting introduction to how the Christians of Baptist and Methodist traditions can come together and form new and continuing relationships and extend our Christian mission to the Hampton community.

Willem Sandberg



Getting to know Barbara

I was born into a non-churchgoing family in Manchester. My Mother knew she was an agnostic but my Father was not so sure. His parents were involved in their parish Church, St Mary's Osterley, and although he had some faith, he thought church was not necessary to its maintenance.

Consequently, it was a huge surprise to everyone when aged 13 I started going to the local Baptist Church in Pinner where we were then living, dad's job having brought us south. I now realise that this was God's call but at the time it seemed inexplicable – a sense that I had to do this, that I felt at home in the services and other activities. I was swiftly befriended by an older lady and her family and through them gently absorbed into the fellowship. At 15 I asked for baptism and church membership and my faith journey began in earnest.

University followed with the opportunity to be part of a broad range of Christian groups and a local Baptist Church. I then began a thirty-year career in local government and although this might not be what we generally view as a "calling" it allowed me to work in areas where I could make a difference such as education, care and housing. As God and my job moved me around, I was part of several churches ranging from a massive 400 member Baptist Church to a village Local Ecumenical Project in Hampshire. I enjoyed youth work and teaching Sunday School and served as a Deacon.

I arrived in the Richmond area in 1990 and joined Teddington Baptist Church in 1991 just in time to become one of the planting team for Hampton Baptist Church. A career change in 2004 to university lecturing and consultancy meant that I was able to do more at HBC and in the wider denomination. As I have grown older this has focused on administrative roles such as Treasurer and Secretary – a sign from God perhaps, that my camping days are behind me!

The last 20 months have been a testing time for the HBC fellowship as we came to terms with the reality that we were unable to continue our separate ministry. God has been faithful to HBC for 26 years and He has now brought us into a new partnership with all of you, our Methodist brothers, sisters and friends. I look forward to serving Him through and in the Hampton Mission Partnership.

Barbara Spittle



Getting to know Doris

I was born in to a Christian orthodox home in Ghana. Growing up with my grandparents I will say was the best feeling as a child. I was confirmed in 1997 as a full communicant. But it came to a point in time when I would have to leave my family and had to move to another region to help a worthy family look after their little ones. Over there, the family were Christians too, but they did not practice it intensely. In view of this I took it upon myself to start doing morning devotion with the children and asked permission so that we could attend church services on Sundays. I then started going to Presbyterian church with the children since, to me it is an obligation as a Christian to attend church every Sunday, and I will say clearly too with no guilt that I see it as an escaping point where I can sit for 3 - 4 hours without having to do any household chores!

In 2000 my foster parents had to travel to Canada where the woman was offered a job as a surgeon. So I was brought back to my grandparents in Peki. As I look back today, and having remained in contact with my two sisters as I call them, I will say I have really instilled good morals in them since their parents were busy creating a comfortable life for their future. I stood in and introduced them to God and because of that they grew up and never stopped loving God. The elder one has remained in touch with me and always says, 'Sister Doris you have given us the best thing ever which no one will take away from us.' Even though then I will say it was just a normal continuation of a routine as I grew up to see my parents and grandparents do it.

I will say my real encounter with God was when I went to secondary school. That was after I came back to my real family from the people I was helping to look after their children. I decided to go back to school and because my mother does not have money to take me to the secondary school in our village, we planned together that I go to the next five village far away to attend their Secondary Technical since that is quite affordable. In the process of pursuing this dream of having a secondary education I was privileged to live with one of my aunties who was a Deeper Life Christian Treasurer then in that village. To cut a long story short, living with that auntie was what gave me the opportunity to understand God and his love for humanity and the benefit it takes to be a true Christian. I started to share his words with friends in school and offered to become the scripture union leader, which as well has challenged me always to have a high chastity life since others will be looking upon me as role model. In my three years in Secondary Technical I won over 50 souls to Christ. I remember on our school leavers night I was acknowledged as the best female student with outstanding reports. I owe my life then, now and future to God for he has dealt well with my soul and I will remain in this love for Christ until his great kingdom comes.

Doris Bramson



Could you be eating your clothes?

It might surprise you, but you are probably wearing plastic clothes. Many of our clothes contain plastics like polyester, nylon, acrylic and polyamide. Every time we wash these materials, they shed millions of plastic microfibrils. These are threads so small they can drain out of washing machines and pass straight through wastewater treatment plants and into the sea.

Once in the sea these microfibrils absorb toxic chemicals, and marine organisms such as plankton can easily mistake these tiny plastics for food. Anything that dines on the plankton will get a dose of plastic pollution potentially passing it up the food chain. Microplastics have been found in mussels and fish destined for the dinner table. They've also been found in drinking water, beer and table salt.

Tiny fibres might be very small but they absorb high concentrations of poisonous substances such as detergents and fire-proofing chemicals, some of which, such as DDT, are now banned but which escaped into our oceans years ago. Some of these pose a threat to our liver, kidneys and nervous system, others are toxic to marine life. They are certainly not substances you would want lurking in the food chain.

For many materials recycling is a useful way of preventing pollution – but not for plastic. It just delays the inevitable escape of pollutants into the environment. Many plastics can only be recycled a few times before they become too low grade anyway.

A plastic bottle is thrown away. It fragments into microplastics, which last hundreds of years, spreading pollutants. Or it is sent for recycling – where it may be made into polyester and maybe made into fleece. At once it starts shedding microplastics which find their way into the environment and last for hundreds of years, spreading pollutants. That's why we need to phase out all but the most essential plastics – and need to find alternatives to using plastic in clothing.

Retailers have been asked to look at ways of removing the most polluting items from the shelves and most have agreed there needs to be a shared way of measuring how much plastic pollution their products cause.

So, what can we do in the meantime?

- Wash clothing at lower temperatures – it is less aggressive and therefore less likely to shake out plastic fibres
- Reduce spin speeds – faster spin speeds dry clothes quicker but they also shake them up, risking more plastics shedding.
- Air dry rather than tumble dry – tumble drying is more aggressive and could cause clothes to shed more plastic.
- Buy fewer fleeces – polyester fleece could well be one of the biggest emitters of microfibrils. Consider buying a woollen fleece instead.
- Keep clothes for longer. Your clothes are likely to shed more plastic in the first few washes – so frequently changing your wardrobe will probably increase the amount of plastic you are sending into the environment. Buy higher quality clothes that last.

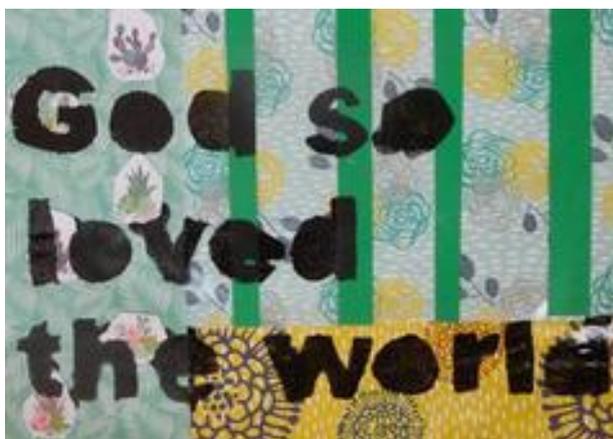
Hazel Greasby – from an article by Friends of the Earth.

Teddington Methodist Church Community Craft Day

On Friday 30th August, members of the congregation and wider community came to create a range of pieces of art to enhance our church building. There were lots of activities going on in the main hall including paper collages (with extracts of bible verses stencilled across them), painting/cutting plastic bottles and adding tiles to a large mosaic. The plastic bottles have been cut and hung in the corridor near the car park entrance (has this a name?!) to create a large chandelier. This is inspired by the Chihuly glass installations in Kew Gardens and a great way of reusing plastic bottles. The wonderful collages will be framed and displayed in this corridor too. We continue to work on the mosaic which we plan to install in the Stanley Road entrance to welcome people into the Church. The vibrant colours look fantastic. We are very grateful to Alison Boore who created the overall design. (Picture below shows the mosaic in October.)

During the day, people of different generations came to join in with the activities, eat cake, chat and enjoy a ploughman's lunch in the garden. Thank you to all involved especially Jo Morgan for her inspiring ideas, great enthusiasm and for providing some of the materials. Thanks to Sue Morrell and Helen Bott for serving coffee and lunches. Also, a BIG THANKS to all who came and contributed. We hope you enjoy seeing your art works when they are displayed.

Sally Aston and Cathy Trevelyan



Hampton Methodist housegroup

Jim Stockley, one of our previous pastors, was keen to establish house groups in the 1990's and two were set up, one meeting in Hazel and Colin's home and the other at Wendy's, which is still running. Initially Hilary Everitt prepared the material but now we take it in turns. We meet on alternate Thursdays at 7.45 to finish at 9.30pm, with breaks at Christmas and in the summer.

We have used various Bible study guides in the past, some from A Life Builder Bible Study series including 'Angels', 'Pleasing God' and 'Women of the Old Testament.' We now prefer guides that include a DVD, and have used material from Philip Yancy, for instance 'Prayer: Does it make any difference?' and 'The Jesus I never knew.' Also, some by John Ortberg such as 'The life you've always wanted' and 'If you want to walk on water, you've got to get out of the boat.'

We are currently using a guide by Jeff Lucas who we have found popular in the past. The current guide is entitled 'Life, the journey for new Christians.' which we have just started. We feel that although we are not new Christians there is much we can gain by studying this material.

We start each session by sharing news, then have a prayer. We watch the DVD and go through the material and then we share any concerns, whether for ourselves, our families, members of the congregation or our world and then we have a time of prayer before closing. We find that the fellowship enriches our Christian journey and strengthens our faith. We are currently a small group of seven but look forward to welcoming anyone who would like to join us.

We usually go for a meal together in the Christmas season and again in the summer holidays. Previously some of these have been progressive meals visiting a different home for each course. Upcoming dates are 14 and 28 November and 12 December.

Margaret Thorn

Hampton Baptist home group

The home group at Hampton Baptist Church began as a group of Christians coming together in Hampton to pray for the way forward in settling a group in Hampton as a Church plant from Teddington Baptist Church. After Hampton Baptist Church became established, it continued as a midweek meeting where people could come together to pray for each other, support each other and study God's word, in a more informal and intimate setting.

The small group continues to meet on Tuesday evenings 7.45pm – 9.45pm in one of two local homes, with the same focus – to uphold each other and the work of the church in prayer and to further study and explore the word of God and it's relevance for us today.

We tend to use the CWR 'Cover to Cover' books which are often written in 7 small group bible study sessions – either following a theme such as 'Great prayers of the Bible' or a book of the Bible such as 'Ruth' which is our current study.

Due to various personal commitments we cannot always meet every week, but the dates we are meeting and the venue for that date is published in the Sunday notice sheet and all are welcome to join us – even if you have not been before.

Depending on the number of weeks available, we often have at least one session per term dedicated to prayer and worship. On these occasions we spend time both in praise, often watching videos of songs and joining in, prayer and quiet reflection, and when it seems appropriate, also participating in communion together.

If you would like any more information or would like to join us, please feel free to speak to me or any of the group.

Christine Broomfield.

Summer events

Catching up with Joan at Denbies; Eunice, Monika, Roderigo and Rubina in Germany; Day out with Hilary; Visiting John Trotter. Apologies for poor quality pictures on a failing camera!



Waverley Abbey – Inspiring Women

On 9 October, 12 of us from the Partnership went to Waverley Abbey for the Inspiring Women Autumn Day 2019. The subject was The Power of Choice. We started with coffee then headed upstairs to the Waverley Room for session one, which was entitled Choice Defined.

We started with musical worship, which was lovely, then we were introduced to our speaker, Jen Baker, an American who told us that God had told her to leave Michigan 16 years ago and come to England, even though she had no visa, job, or anywhere to live! She has travelled all over the world to preach, and is passionate about the word of God. We were told that we need to make the right choices and decisions in our life, to look at the Word, not the world. We need to remove doubt and fear to make the right choices. She pointed us to 2 Timothy 1 v. 7, which tells us that God gave us a spirit of power, love and self-discipline, so;

Power / love / sound mind/ gives us:

Authority / Identity / Clarity / which drives out:

Fear / Shame / Confusion.

Jen told us:

1. A doubt-based thought will produce a fear-based decision.
2. Identity empowers choice, our decisions should be spirit led.
3. Peace can only come from God.
4. Perfect worlds can be shattered, but shattered worlds can be perfected again.
5. Don't fear mistakes, just use them.
6. Insecurity rejects responsibility, identity accepts it.
7. The past does not define your future, it informs it.
8. God knows in his wisdom what I cannot understand in my humanity, we must rest there.

We broke off for a lovely lunch, and some of our group walked to the Abbey ruins in the grounds, before returning for the final session. Jen had so much to tell us, she had to skip much of what she had prepared. We could have done with more time!

She finished by saying we should keep the right company, choose our friends carefully, choose our future, choose to keep choosing, and throw away distractions. She left us with 10 practical questions to ask

The power of choice

10 practical questions to ask:

- What do my spiritual leaders say?
- What do my closest friends say?
- What does my gut say?
- Is fear leading this decision?
- Is this in line with God's purposes for my life?(vision/values)
- If I say 'no' how do I feel?
- Which answer is outside of my comfort zone?
- Do I have peace about the timing?
- Who else will this decision affect and what do they say?
- Have I fully surrendered my will and the outcome to God?



Hampton Harvest and Partnership Service

This year on the 13th of October, we had our Harvest Service in which we gave thanks, both for the Harvest of food and for the Harvest of Community as we formally recognised the joining together of Hampton Methodist Church and Hampton Baptist Church to create the Hampton Mission Partnership. It was also an opportunity to launch Bethany Corner, our new Godly Play classroom.

Bethany Corner arose out of our need to offer something of value to our children and young people in a context where there are not enough volunteers to run a traditional junior church. Surrounded by the historical sweep of the Bible stories, it allows the children to remain aware of 5000 years of history in a new and interactive way. The library of books of the Bible, baskets of animals, the ark, Moses and the desert, the Judges, Ruth, the Kings, including David and the Psalms, the Prophets, Daniel in the lions' den, John the Baptist, the Holy Family, the life and witness, death and resurrection of Jesus and the disciples as well as stories of the early church are all represented through books, toys, puzzles, games and models which the children can play with or respond to using the art and craft materials.

We introduced the idea using the church calendar – Advent, Christmas, the great, green growing time of the ordinary seasons, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and more green, growing, discipling time. We built the calendar with Lego bricks, and a felt version on the wall will allow the children to note where they are throughout the year.

To the sound of children still learning to work quietly in the space, we reflected on the importance of the Deuteronomy injunction to leave some of the harvest for the orphan, the widow and the foreigner and asked God to bless our own harvest gifts which have been donated to the Hampton Food Bank and Women's Refuge.

Mark and Paul led us in a short recollection of the journey which the Methodist and Baptist congregations have made to arrive at this place of travelling together in missional partnership and we laid down the keys to Bethany Chapel, the home of Hampton Baptists and the open padlock, signifying the opening of Hampton Methodist Church to the new partnership congregation. After reflecting on the churches' journeys to partnership, the new logo, shown on the front cover, was revealed. Finally, we left our seats to take bread and wine and stand together as a sign of the harvest of friendship and family created from the seed of our willingness to lay down our individual identities as separate communities.

During the offering, Vianna played the piano, accustoming herself to that adrenaline spike that comes with playing music for worship and beginning a journey of practice which we plan to encourage in our young people and which we hope will result in new musicians and leaders for our future worship.

It was a time of celebration, it was a time of thanksgiving, it was a service that reminded us of all that we have been given: food, partnership, young people, the wherewithal to serve them and others in Hampton as we gave thanks:

For the fruits of creation

For the trees and the grass, the flowers and the bushes

For the animals, the birds, the fish

For sunrises and sunsets and all the glory in-between.

For the gifts of intellect, wisdom and free choice with which God has graced us

For our doctors and researchers who have found ways to heal

For our farmers, geographers and biologists who have found ways to grow food more effectively

For our engineers, mechanics and builders who have found ways to bring the world closer and who are struggling to learn ways of healing the land

For our mathematicians, statisticians and analysts who help us understand what is going on in our world

For our teachers, preachers and researchers who help us to make sense of the world in all its marvellous complexity

And for the opportunity to explore together new ways to be church in this place.

Revd Vicci Davidson



Full of Life Fair

It was a busy day as always on Friday 4 October at the annual Full of Life Fair for Richmond residents over 55, held at Twickenham Rugby Stadium. There were more than 1000 visitors and 80 stalls. We had lots of visitors to our stall and they loved the jam/honey and other freebies, and we were able to give away hundreds of leaflets about activities for seniors in churches across the Borough. We also gave some "Strength and Hope" booklets where we felt it was appropriate and these were warmly received. The prayer tree was again well received with plenty of people tying ribbons or writing prayers. The photo was taken before everyone arrived.

Tina English
Director of Embracing Age



The Extra Mile

Since returning after our summer break The Extra Mile (TEM) has been busy with referrals and sorting donations. We have supported families in Molesey as well as other parts of Surrey; Hounslow, Kingston, Richmond and Spelthorne Boroughs. Only this week we had two new professionals contact us, one quite local and the other from Guildford who have families in need in our area. So, our outreach is far and wide and seems to be growing rapidly.

We also have a new Facebook page, so if you are a Facebook user please find us. There are new leaflets being printed to include the Hampton Mission Partnership logo and a general update on graphics and content. On the home front - Waitrose in Hampton decided to choose TEM as one of its local charities for the 'Green Token Scheme' during October. We had the most donations and raised £210. At the same time the Hygiene Bank in Hampton had a basket for toiletries for us and these have been boxed up ready for us to collect next week. We are very lucky to have such enthusiastic and strong support from the local communities and we all appreciate every little gesture made as it makes such a difference.

Pam Harrison

Jim Stockley

'Thank you so much for sending the Hampton magazines for us. We have been so appreciative of the love that has been shown for dad. It was such a lovely gesture to devote space in the magazine for tributes reflecting people's memories of dad.

We were also so pleased and quite overwhelmed that so many people from Hampton came to the Thanksgiving Service. It meant a lot to Diana and myself. We have been very grateful for the love, kind thoughts and support from the people at Hampton.

May God bless you.'

With love from Christine and family

'I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, letters, cards and telephone calls following Jim's death on 2 April. I also very much appreciated those who came to his Thanksgiving Service, and I did try to speak to everyone. I know Jim had many happy memories of his and Grace's time at Hampton and often talked to me about them.

I have moved out of Jim's house and should anyone wish to contact me, my telephone number is 01202 430210. Jim has left a very big gap in my life and I miss him dreadfully; life is very different now.

I have sent Liz Windaybank a DVD of the Thanksgiving Service for anyone who would like to borrow it and I have also included spare copies of the order of service.

With Christian greetings to everyone'

Diana

Brenda and Bill Messingham

It was lovely to receive the church magazines from Hampton – a lot of memories came flooding back.

I attended Teddington Baptist Church until I married Bill in 1960. When Gail, our elder daughter was three in 1965, as there was no Baptist Church in Hampton then, I took her to Percy Road for Sunday School and soon after spent 12 years as a teacher with the children under seven. During that time John and Trudy were christened in 1965 and 1970.

Bill and I took part in several things while at HMC. I was chairwoman of Ladies Guild for several years and helped Bryan Woodriff to start the Boys Brigade company in 1987, then with Jim Stockley leading the first Alpha course after training with Hampton Baptist and Sunbury Methodist. Bill was a steward and senior steward, twice representing Hampton in the circuit and circuit Home Missions Secretary and Synod, and as an officer in the Boys Brigade. The memories continued as we recognised several names including Mark Gilks and Wendy Salmon.

We left Hampton in October 1997 and moved to Cleethorpes. We joined St Andrew's Methodist Church at first but after 12 years things changed. When the morning service changed to 9.30 it became more difficult to attend regularly, so eight years ago we joined the Anglican church within walking distance of us. They made us very welcome and we are very happy there, especially as Bill packed up driving last October. In June this year Bill was diagnosed with cancer and had a big operation on 5 July, which he is recovering from with treatment slowly.

I want to thank Liz Windaybank (my sister-in-law) for all the messages she passed on from people who remembered us and for your minister and congregation who prayed for us. Keep up the good work you are doing in the church and community for our Lord.

Brenda Messingham

Since writing this Bill felt unwell and had a fall at home. On 16 October he sadly died.

Memories of Bill

Bill Messingham was Senior Steward at Hampton Methodist Church in the late 1980's and early 1990's, when I first became a steward. He was, simply put, a smashing bloke. Tall and black bearded he might have given the impression of being fierce, but in reality, he was the total opposite. He was truly a gentle man. The stewards would pack the lounge in his house on Broome Road for the stewards meeting. We needed two stewards for the Sunday morning service and two more for the Sunday evening service. Bill ran the meeting with a jollity that was attractive and encouraging. His personality was as warm as that packed lounge. My job at the time entailed a lot of evening work, and he would kindly fix the meetings around my availability. He often would tell stories about his boyhood growing up in Hampton, such as being so happy when his school was closed because it had been bombed in WW2. Whenever we had a nativity play as part of the service, due to his height and beard, Bill was always a shepherd. It was clearly type casting!

If you know where to look on our website you will find a lovely photo of Bill, wife Brenda, David Salmon and Brian Woodriff with the Boys Brigade lads. Bill was a natural for this ministry, team working as always with Brenda.

I, like so many at our church, have much to thank Bill for over the years, and although he and Brenda moved out of Hampton it was always a joy to see him when he came back for a visit. We give our thanks to God for Bill and his life, and our prayers for Brenda and all the family. May Bill rest in Peace and rise in Glory.

Mark Gilks

I became a member of Hampton Methodist Church in June 1989 at the same time as Pam Harrison, and Bill was a church steward. Rev Ronald Kemp made an appeal for more people to get involved, so I asked Bill what it involved and became a steward for the first time in 1991. That was a memorable year for other reasons also...

Brenda was a good friend of mine and often looked after my daughter after school. Picking her up one day I discovered that Brenda had a brother and not many months later the Messinghams became not only friends but also family when John and I were married at HMC. Bill stepped in to 'give me away' and thereafter if he phoned I would be told that my dad wanted to speak to me!

Bill had a big heart and children loved him as much as he did them. He made a great Father Christmas, even fooling his own family. He had a strong, uncomplicated faith and was a great encourager. Bill's brother Peter is married to Brenda and John's sister Barbara, and Bill's sudden death has knocked us for six, coming only a few months after the death of a dear cousin, Dr Roger Hurding. Over the years Roger had organised several cousins get-togethers, so that we don't just meet up at funerals. I can only imagine that the reunions are now continuing in Heaven!

We said goodbye to Bill at St Francis of Assisi Church on 1 November in a lovely service conducted by Father Nick Nawrockyi. The last hymn was Bill's favourite: 'Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord'. Brenda had managed to organise a special wish of Bill's for his funeral, which took us all by surprise! A Scottish piper played 'Amazing Grace' on the bagpipes as we left the church and again as we reached the crematorium. A perfect ending and Bill would have loved it.

Liz Windaybank



Books

Postcards from the land of Grief by Richard Littledale

Losing someone who is close to you is a difficult experience. It has been described as 'The path not chosen.' Grief brings with it many emotions including anger, disbelief, denial and anxiety and also feelings of isolation, intense sadness, loneliness and fear for the future. Each person learns how to deal with bereavement and grief in their own way but it is not an easy pathway to travel on –each step, each turning point, each moment of wondering if the road will ever end is part of the journey of love for the one you have lost.

I was listening to Premier Christian radio one day and heard an interview with author and preacher Richard Littledale, who was minister of Teddington Baptist Church for 19 years from 1997. Richard has written a book called 'Postcards from the Land of Grief: comfort for the journey through loss towards hope,' which tells his story of losing Fiona, his wife of thirty years, following a difficult struggle over seven years with cancer.

Richard explained how he had always loved to write - children's stories, a guidebook on church communications for the Baptist Union, articles for Christian journals and books. Following the loss of Fiona he began to write 'Postcards' to honestly share his personal experiences of grief.

Richard describes it in this way: - 'The emotional ground beneath my feet had shifted so much that nothing was as it had been. There was no familiar ground, even in familiar places. It was like living abroad-even when walking down familiar streets and seeing familiar faces. Home was a long way away.'

There are 34 'Postcards' which reflect Richard's feelings as he travels his pathway of grief. Many are written for special days-Fiona's birthday, a wedding anniversary, Valentine's Day. The book has been described as poignant, evocative and comforting all at once.

Jennifer Rees Larcombe (bereavement and trauma counsellor) described the book in this way: 'A postcard is about all you can read when your brain is knocked out by grief. That's why this book works so well, not just for people on this ghastly journey, but also for those who struggle to help them.' A short excerpt from the final postcard:

'The sun has now risen 365 times without its rays ever falling on her face.

I have managed, very falteringly to live without her. She lives there and I live here and we shall not meet again until I travel to another place more foreign still. It will be foreign to me, I suppose, and yet in the truest sense ever it will be home.

Until that day comes, and today especially-I shall head for the sea, I shall gaze at its seemingly endless waves. I shall look for its invisible far shore, and I shall choose to believe that on another shore she looks for me.'

'Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death you are with me' Psalm 23:4

'He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away' Revelation 21:4

I can thoroughly recommend Richard Littledale's book-let me know if you would like to borrow it.

Wendy Salmon

Love, interrupted: navigating grief one day at a time by Simon Thomas

Simon Thomas is a former Blue Peter presenter and football commentator for Sky Sports. I wanted to read this book after seeing his interview with Dan Walker on BBC Breakfast and then on Songs of Praise. This is a brutally honest account, often quoting phone texts sent and received during his wife Gemma's illness and unexpected death aged 40 just three days after being diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia. In the introduction to the book Dan says 'Where do faith and grief meet? How is faith affected when you lose someone you can't feel complete without? Simon has made me think about all sorts of issues; things we all need to consider. That's why I feel this book is so important.'

Before she died, Simon promised Gemma that he would not give up on his faith. He says, 'Barely two hours later that same day, I was already discovering that keeping that promise would be the toughest of battles as I railed at God outside the hospital.' The following day he prayed aloud in front of his family and friends, '*God, I will not forsake you, I will have faith in you.*' He says he is not altogether sure why he did it but, 'Perhaps I just felt the need to acknowledge – in front of my family, in front of my friends and in front of God – that however dark life felt, and despite the irreconcilable anger I felt towards him, I wasn't going to give up on God.'

Simon shares how he and eight-year-old Ethan navigated their way through their grief in the following days, weeks and months, starting with both of them sharing a 'Mummy memory' every evening. He also had to decide what to do about his job, which took him away from home so often, at a time when Ethan needed him most. He also speaks about the many questions Ethan asked after his mum died and how he tried to give honest replies without brushing Ethan's worries aside.

A year on Simon says, 'I know that life can never be the same again. But I have boundless hope that it can be as good again, and for that, I will always thank my boy's incredible strength and unconditional love. He kept me swimming towards the light on the most desperate of days. I will always cherish the support of the family, friends and strangers who stood by us in the darkest of times. And I believe that, even when he felt so distant and quiet, God never once left my side.'

The book concludes with 12 things Simon learnt about grief in the 12 months after Gemma's death. I can only agree with Dan Walker about the importance of this book. It is available to borrow from the local library.

I had no idea Wendy was also reading a book about death, equally as powerful. The following book was recommended to us by Mark Gilks a few years ago and I thoroughly recommend it.

Just round the corner: Glimpses of the Afterlife by Colin Morris

Colin Morris was an author and broadcaster and was Superintendent Minister of Wesley's Chapel and President of the Methodist Conference. This book has 26 very short chapters, each a response in some way to the question posed by Jeremiah in chapter 5, 'What will you do when death approaches? What will you do when the end is near?'

Chapters include, 'Do nothing' - because death is the end and beyond it oblivion; 'Bet on the beyond' - the odds for and against immortality; 'I could go by the book' - how could the writers of the books of the bible, preachers and theologians know about the afterlife? and 'Wrap up warm' - cryonics.

This is a fascinating, thought-provoking, often witty book about what will one day happen to us all. There is a copy you can borrow in the narthex.

Liz Windaybank

Dates for your diary around the circuit and beyond

Friday 8 November- Circuit Fireworks Party at Hanworth Methodist Church at 6 pm. Entry cost is one large rocket per family. Sausages and soup available.

Saturday 9 November – Barn Dance with ploughman’s supper at Teddington Methodist Church. 6.30 pm to 9 pm.

Saturday 16 November – Christmas Market at East Molesey Methodist Church. 10.30 am to 3 pm.

Saturday 16 November – Tear Fund Big Quiz Night. 7.30 pm in our large hall. £5 per person which includes tea/coffee and table nibbles. Bring your own soft drinks and other snacks. Max 6 per team – bring a team or make up a team on the night.

Monday 18 November – Hampton and Hampton North Police Liaison Group meeting at YMCA White House at 7 pm. Meet the local police team and ask questions relating to local issues. There will be a short presentation by the Met’s cybercrime unit with a practical handout.

Tuesday 19 November – Ladies Guild talk by Colonel Chris Webb, entitled ‘Lessons along the way – Life with the Salvation Army’. 8 pm. Everyone welcome (even men!)

Sunday 24 November- Thameside Harmony Chorus will be performing a Christmas programme in an afternoon tea concert at Long Ditton Village Hall, Ewell Road, KT6 5LE at 3 pm. Tickets £10 under 65, £8 65 and over. Ring 0208 398 5322 to book. Speak to Chris or Fiona for more information.

Friday 29 November- Circuit Book Club in the Brooker Annexe at Sunbury. 7.30 pm. The book this month is ‘Prognosis’ by Sarah Vallance.

Sunday 1 December – Christmas chaos! Kids’ Christmas Show at Lantern Arts Centre at Raynes Park Methodist Church in the Studio Theatre. It’s Christmas but all Amelia’s presents are in America and snow has cancelled her flight! In her ‘boring hotel room’ she meets different visitors who help her to understand that Christmas isn’t about being selfish. Great songs, colourful characters and action that takes place all around the audience. Starts at 2 pm. Tickets £6. Suitable for all ages. To book tickets and for more information visit www.lanternarts.org

Saturday 7 December – Gun and knife crime equipping day for anyone concerned about this issue or working with children and young people. At Hanworth Methodist Church. 10 am to 4 pm.

Saturday 7 December- Teddington Choral Society Christmas Concert at Landmark Arts Centre. 7.30 pm

Friday 13 December – Carols at Salvation Army premises, Sunbury Court, Lower Sunbury Road, Sunbury. 7 – 8 pm. This event is for Hampton and Sunbury churches to sing carols together with a Salvation Army band. Tea/coffee and mince pies available at a small cost. It is planned to be outside if weather permits, and we are encouraged to bring lanterns.

Sunday 15 December- Carol Service at Hampton Methodist Church at 5 pm.

December 18 to 22- The Nativity at Wintershall Estate, Guildford at 4 pm. Stand with the shepherds in the field and see Mary arrive on a donkey. Sit in the barn where baby Jesus lies in the manger. A timeless, memorable experience for both young and old as you watch the real story of Christmas brought to life. Tickets and more info at www.wintershall.org

Saturday 21 December- Messy Church with nativity at Hampton Methodist Church. 3 pm to 5 pm.

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