

Dec - Jan 2013

outlook

Newsletter of **Highgate United Reformed Church**

Walford John Harrison 1932 - 2012



Contents

- 2** New Church mugs
- 3** Ministry of Women
- 4** Fit for Purpose?
- 5** Tomb of the Unknown Soldier
- 6** Calendar
Church Meeting
Worship leaders
- 8** Review of *Reforming Worship*
- 9** Carol Services
HASM Discussion Groups
- 10** Day of Stillness
- 11** Church Garden Award
Home Group
Lectionary Readings

Walford was born in Edinburgh in 1932. His family moved to the Shetland Islands when he was a baby. After leaving the Shetland Islands, aged 4, he moved to Maidenhead and then to Salisbury, where he remembered being taught English at the Grammar School by William Golding.

He moved to Mill Hill when he was 14. In Uphill Road, Mill Hill, the Harrisons lived a few doors away from Bridget Figgis' family. He and his younger brother Ben were often in the Figgis household, which was very different in atmosphere to his own rather stern and austere home. He suffered badly from a stammer, which, together with his natural shyness, badly affected his ability to communicate with people.

His life was changed irrevocably when he fell in love with the girl down the road, Bridget, aged 21. She helped him overcome the worst of his stammer and he gradually became more confident. Academically gifted, Walford read Medicine at Balliol, Oxford. Bridget and Walford married in 1956 when he was a 24 year-old trainee doctor, 3 years after Bridget contracted polio. Walford remained unwaveringly loyal and supportive of Bridget, always putting her needs before his own.

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Walford continued his medical training and education, becoming a Pathologist. Highly regarded by his peers at the North Middlesex Hospital, he kept 'frozen sections' in the family fridge and spent many hours in his study looking at glass slides through a microscope. The demands of medicine meant that Walford was not around very much to help Bridget when their children Paul, Clare, Wendy, and James were young. Nonetheless, his family was very important to him and he would do anything for them. In later life, he especially enjoyed playing with his grandchildren when they were young, and followed their progress with keen interest and encouragement.

Music was very important in Walford's life. He enjoyed playing the violin in chamber music groups, and was very keen that his children learn to play a musical instrument (son James became a music teacher and cellist). Another great love was gardening. However, the family recall carefully tended roses being wiped out by a stray football on many occasion in the beautiful garden Walford created in Uplands Park Road, Enfield.

On family holidays, Walford displayed a competitive streak when playing French cricket on the beach—strictly according to Harrison rules. He remained slim and fit all his life, eating sensibly and sparingly, yet relished meals out. He was a Pathologist who was exceedingly squeamish—on one occasion, he fainted at the cinema in Enfield Town during a drug scene with a needle in *French Connection 2* — he also felt ill seeing injections given to his own family. He was a man who was always careful with money, recording every purchase in his elegant handwriting in various notebooks and files. It was therefore all the more surprising when Walford and Bridget made an 'impulse purchase' of a holiday house in Mullion Cove, Cornwall, in 1988. The house and the nearby beach were the scene of many happy family holidays with their sons, daughters, and grandchildren.

It may have been Walford's reputation for financial caution that led to his being invited to become honorary Treasurer of the church. That he accepted this invitation was more a mark of his strong sense of duty and commitment to the Church than any particular desire to do it. He maintained a ledger, counted and banked offerings, and paid invoices, all in a typically careful and meticulous way. The church owes much to Walford for his service as Treasurer. As an Elder he was kind, considerate, and reliable. Having a grandfather who was a Congregational Minister and notable Pauline Scholar, a father who was a Congregational Deacon, and a father-in-law who was a Congregational then United Reformed Church Minister, Walford had a hinterland of English Nonconformity. This occasionally surfaced in his comments about some of my liturgical innovations, which I argued were ecumenical in intention, but Walford disapproved of as Anglican in practice!

Late in life, Walford contracted Parkinson's Disease. The symptoms were controlled for some years with medication but gradually worsened. It was a particular blow to Walford when he was told it would no longer be safe for him to drive. On Christmas Day 2009, Walford's health took a turn for the worse and he had to be hospitalised. Eventually he became a patient at the Highgate Nursing Home in Hornsey Lane. There he received excellent care and Bridget was able to visit him regularly. Walford died on the 5th of September. A Committal took place on the 17th of September at the Golders Green Crematorium, and a Service of Memorial and Thanksgiving was held in the Pond Square Chapel on the 28th of September, attended by a large congregation of extended family, colleagues, friends, and church members. We give thanks for Walford and commend him to God. Walford is survived by Bridget, Paul, Clare, Wendy, and James. Please remember them and their families in your prayers as they begin to adjust to their loss.

Julian Templeton

(with thanks to Clare and Bridget Harrison for material and comments)



As well as being available for our tea and coffee on Sunday morning, this beautiful mug is available to buy.

**An ideal Christmas present?
£6 each**



The Ministry of Women

In the wake of the General Synod of the Church of England's House of Laity narrowly failing to gain the required two-thirds majority in favour of allowing women ministers to become bishops, readers of *Outlook* may be interested to learn about the pivotal role played by a former Minister of the Pond Square Chapel, Highgate, in the first woman to be ordained as a Christian Minister in Britain.

William Selbie was Minister of the Pond Square Chapel from 1890–1902. He later became Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford. It was whilst Principal that Selbie was approached by Constance Todd, a Presbyterian who had read History at Somerville College, Oxford, about the possibility of entering Mansfield College as a ministerial student. Selbie recognised her calling as genuine and saw no reason to reject her application solely on the grounds that she was a woman. His confidence was well founded. Constance Todd excelled academically and vocationally. She completed her ministerial course of study, received a call to the Darby Street Mission of the King's Weigh House Church, London, and gained recognition from the London Congregational Union as a fully accredited Congregational Minister in 1917. She married a fellow ministerial student, Claud Coltman, the day after their ordinations, and they went on to exercise a joint ministry in Kilburn, Oxford, Wolverton, and Haverhill.

A life-long pacifist, Constance Coltman was a founder member of the Society for the Ministry of Women, and at an advanced age learned Swedish in order to support women seeking ordination in the Church of Sweden! At her funeral in 1969, Lady Stansgate (Tony Benn's mother) gave one of the Tributes. There is a 'Coltman Room' named after her in URC Church House.

Selbie supported a number of other women with ministerial vocations, one of whom later wrote how 'wise, fair, and kind' he had been, 'never hiding from them the fact that life for a woman minister is as yet bound to be difficult, but also making clear that



God can speak through a woman as well as through a man, that she, too, may be called to His service in the ministry and can then do nothing but answer the call.'

In the United Reformed Church today, three out of thirteen Synod Moderators (who exercise an episcopal ministry) are women. A woman, Val Morrison, is Co-Moderator of the General Assembly (the highest council of the church). Roberta Rominger (formerly Moderator of Thames North Synod) is General Secretary, the highest office in the church's Secretariat. Susan Durber and Rosalind Selby are Principals of two of our three Colleges (now called Resource Centres for Learning). And the church is served well by many women Ministers and Elders. All this is not to suggest that prejudice against women's leadership in the United Reformed Church does not exist (the church is the society of sinners); but it is to acknowledge that the United Reformed Church has been, and continues to be, immeasurably enriched by the ministry and leadership of women (indeed, would probably collapse without it)! Please pray for our fellow Christians in the Church of England as they continue to wrestle with their recognition of women's leadership.

Julian Templeton

Fit for Purpose?

(Adapted from a sermon preached at United Evening Worship, Christ Church at Whetstone, 7th October 2012)

The 40th anniversary of the United Reformed Church's original union provides a useful opportunity to ask the question: is the United Reformed Church fit for purpose? And I want to break this question into three parts.

1. Do we believe God is fit for purpose?

One of the features of life in the developed world is that because of mechanisation, technology, a relatively high standard of living, and medicine, we think we don't need to rely on God any more. We tend to ignore God (unless desperate) and think that everything revolves round us. We want a god with whom we are comfortable. This thinking has also influenced the Church: worship becomes about meeting 'my needs'. By contrast, the biblical writers believe everything revolves round *God*. They believed that God alone brought the world into being, God has a purpose for the world, and God has the power to help and to save the world. The New Testament writers believe that God has revealed this power to help and to save in his Son. God's power is revealed not by an overwhelming display of might but in the humility of the manger and the foolishness of the cross. Despite all that people in developed nations have achieved, we are still susceptible—like everyone else—to disease, extreme weather, economic crises, and relationship-breakdowns. Only God has the power to sustain us through these difficulties. God is always fit for purpose, but we only realise this when we humble ourselves and trust him.

2. Is the way we proclaim the gospel fit for purpose?

As many no longer believe that God has power to help or save, so they also believe they no longer need God's help or need to be saved. The language of 'sin' is becoming increasingly incomprehensible. People want to feel 'good' about themselves (nothing wrong with that) but blame *others* when

they don't feel good about themselves! The Christian understanding of the human self is that we each have a flaw that runs through us. We believe this is the most realistic way of understanding why, despite our best intentions, we mess things up and hurt one another. The centre of the gospel is the good news that Jesus, as God's own Son, identifies himself with our human condition, yet without himself succumbing to the power of this flaw. His death on the cross becomes the universal moment when God deals with sin (the flaw) once and for all: not allowing sin to separate the sinner from God but in the resurrection, overcoming the breach of sin and reconciling humanity with God. We can, and should, feel good about ourselves because God in Christ loves us too much to let us stay the way we are! If the gospel we proclaim does not communicate these essential truths of the significance of Christ's cross and resurrection—that is, our need to die to sin and be brought to new life in Christ—then our gospel is not fit for purpose.

3. Are our buildings and facilities fit for purpose?

Many of our church buildings were constructed before the use of the motorcar became widespread. As a result, most do not have adequate, or any, car parking. Many of our buildings were constructed before there was recognition that worshippers might wish to be comfortably seated, warm, hear, require level access, or need to use a toilet! And although many of our buildings have been partly adapted for some of these purposes, most are in significant respects unsuitable. Of course, the same criticism can be levelled at many of the parish churches and virtually all cathedrals: they are in many respects totally unsuitable for use by all but the able bodied and hardy! But what many parish churches and cathedrals have—that most United Reformed Churches do not have—is a loyal group of worshippers willing to put up with inconveniences because of the particular experience of worship that attracts them.

Church of Christ the Cornerstone



The United Reformed Church should not attempt to compete for those looking for 'heritage' or 'hype'. We need to regain confidence in Reformed worship that seeks God simply and that engages with life realistically. Our advantage is that we have the freedom to construct buildings for worship and community that are accessible and comfortable. Such buildings do not have to be ugly. There were some visionary church leaders in the new town of Milton Keynes who decided that rather than each constructing a separate building, they would combine their resources and build an ecumenical church in the new town centre. The result is the Church of Christ the Cornerstone. It was built by an ecumenical partnership of Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Methodists and the United Reformed Church.

The church building has the aesthetic beauty of a basilica-like dome that lifts the spirit, combined with the accessibility and comfort that makes it a pleasure to be in. If five separate denominations could achieve this, it should be well within the reach of five United Reformed Church congregations to combine their resources and build a new place for worship and community that is both beautiful and fit for purpose for the 21st and 22nd Centuries.

To be fit for purpose: let us humble ourselves and trust God; let us express our belief in the gospel by being willing to die even to our existing ways of being church; and let us ask God to resurrect new life and fresh vision within and among us.

Julian Templeton

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

I thought I knew about this tomb in Westminster Abbey, but found out more in the item from the British Legion (below). When we hold the two minutes' silence in our church in November I think of the memorial outside our church. This gives three names with an unusual surname which could only mean that they were related and I think how devastating that must have been for the families concerned.

The story of the Unknown Warrior

The Reverend David Railton, a chaplain at the Front, is believed to have had the idea of honouring the unidentified dead of the Great War. In 1916 he noticed a grave in a garden in Armentieres which had a rough cross bearing the words: "An Unknown British Soldier". After the War, in 1920, he suggested that Britain honour its unknown war dead officially.

Between four and six bodies were exhumed from the main British battle areas in France. The remains were covered with a Union Jack and left overnight in a chapel at St Pol. Brigadier-General L J Wyatt, who was

the commander of British troops in France and Flanders then selected one. Placed in a coffin made of oak from Hampton Court, the body was transported to Dover on the destroyer HMS Verdun.

On the morning of November 11th 1920, the second anniversary of Armistice Day, the Unknown Warrior was drawn on a gun carriage in a procession to the Cenotaph where King George V placed a wreath on the coffin. At 11.00 am the nation observed the Two Minute Silence and then the body was taken to Westminster Abbey and buried at the west end of the nave.

The grave contains soil from France and is covered by a slab of black Belgian marble. Inscribed upon the marble are these words from the Bible:

They buried him among the Kings because he had done good toward God and toward his house.

(2 Chronicles 24:16)

Within the first week, 1,250,000 people filed past unidentified war dead. It is now one of the most visited war graves in the world and is the only part of the Abbey floor that is never walked on.

Pamela Furse

December

Sunday 2	10:30 am	Advent 1 , Worship led by Rev Robert Courtney	
	6:00 pm	Highgate School Advent Service, PSC	
	pm/am	Cold Weather Shelter	
Monday 3	2:00 pm	Open Door Gathering, Trees, 2-4 Broadlands Road, N6 4AN	
Wednesday 5	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG	
Friday 7	12:30 pm	Christian Meditation	
Sunday 9	10:30 am	Advent 2 , Worship with Holy Communion led by Rev'd Julian Templeton, followed by Church Meeting	
	3:00 pm	CTH Living Crib Procession, starting in Pond Square, ending at St Joseph's, Highgate Hill.	
	pm/am	Cold Weather Shelter	
Wednesday 12	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG	
Thursday 13	6:30 pm	Community Carols in Pond Square	
	7:30 pm	Christmas Reception with Ballet Performance, PSC	
Friday 14	12:30 pm	Christian Meditation	
Sunday 16	10:30 am	Advent 3 , Worship led by Rev'd Roger Orme	
	6:30 pm	Carol Service at St John's Church , Somerset Road, New Barnet, EN5 1RH	
	pm/am	Cold Weather Shelter	
Monday 17	2:00 pm	Open Door Gathering, PSC	
Wednesday 19	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG	
Sunday 23	10:30 am	Advent 4 , Worship with Christmas Around the World	
		Presentation led by Rev'd Julian Templeton	
	3:00 pm	Carol Service at Trees , 2-4 Broadlands Road, N6 4AN, led by Rev'd Julian Templeton	
Monday 24	6:30 pm	Christmas Eve All Age Candlelit Carol Service led by Rev'ds Julian Templeton and Roger Orme	
Tuesday 25	10:30 am	Christmas Day All Age Carol Service led by Rev'd Roger Orme	
Sunday 30	10:30 am	1st after Christmas , Worship led by Rev'd Julian Templeton	

CHURCH MEETING Sunday 9 December

After worship on Sunday 9 December a Church Meeting will be held at which the Elders will present some proposals for discussion. The proposals are about expending a greater proportion of the church's income on mission and ministry. The Elders wish to hear your views on these proposals, since we will only pursue those for which there is substantial support.

Julian Templeton

Sunday Teas & Coffees No previous experience necessary

Do you enjoy a cuppa after the service? Then please offer to help by putting your name on the Rota on the noticeboard in the lounge. This will enable those who regularly make our coffee/tea to circulate and chat after the service? Many thanks.

January

Saturday 5	10:30 am	HASM Elders and Deacons Meeting, Union Church, Northiam, Totteridge, N12 7 ET
Sunday 6	10:30 am	Epiphany , Worship led by Tony Alderman
Monday 7	2:00 pm	Open Door Gathering, Trees, 2-4 Broadlands Road, N6 4AN
Wednesday 9	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
	8:00 pm	HASM Discussion Group, Arthur Miller and the American Dream, Elders' Vestry, Free Church, Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb, NW11 7AG
Friday 11	12:30 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 13	10:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion led by Rev'd Donald Macarthur
Monday 14	8:00 pm	CTH Theology Group, 17 Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SD
Wednesday 16	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Thursday 17	7:30 pm	Management Committee
Friday 18	12:30 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 20	10:30 am	Worship led by Rev'd Roger Orme
Monday 21	2:00 pm	Open Door Gathering, PSC
Wednesday 23	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Friday 25	12:30 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 27	10:30 am	Worship led by Susan Chinn and Dr Peter Horton
Monday 28	8:00 pm	CTH Theology Group, 17 Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SD
Wednesday 30	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG



February

Friday 1	12:30 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 3	10:30 pm	Worship led by Rev'd Roger Scopes
Monday 4	2:00 pm	Open Door Gathering, Trees, 2-4 Broadlands Road, N6 4AN
Wednesday 6	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Friday 8	12:30 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 10	10:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion led by Rev'd Julian Templeton
Monday 11	8:00 pm	CTH Theology Group, 42 Onslow Gardens, N10 3JX
Wednesday 13	8:00 pm	Ash Wednesday , HASM Discussion Group, Sin, Evil, Repentance, and Redemption, led by Rev'd Julian Templeton, PSC
Friday 15	12:30 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 17	10:30 pm	Lent 1, Worship led by Rev'd Derek Lindfield

Worship Leaders

In December we are looking after ourselves: no visitors – and we seem to have more services because of the way Sundays fall in relation to Christmas. I hope you will do your best to support Julian and Roger. Special thanks to Roger for making sure we have our usual Christmas Day service. At the service on 30th December we will wish Julian and Laura bon voyage as they set out for New Zealand. They will be away from 7 January till 7 February.

January in consequence sees many visitors. **Tony Alderman** on 6th January is the church secretary at St John's, New Barnet. **Rev Donald Macarthur**, of

St Andrew's, Frogna, will take our service of Holy Communion on 13th January. He needs no special welcome, just our thanks for his faithful annual visit to us. **Rev Roger Orme** takes the service on 20th January and **Susan Chinn** will preside on 27th January when **Dr Peter Horton** will speak on the hymns of WH Monk.

Peeping into February, **Rev Dr Roger Scopes** will be with us on 3rd February – and **Julian** will hopefully be back on 10th February.

My special thanks to Iveta Olejkova who made all the January and February arrangements. I have virtually retired!

John Thompson

REFORMING WORSHIP – a

review by Revd Robert Courtney

Julian Templeton and Keith Riglin have done us all a great service in bringing these papers to general availability and our attention. Nevertheless they are something of a mixed bunch. Some of them will commend themselves to most of the congregation, a few have a more limited appeal to those with special interests. Even these are readable and carry nuggets of wide significance.

The Foreword by an eminent Anglican gives a thoroughly Reformed beginning. She points out that "worship rests in and grows out of a deep familiarity with the Scriptures," heard as God's life giving Word. The first chapter is itself something of a foreword, but deliberately, or inadvertently ends with a reminder that modern versions of clear, classical phrases tend to end up weaker than the originals, whatever their political correctness. There follows a wholly admirable essay by Marvin on the whole theme of reforming worship. The thrust of his argument is beyond criticism; although he might well forgive me for arguing with him on a couple of points.

The historical chapter by Cornick is not only fascinating and revealing, but has a spiritual kick in it that is worth any Christian's time and trouble. I find myself less well informed on the more obscure continental reformers than I had thought. It is a pleasure to discover how far I agree with some of their most radical opinions. I knew they were "the cream of the educated humanist elite", and I feel the URC could do with a few more of them around today – and their radicalism.

Cornick makes clear, (and this appears again in David Thompson's essay): the denominations have all had their ups and downs in worship and customs. This suggests that we should not worry too much about making changes ourselves as occasion demands, but should constantly refer back to first principles. When these are neglected, as in some modern and popular forms, worship can become vacuous; well meaning, but meaningless. As for Cornick's interesting paragraphs on Congregational church architecture, Highgate readers need go no further than the present library of Highgate School. Outside at present it is unprepossessing. Inside it's a dream.

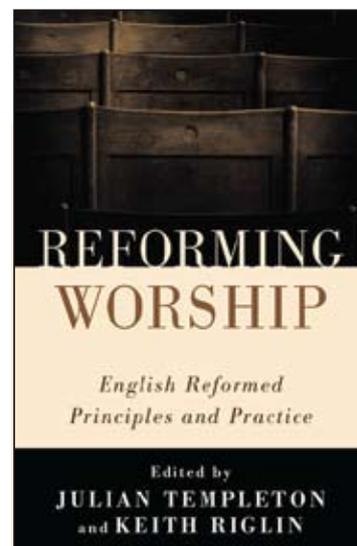
Julian himself attacks two problems. Both relate

to the language we use in worship and prayer. If people, for whatever reason, find it difficult or objectionable to address God as "Father", what do you put in "Father's" place? Too many attempts depersonalise God; and others, determined to drive out any suggestion of patriarchy in our society, let alone our churches, either undercut the Trinity, or fail to give sufficient weight to Jesus's own advice and practice. His use of "Father" in its affectionate form is perhaps too intimate for public worship in general.

But perception is all. As a very young Sunday school teacher I was taught by my Department Leader never to tell children that God was like father. As one of my 5 year olds had a father in and out of prison all the time, I saw the value of that. As a student in a bible study group reading Ephesians 5, I learned that a really good father, and mother for that matter, begin to show some of the nature of our heavenly Father.

His other concern is to use language which "presents as clearly as it can the character of God the Holy Trinity". But this too can present its own traps. To address God as "Triune God" is equally de-personalizing, and can totally inhibit prayer in a congregation. Possibly any language is capable of distracting people from the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Julian's advocacy of greater use of the address "Heavenly Father" to emphasize that "God's Fatherhood is of a different order than human fatherhood" is helpful. Surely that is precisely what Jesus was doing in the Lord's Prayer.

Riglin is exercised by the issue of proper authorisation of those leading Communion Services. I can see where he is coming from, and indeed where he is going. (He is now an Anglican.) His treatment is thorough. But perhaps in the end the most significant issue is not whether authorisation is by a wider Council of the URC, (which may be in no practical position to judge the appropriateness of such a local appointment) or alternatively by the local Church Meeting, standing as the local presence of the Church Universal. Rather whether in the latter case this actually takes place, and is conducted as "seeking the mind of Christ". The URC holds successfully together three different understandings relating to presidency at the sacraments. But all traditions would surely wish such decisions to be made with Christian seriousness.



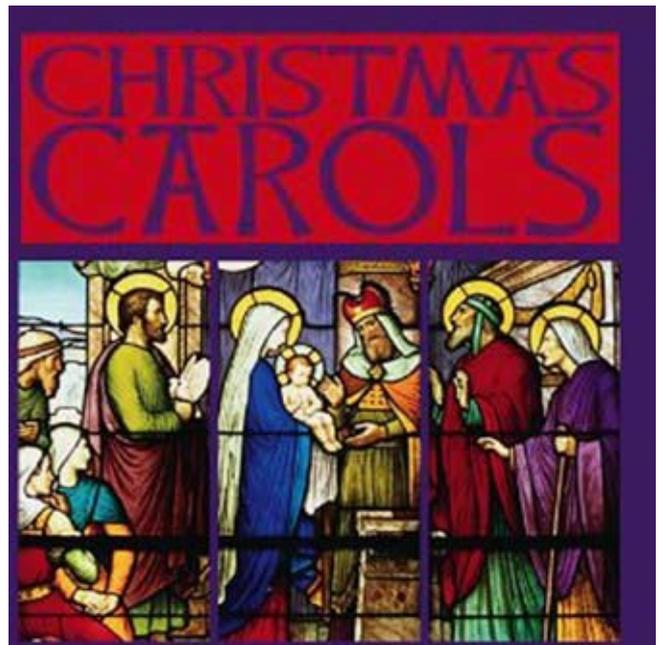
Carol Services



For logistical reasons, it has not been possible to organise a choral carol service involving singers from both of Julian's churches at Highgate this year. However, I know that anyone who is free would be very welcome to attend an evening carol service at St John's, New Barnet on Sunday 16th December at 6.30pm; I will be accompanying the service, and a few Highgate singers will be augmenting the St John's choir.

On the afternoon of Sunday 23rd December at 3pm, Julian will be leading an event at Trees, the residential home in Highgate at which some 'At Home' sessions have been held, which will involve the singing of carols. I've already recruited a few people for this event, but others would be welcome; all the carols will be well known, and no rehearsal will be required!

Robert Manning



HASM Discussion Groups Wednesdays, 8:00 pm

January 9 2013

Arthur Miller and the American Dream

Lilli Segel

Elders' Vestry, Free Church, Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb, NW11 7AG

Arthur Miller (1915–2005) was one of the most highly regarded playwrights of the 20th century because of his skill as dramatist, his use of language, and his understanding of the American scene. Examples of this are the struggle of the little man in the jungle of the American business world in *Death of a Salesman* or the danger of witch hunt (McCarthyism) in *The Crucible* or the consequences of the Wall Street crash in *The Price* and other plays. It is surprising to note that American drama as such had only existed for just over one hundred years at the time Miller was writing. Eugene O'Neill arguably invented it, followed by Tennessee Williams. A look at both will help to put Miller's contribution in context.

13 February 2013

Sin, Evil, Repentance, and Redemption

Julian Templeton

Pond Square Chapel

In popular parlance, sin has been evacuated of theological content and trivialised, such that eating chocolate is said to be 'sinful', by which is meant it is "naughty but nice." Paradoxically, although sin is effectively dispensed with, many wish to retain the category of evil. Thus those convicted of heinous crimes are labelled as "Evil!" The risk with this approach is the presumption that evil is elsewhere, other, and nothing to do with oneself. However, theologically it is important to say that evil is the effect of which sin is the cause. It is the cumulative effect of sin that results in evil. Sin is the flaw that runs through each one of us. When we fail to keep sin in check, the potential for evil may manifest itself. The Church claims that there is an effective remedy for sin and evil: the response of repentance to the good news of Jesus Christ. Repentance is the resolve to change our boringly repetitious sinful attitudes and actions with God's help. When it is genuine, such repentance constitutes redemption: a rescue from sin's prison and reorientation to life as God's good gift. It is appropriate to reflect on these themes on Ash Wednesday, the traditional day of Christian penitence. The discussion will conclude with a short liturgical act of penitence for those who wish to stay for it.

Just This Day November 28th 2012

An annual worldwide Celebration of stillness

This is the sixth year of the Just This Day annual worldwide celebration of stillness. The theme is that in this busy world we forget that we all share the same space. It is suggested that we go beyond nationality, religious difference and division and remember the still silent present where everything is united.

Fr Laurence
Freeman OSB



I went to listen to Fr Laurence Freeman OSB, a Benedictine monk and Director of the World Community for Christian Meditation. There were five other speakers, a mix of religious and secular. In the morning in the church of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Laurence Freeman led a twenty minute meditation and then each speaker summarized why and how they meditate. Their commonality was that they all needed to meditate, were certain that they benefited from it, and were at ease in meditating with each other in spite of their differences. Laurence Freeman, very secure in his Christian beliefs, made a distinction between faith and belief, and suggested that a global community of different faiths could meditate together. The work of silence, the universal silence, the simplicity of the heart, we forget at our peril.

The second speaker was Rajinder Singh Sandhu, headmaster of Guru Sikh Academy. He was very direct and simple, convinced that all faiths lead to God. If we shed our ego we will have humility and become a piece of fertile ground. Then the seeds will grow and we will have humility, spirituality and courage. If we pray with humility we see God in everyone.

Next was Paul Sternberg from Action for Happiness. He works with economists and educationalists, to bring happiness and well-being into public policy, education and community via an evidence approach to happiness. He believes that meditation, getting to the heart, the world beyond words, relieves stress.



St Martin-in-the-Fields

Next up was Jeremy Sinclair, chair of M and C Saatchi, and known to many for his slogans and work in advertising. Among many other pursuits he organizes Art in Action. A man of original thought, he believes that stillness is the starting point of creativity, ideas come from silence. You have to leave your baggage behind, no past, no future plans, to move towards origin you have to be still. Most people can't do it! The poem creates the poet, the artwork the artist.

The final speaker was Claire Foster Gilbert of The Ethics Academy. She teaches virtue and communitarian ethics, and has created an inspirational teaching programme currently piloted in schools in the UK with PHSE, Citizenship, Religious Studies and SEAL curricula. She has been working at St Martin-in-the-Fields and in December becomes Director of the Westminster Abbey Institute.

Gwyneth Wilson

Our Church Garden wins an award

Thanks to Alan Dallman, Chairman of the Highgate Horticultural Society, who keeps our church garden looking attractive all year round, our garden was entered for "Garden Display in a Public Place" Class and we were delighted to be awarded the Noel Buxton Cup (which we can hold for a year), together with a Gilt Medal and Certificate for Alan. The awards were presented by the London Gardens Society in the Old Library of the Guildhall. Our congratulations to Alan, as well as our thanks to him and his team.

If you have not yet attended any of the Highgate Horticultural Society Shows held in our church in spring, summer and autumn, do come along next year and enjoy seeing the exhibits – and enjoy the home made cakes and tea.



Home Group

The Home Group has continued its weekly gatherings on Wednesdays throughout the autumn. Our last meeting before Christmas will be on Wednesday, 19th December and we shall resume on Wednesday, 9th January 2013.

All our meetings are held at 14, Southwood Park, Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SG, unless notified otherwise at the previous Sunday morning's service. We start at 7.45pm and aim to finish at 9.45pm.

Generally, we follow the Lectionary Readings

suggested for the following Sunday, but our discussion ranges widely and reflects the diversity of interest and experience of those present. No previous Bible knowledge or preparation is necessary and the atmosphere is very relaxed and friendly. Light refreshments are provided at the start and end of the evening.

If you would like to join us, we shall be delighted. Lifts, door-to-door, can be arranged. **Please contact Roger Orme: 07966956160 or 020 8458 2144.**

Revised Common Lectionary

9 December	Luke 3:1-6; Baruch 5:1-9 or Malachi 3:1-4; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 1:68-79	13 January	Luke 3:15-17, 21-22; Isaiah 43:1-7; Acts 8:14-17; Psalm 29
16 December	Luke 3:7-18; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Philippians 4:4-7; Isaiah 12:2-6	20 January	John 2:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10
23 December	Luke 1:39-45 (46-55); Micah 5:2-5a; Hebrews 10:5-10; Psalm 80:1-7	27 January	Luke 4:14-21; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19
24 December	Luke 2:1-14; John 1:1-14; Isaiah 9:2-7; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 1:1-4; Psalm 96 or 98	3 February	Luke 4:21-30; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6
25 December	Luke 2:(1-7)8-20; Isaiah 62:6-12; Titus 3:4-7; Psalm 97	10 February	Luke 9:28-36 (37-43); 2 Corinthians 3:12 - 4:2; Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99
30 December	Luke 2:41-52; 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Colossians 3:12-17; Psalm 148	17 February	Luke 4:1-13; Romans 10:8b-13; Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91, 1-2, 9-16
6 January	Matthew 2:1-12; Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:1-12; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14	24 February	Luke 13:31-35; Philippians 3:14 - 4:1; Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27

Advent Christmas Worship and Events

Sunday 9 December
3:00 pm

Churches Together in Highgate Living Crib procession with donkey begins in Pond Square with carols and ends at St Joseph's Church, Highgate Hill.



Thursday 13 December
6:30 pm

Community carol singing in Pond Square

At approximately 7:30 pm in the Pond Square Chapel there will be a Christmas Reception with mulled wine, mince pies, and a short performance from the Highgate Ballet School



Sunday 23 December
10:30 am

the leaders and children of the Junior Church will present

'Christmas Around the World'

as part of morning worship led by Julian Templeton

3:00 pm
Carol Service at Trees
2-4 Broadlands Road

Julian will lead this and anyone is welcome to attend



Christmas Eve
6:30 pm

Julian Templeton and Roger Orme will lead an all-age carol service by candlelight.



Christmas Day
10:30 am

Roger Orme will lead an all-age carol service