



outlook

Newsletter of **Pond Square Chapel** | Highgate United Reformed Church | **March - June 2021**



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What? or Who? Can Save Us?

This time last year many of us would have been of the same mind - horrified that such a dreadful pandemic as Covid-19 seemed to be taking an ever-expanding hold of our world, but still thinking that we could be over this by the summer of 2020!!!! And now we know - no chance! Gwen and I returned on 22nd March 2020 from a holiday in Melbourne to be told that 2 people had attended worship in the church, Robert (the Organist) and Rowena, and the first lockdown started on 23rd March. And what a quick learning curve that was as we experimented with running virtual services by zooming and streaming!

The number of cases, and indeed the number of deaths, grew and grew right through the past year, and everyone was asking - "What can save us?"

What Can Save Us?

It was in the latter half of last year, among all the depressing statistics of increasing case numbers, that there shone a ray of light and some good news started to filter through - several companies had been working on vaccines



and initial trials were looking very hopeful for not just one, but for a few of these vaccines. At last, signs of a way out - the vaccines can save us. And we're now delighted of course that nearly all of our most vulnerable people have received at least their first vaccination, if not both. Our hope certainly is that we might be delivered and set free once again.

But actually it's not so much 'what' can save us?, but 'who' can save us?

Who Can Save Us?

We certainly want to express our deep gratitude to scientists and microbiologists who have been working on these things for months and months. They are, of course, individuals with names - for example, Prof. Sarah Gilbert: “The woman who designed the Oxford vaccine”^{*}.



Likewise we want to express our grateful thanks to NHS front-line workers and others, also individuals with names and families - nurses and doctors, surgeons and paramedics, cleaners and drivers, many of whom are emotionally and physically drained with the hours they have put in sacrificially.

And people in other parts of the world also ask this same question in a variety of complex political situations: ‘Who can save us?’ - in Myanmar, in Hong Kong, in Yemen, in Russia, in the U.S.A., in the U.K.?

Disciples were asking this Question

It was, of course, a question that was being asked all through the whole Bible at various stages, particularly when the Children of Israel were going through a hard time - “Who can save us?”. And this led to hopes and dreams of salvation being expressed - “Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass ...” (Zechariah 9:9).

That longing for salvation was particularly poignant at the time of the Roman occupation of Palestine in the first century A.D. when everyone, Jesus’ disciples included, would have been thinking - “Who can save us?”

There must have been huge disappointment for these disciples then, when their ‘donkey-riding’, prayerful, submissive, peace-loving teacher... hung on a cross to die! “He couldn’t even save himself.” (Matthew 27:42)

^{*} <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-55043551>

Easter Message

But at Easter we recall the amazing turnaround which takes place in the lives of these men and women - not only is there an empty tomb, but these disciples are transformed by God's Spirit from fearful prisoners trapped in their own sorrow and disappointment into joyful, determined and enthusiastic witnesses. "Who can save us?" The risen Christ can!

Testimony of Peter and John

Following the death and resurrection of Jesus, and right from the very earliest days of the church, this was the good news - Jesus is not dead, he is alive, and by his Spirit he still brings healing, forgiveness and deliverance to all.

After the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful gate recorded in Acts chapter 3, Peter and John had the opportunity to preach to the crowd and they went through the whole story - "the God of our fathers glorified his servant Jesus whom you delivered up and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead." (Acts 3: 13 - 15) The next day they were questioned by the authorities and Peter says - "if you're asking by what means this man has been healed, be it known to you all ... that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, ... by him this man was healed. And there is salvation in no-one else, **for there is no other name ... by which we must be saved.**" (Acts 4: 9 - 12)

What? or Who? Can Save Us? Thank God for the ongoing rollout of the vaccines. Thank God for the risen Christ, and for his love and healing offered freely to you and to me.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David E.P. Currie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

David E.P. Currie

Minister: Pond Square Chapel

Welcome to our New Members

It's always a real joy and a cause for thanksgiving when we see our local fellowship being able to welcome new members into our church. And even more so during lockdown when we were unable to have the service in our church building, and when the whole country was caught in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic.

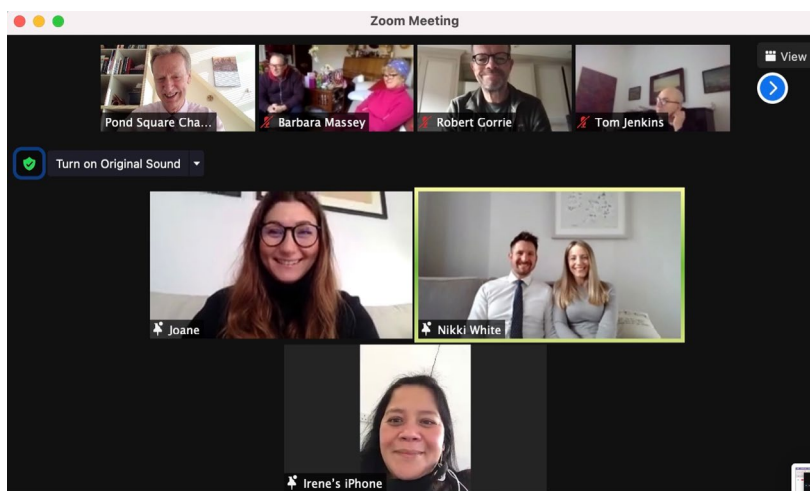
The following new members (see photo) were received at a Confirmation Service held on a virtual platform on Sunday 22nd November, 2020 -

- **Joane Nakamura**
- **Irene Santos**
- **Nikki Phillips**
- **James Phillips**

At that service we were all encouraged by the words (recorded in John chapter 9) of the blind man who Jesus had healed. He had just received his sight again after obeying some instructions Jesus had given him, and he was being pushed by the religious authorities to denounce Jesus, but he based his response on his personal experience - "one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see." (John 9: 25)

We pray that our new members may find love and strength as they continue to journey with Jesus, and that they too will have confidence to speak from experience as together we share Christ's love with others.

We extend a very warm welcome to Joane, Irene, Nikki and James.



• • • • • **Diary Dates 2021** • • • • •

28 March – 16 April

Churches Together in Highgate Easter Trail

For more information go to: www.highgatehastertrail@weebly.com

March

Sun 21	10.30 am	Passion Sunday, and Sunday's Cool
Friday 26	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 28	10.30 am	Palm Sunday Family Service (<i>change of clocks!</i>)

April

Good Friday

Friday 2	10.30 am	Churches Together Service - Pond Square Chapel
	12.30 pm	Meditation

Easter Sunday

Sun 4	10.30 am	Easter Sunday Service, incl. Sacrament of Holy Communion, and Sunday's Cool
Friday 9	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 11	10.30 am	First Sunday after Easter, and Sunday's Cool
Friday 16	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 18	10.30 am	Second Sunday after Easter, Sunday's Cool
Friday 23	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 26	10.30 am	Third Sunday after Easter, Fun Sunday
Friday 30	12.30 pm	Meditation

May

Sun 2	10.30 am	Fourth Sunday after Easter, Sunday's Cool
Friday 7	12.30 pm	Meditation

• • • • • **Diary Dates 2021** • • • • •

Sun 9	10.30 am	Sacrament of Holy Communion, Sunday's Cool
Friday 14	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 16	10.30 am	Sunday after Ascension, and Sunday's Cool
Friday 21	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 23	10.30 am	Pentecost Sunday, and Sunday's Cool
Friday 28	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 30	10.30 am	Trinity Sunday, and Fun Sunday

June

Friday 4	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 6	10.30 am	Second Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday's Cool
Friday 11	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 13	10.30 am	Sacrament of Holy Communion, Sunday's Cool
Friday 18	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 20	10.30 am	Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday's Cool
Friday 25	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 27	10.30 am	Fifth Sunday after Pentecost, Fun Sunday

July

Friday 2	12.30 pm	Meditation
Sun 4	10.30 am	Book giving Service (tbc)

Future Dates to be Noted -

Saturday 18th September	Fair in the Square, incl. Art Exhibition by Kate Green
Saturday 27th November	St. Andrew's Night Ceilidh

Kindness

2021

Sunday's COOL
at Port Square Chapel

Be kind and honest and you will live a long life; others will respect you and treat you fairly. - Proverbs 21:21

This year our main focus will be Kindness. Every month we will look at a person, passage or theme and search for kindness in these sessions.

We have already looked at being kind to our planet during our Climate Change theme. It was great to hear that the children's ideas and video clips of how to help our environment!

This is what we have planned for the first half of 2021.

March- God and Suffering – How we can be kind by supporting people who are suffering.

This will link in with our Easter theme.

April – The Jesus Series – Easter Sunday and looking at the kindness of Jesus

May- Think of Others month - Kindness by thinking of other people.

Due to the latest lockdown the children have enjoyed being back on Zoom and Paul (and Polly) have loved taking part in the children talk videos but they can't wait to be back in the church building.

Easter Holiday Activities

During the February half term the children were able to attend a pre-recorded Meditation session and a Praise Party with some great dancing!

I am currently thinking of some fun activities during the Easter holidays so keep an eye for more information on this!

Sponsor a child update

As many of you may know, we sponsor a child called Stevin. Due to the current circumstances the children have been unable to send drawings or write to him, and vice versa. When we are able to do so we should get an update of how he is doing.

Poetry

Green Our World

Seize the moment, wipe the slate clean
resolve afresh to green our world
look and listen the choice is ours
frictions or freedom; re-balance our lives
to nature's rhythms, our living planet.

Gwyneth Wilson

The Language of Grief

Stark words 'I'm sorry mum,
I cannot breathe, I'm dying'.
An abandoned commercial parcel
she lived in the same world as me.
A traded human cargo
Lured by unlikely promise.
An unacceptable death,
an unequal divided world.
Refugees, wanderers not wanted,
countries unwilling to find answers.
Accepting the language of grief,
but not the language of life.

Gwyneth Wilson

Temporary Single Venue To Host Its Winter Shelter 2020-21

C4WS has broken its 15-year practice of providing dormitory-style shelter moving from church- to- church in direct response to Covid-19 safety concerns - it is simply too dangerous for the guests, volunteers and staff involved to use church buildings.

The team at C4WS spent months searching for a suitable location to run a shelter from, considering more than 50 different locations.

They found an empty hotel in Euston which has been rented until the end of March 2021. The shelter opened on 14 December 2020. It can house up to 20 people in self-contained rooms and give them dignity, respect and a Covid-19 safe environment.

A new guest at the shelter has said: "It's a nice and cool shelter. It provides so many things like essential necessities like food and shelter. ...If it was not for this organisation or shelter, I would've stayed outside (on the streets) in this kind of winter cold; it (is) really helping me a lot truly. Thanks to this organisation many people have got a place to lay their heads."

Guests are referred into the project by one of the local welfare agencies with which C4WS has a pre-established referral relationship. They offer guests a 28-day stay, and a dedicated caseworker. Whilst staying at the shelter every guest can access employment, education, immigration and English language support, as well as be supported through housing applications into permanent accommodation.

C4WS needs your support to help raise the funds to cover the substantial costs of renting and running the shelter this winter. Pond Square Chapel voted to donate £500 from church funds at its Church Meeting in January. Congregation members and individuals who have volunteered in the past in Highgate have also made donations, but more are needed.

For homeless people who do not find a place at the shelter C4WS's Friday Club continues to offer a vital takeaway food and donations service each Friday - plus companionship and advice from C4WS staff and volunteers.

For more information go to **www.c4wshomelessproject.org.uk**

Patricia Judd

World Day of Prayer: "Build on a Strong Foundation"

This was the title of this year's World Day of Prayer, a joint ecumenical service of the Highgate and Muswell Hill churches together. The theme is based on Matthew 7: 24-27 put together by the Christian women in Vanuatu. The service, virtual this year, was held on Zoom at 2pm on Friday 5th March. The same service was held all over the world on the first Friday in March like every year. Over 60 people from the Highgate and Muswell Hill churches joined this annual ecumenical World Day of Prayer service.

In the service Jesus tells a story about the Kingdom of Heaven using the image of a house and the land on which to build the house is an important decision for people in Vanuatu. The combination of considering the terrain and the climate is crucial in a tropical archipelago located in the South Pacific Ocean prone to earthquakes, cyclones, volcanic eruptions and rising sea levels.

Christa Keeler



Lectionary Readings For Sundays

LENT 1 February 21:

Genesis 9 v. 8-17; Psalm 25 v. 1-9; Mark 1 v. 9-15 & 1 Peter 3 v. 18-22.

LENT 2 February 28:

Genesis 17 v. 1-17; Psalm 22 v. 23-31; Mark 8 v. 31-38; Romans 4 v.13-25.

LENT 3 March 7:

Exodus 20 v.1-17; Psalm 19; John 2 v. 13-22; 1 Corinthians 1 v. 18-25.

MOTHERING SUNDAY:

1 Samuel v. 20-28; Psalm 127 v. 1-4; Luke 2 v. 33-35; 2 Cor 1 v. 3-7.

PASSION SUNDAY:

Jeremiah 31 v. 31-34; Psalm 51 v 1-13; John 12 v. 20-33; Romans 5 v.12-21.

PALM SUNDAY:

Isaiah 5 v.1-7; Psalm 69 v.1-20; John 12 v. 12-16. 1 Corinthians 2 v. 1-12.

EASTER:

Isaiah 25 v. 6-9; Psalm 118 v. 1-2 & 14-24; John 20 v. 1-18; 1Corinthians 15 v. 1-11.

EASTER 2 April 11:

Isaiah 53 v. 6-12; Psalm 133; John 20 v. 19-31; Acts 4 v. 32-35.

EASTER 3 April 18:

Deuteronomy 7 v. 7-13; Psalm 4; Like 16 v. 19-31; Acts 3 v. 12-19.

EASTER 4 April 25:

Exodus 16 v. 4-15; Psalm 23; John 10 v. 11-18; Acts 4 v. 5-12.

EASTER 5 May 2:

Isaiah 60 v. 1-14; Psalm 96; John 15 v. 1-8; Acts 8 v. 26-40.

EASTER 6 May 9:

Ezekiel 47 v. 1-12; Psalm 98; John 15 v. 9-17; Acts 10 v. 44-48.

EASTER 7 May 16:

Isaiah 61; Psalm 1; John 17 v. 6-19; Acts 1 v. 15-26.

PENTECOST:

Ezekiel 37 v. 1-14; Psalm 104 v. 26-37b; John 20 v.19-23; Acts 2 v. 1-21.

TRINITY SUNDAY:

Isaiah 40 v. 12-31; Psalm 97 & 98; Mark 1 v. 1-13; Romans 8 v. 12-17.

TRINITY 1 June 6:

1 Samuel 8 v. 4-11; Psalm 138; Mark 3 v. 20-35; 2 Corinthians 4 v.13 - 5 v.1.