



outlook

The newsletter of Highgate United Reformed Church
Pond Square Chapel, South Grove, Highgate, London N6 6BA

PRAYER by George Herbert

PRAYER the Church's banquet, Angels' age,
God's breath in man returning to his birth,
The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,
The Christian plummet sounding heav'n and earth ;

Engine against th' Almighty, sinners' tower,
Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear,
The six-days' world transposing in an hour,
A kind of tune, which all things hear and fear;

Softness, and peace, and joy, and love, and bliss,
Exalted Manna, gladness of the best,
Heaven in ordinary, man well drest,
The milky way, the bird of Paradise,

Church-bells beyond the stars heard, the soul's blood,
The land of spices, something understood.



I love the soaring imagery of this poem. "Church's banquet" evokes the image of prayer as a feast for the soul. "God's breath in man returning to his birth" alludes to the Genesis story of the Lord God who forms a human from the earth and breathes his own spirit into its nostrils, and Adam becomes a living being. Prayer is that same spirit returning to its origin.

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We might be surprised, however, by the reference to prayer as an "Engine against the Almighty". Praying against God; surely not! Yet a surprising number of the psalms are prayers of complaint against God ("reversed thunder"?). Prayer can be the "sinners' tower," a place of refuge. I'm not sure what to make of the lines: "The six-days' world transposing in an hour, a kind of tune, which all things hear and fear". Is this referring to the world of creativity and work? If so, why should all things hear and fear the tune it transposes in an hour? "Heaven in ordinary" suggests that by means of prayer we may find God in the everyday. "Man well drest" suggests that prayer is the best kind of covering. And what about "the milky way, the bird of Paradise...the land of spices": are these flights of fancy? Possibly, but why not use the imagination in prayer? It is God-given. "Something understood" suggests a mutual comprehension: that when we pray, God understands our requests and why we are making them; and also that in praying we better understand God's ways. I love this sonnet about prayer because it reads like it was written at a time of elation, a time when George Herbert was meditating on prayer as if from a mountain summit. For we who often struggle through the valleys of prayer –realizing how much discipline and work it takes – it is good to be reminded of the view from the top.

Julian Templeton

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Ceilidh 15 May

Please put this date in your diaries now! We have booked the same wonderful band we had last year at our anniversary celebration, so we hope as many as possible will come and enjoy the music and dancing. Even if you are not able or willing to flit around the chapel, many who came just to watch had a fantastically enjoyable evening. Hot food will be served and we will make sure there is no shortage of beers, wine and soft drinks to slake your thirst.



All proceeds will go to **Christian Aid**, so to cut down on expenditure, we will be asking for donations of puddings from anyone willing to help. So please get those recipe books out and think of some desserts you might like to make.



This event will replace the fund-raising Quiz Night we have organised in previous years, so please think of some way you can contribute.



Fellowship

I am sure all of us, at some time in our lives, find ourselves in very challenging and testing situations. Be it the loss of a job, the death of a loved one, loss of accommodation, or simply too much stress from the daily pressures in our lives. It is not a comfortable or desirable place to be, and we would surely prefer life to go on smoothly in an uncomplicated way.

I suddenly found myself immersed in all of those situations last summer. Losing a good friend – to whom in a period of 6 years I had gradually become carer, personal assistant, and life companion – was very saddening. She was a big part of my life; and, apart from dealing with my sadness, I had only a short time in which to find a new job and accommodation. It was the last thing that I wanted to do.

But God is working his purpose within us in mysterious ways, and as they say, when one door closes another opens.

Even before this 'testing' time, Mrs Crane and I had occasionally attended the home fellowship group – mainly to read and understand the scripture. Since her death I have become a frequent visitor and gradually a fellow of these meetings. What I realised last summer was that the fellowship group gave me much more than a greater understanding of scripture. I found mutual support, encouragement, friendship, peace of mind and hope.

After a seemingly endless search and many applications, I found my new flat and job in the last week of the 3 months time that I had available. I did not have a back-up plan, and felt on many occasions sad, lonely, frightened and worried. But I knew that each Wednesday my

worries would be minimized and replaced by the love, laughter and peace that are shared so generously in our group. Our meetings not only give me strength and a peaceful mindset for the week ahead, but also inspiration in my daily life.

I still miss my dear friend to this day, and probably will for some time, even though I feel that she is in a better place. My new path seems exciting and full of new surprises, which sometimes, I know, will be challenging. But it is easier to face these with the strength from God that is shared in Christian friendship.

Thank you God, that we have this opportunity to meet every week at our home fellowship group to learn, to be inspired, and to be guided by your word in our everyday life.

Iveta Olejkova



TLS LITE course



For the past few months, around ten people from four local churches, including Pond Square, have been doing the URC training and education course TLS LITE (Training for Learning and Serving: Local Introductory Training Experience).

The course was designed mainly to prepare church members for more participation in, and leadership of, worship but you don't have to have that aim in mind to come along. As the second course has just ended, it seemed a good time to ask one of the participants for his impressions of TLS LITE.

I don't know how it has been in your Christian life, but whenever I have the opportunity to do another 'course' I tend to give the matter mere casual thought. If the venue is convenient and I know the other students to be friendly, then my answer to the invitation will probably be a yes.

Once started, I then begin to become concerned about two big things; well, they're big to me anyway.

Is this going to be directive, with the agenda already set in stone?

Is the course going to allow students to see the Big Picture and yet also go into the small detail?

The latter question, I feel, is especially important in Bible Studies, because God wants us to do both. This is why we have to look at any one Bible page carefully and prayerfully; there is a different image of Jesus of Nazareth written upon every leaf.

Like everything else TLS LITE reveals much of its character by the way its contents and parts are presented. For me personally, I found it very pleasing that the course writer assumes that the students have an intelligence capable of grappling with the material, even if students do not possess the same amount of knowledge in all areas.

No one, I can recall, felt patronised during the study period. The two course books were amply illustrated with flow chart diagrams plus charts and graphs, outlining the history and the historicity of Antiquity.

TLS LITE is very interactive, not directive. In fact, I regret not always doing the homework preparation sections very thoroughly, finding myself not always quite able to follow the passages. Then again TLS LITE, if properly executed, does not put people on the spot; like the Alpha course, the very nature of the course should not allow for such.

This leads me back to my point about the Big Picture and small detail. The seminar sections were not rigid, inviting people to drift into red herrings concerning grand and petit words of Scripture; eg Life, Death, Light, Darkness, Water, Beginning and End. It was fitting therefore that the very first section began with the idea of self and God, and self in the world. Fitting

too that the last section reminds us to be open-minded, catholic and universal.

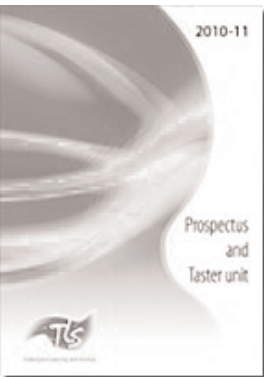
*Not so much a programme
More an experience*

Did I agree with all of the points raised in the study books? Surely not, and I'm looking forward to the new edition of the same course in a year or two from now.

TLS LITE was also a lovely opportunity to get to know some people, who brought a lot to the meetings, and who, like me, would like to thank Julian and Laura for throwing open their home for the two hour period every second Thursday morning.

And we, I am sure, also feel grateful for Julian and Ian's teaching, to say nothing of the time they would have spent in lesson preparation. Their time, like ours, was well spent.

Tony Morgan



TLS LITE consists of a combination of personal and group study.

For each unit there are 2 hours of personal study, and 2 hours with the group.

These are the current TLS LITE courses provided for local churches:

1. Introductory Course: "You, the Bible, God and Worship" (3 units)

A basic course for those who have done no theological education before - or not for a long time.

2. "Getting to Grips with the Bible" (5 units, 1 Study Day)

A basic course about knowledge of the Bible and how it came to be.

3. "Talking about God" (5 units, 1 Study Day)

A basic introduction to theology.

- This course will take place on Thursdays, 9:45 am – 12 noon, 42 Onslow Gardens, N10 3JX. Dates: 15, 29 April; 13, 27 May; 10 June.

4. "Leading Worship" (10 units, 2 Study Days)

The Application of Bible knowledge and theology in the design and conduct of worship.

5. "God's Word for Today" (5 units, 1 Study Day)

More material on proclaiming God's Word and making it relevant.

6. "Valuing Community Experiences" (10 units, 2 Study Days)

For those involved (or who want to be involved) in community activity, reflecting on that activity from perspectives of faith and community development principles.

If you are interested in participating in TLS LITE would you please talk to Julian.

HASM Discussion Group

10 March 2010 Subject: Playwright and Novelist, Samuel Beckett

Leader: Lilli Segel (8883 4137)

Venue: Joan Holton, 4 Ludlow Way , N2 0LA (8444 8582))

Two tramps (or are they clowns?) sit on a mound in a country road, the only feature of which is a leafless tree. They are waiting for Godot. Meanwhile they do their best to pass the time; though, as one of them says: it would pass anyway. But who is Godot? Why are they waiting for him? Will he ever come? What difference will it make if he does come? Samuel Beckett's 'Waiting for Godot' has become a landmark in modern drama. At first it baffled everyone, and angry theatregoers stormed out of its performances dismissing it as meaningless rubbish. Today it is virtually guaranteed to fill any theatre. The discussion will include viewing some short scenes from the play on video.

14 April 2010 Subject: The Tunes and Words of Hymns

Leader: Julian Templeton (8444 5076)

Venue: Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church, Central Square, NW11 (8457 5898)

In the worship of the Free Churches, hymns are the main vehicle for active congregational participation. This is why the choice of hymns is so important. Of the little feedback that leaders of worship receive, much will be about the choice of hymn tunes and words by way of criticism or appreciation. The particular combination of religious poetry with music can vary widely from tradition to tradition, and culture to culture. In this discussion group we will both sing and discuss the merits of words set to different tunes such as 'Lead, kindly light' and 'All my hope on God is founded'. We will also discuss the particular associations tunes such as 'The Dambusters' have, and how we may feel when these tunes are set to Psalm texts or religious verse. Participants are welcome, if they wish, to bring their own favourite (or least favourite!) hymn for discussion.



London Gallery Quire

On Sunday 14th February, at the Pond Square Chapel there was a united worship with authentic West Gallery Psalmody provided by the London Gallery Quire. This was an inspiring and very well-attended event with a congregation of ninety folk from a wide variety of churches. Julian delivered a wonderful sermon on the Psalms in Christian Devotion and the Quire sang both on their own and with the congregation.

For those who missed this, Julian's sermon can be downloaded from our website, – I can thoroughly recommend it and many asked for a copy after the service



Hayward Trio Concert

Saturday 10th April – 7pm

Highgate URC

The programme will include pieces by
St-Saens, Dvorak and Widor

This is the Trio's contribution to our 150th Anniversary celebration, but for us it will be an opportunity to welcome three accomplished musicians, two of whom we know in other guises. **Roberta Rominger** was our Synod Moderator and is now General Secretary of the URC. She plays the cello. **David Trafford** was a frequent visiting preacher when he was minister of Union Church, Crouch End. He plays the piano. The third member of the Trio is **Cathy Bamber**, who plays the violin. The Trio play only for charity and all the proceeds of the evening will go to **Christian Aid**, whose needs at the present time of human distress need no special pleading. There will be wine and soft drinks in the interval. Tickets are £10 from me, or at the door. Do come, with your friends and family and make this an evening to remember.

John Thompson



Bible Society Representative

Sarah Wrightson from St Michael's Church has asked for a representative from the United Reformed Church to serve on a small local committee in charge of Bible Society promotion and fundraising.

If you are interested in being this representative, or in finding out more about what it would involve, please telephone: **020 8348 3645** or email swrightson.highgate@virgin.net

Why a The Bible Society?

The Bible Society exists because millions lack the Bible in a language they can understand, in a form they can use or at a price they can afford. We call this Bible poverty.

More than 4,400 languages still wait for even one book of the Bible.

Though a billion people can't read, only 3 per cent of languages have the Bible in audio.

Every 5 seconds, someone goes blind but the complete Braille Bible exists in only 35 languages.

To find out more, go to their website at www.biblesociety.org.uk.

Area Forum



Thursday 29th April
at Highgate URC

- 7:30 pm Refreshments and Fellowship
- 8:00 pm Opening Worship led by Julian Templeton
- 8:05 pm 'A Mosaic of Ministry'. Presentation and discussion led by Anne Sardeson, Synod Training Officer
- 9:00 pm News from Churches
- 9:15 pm Closing Worship led by Julian Templeton
- 9:30 pm Finish

It would be wonderful if members of the congregation go along to support Julian. I am sure you will be pleasantly surprised at what an interesting event these forums are and it is an opportunity to meet people from other URC churches and exchange news and views.

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Fair in the Square

Saturday 12th June 12 noon – 5:00 pm

Please put this date in your diary. Volunteers are needed for a Food Stall; Face-painting Stall; and to serve refreshments. Any other offers welcome!

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Revised Common Lectionary

- 14 March** Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32
- 21 March** John 12:1-8; Philippians 3:4b-14; Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126
- 28 March** *Palm:* Luke 19:28-40; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Passion: Luke 22:14 – 23:56; Philippians 2:5-11; Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16
- 2 April** *Good Friday:* John 18:1 – 19:42; Hebrews 10:16-25; Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12; Psalm 22
- 4 April** *Easter:* Luke 24:1-12; Acts 10:34-43; Isaiah 65:17-25; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
- 11 April** John 20:19-31; Acts 5:27-32; Revelation 1:4-8; Psalm 118:14-29 or 150
- 18 April** John 21:1-19; Acts 9:1-6 (7-20); Revelation 5:11-14; Psalm 30
- 25 April** John 10:22-30; Acts 9:36-43; Revelation 7:9-17; Psalm 23
- 2 May** John 13:31-35; Acts 11:1-18; Revelation 21:1-6; Psalm 148

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Freewill Offering

Thank you to all who have managed to fill in their Standing Order forms and instructed their bank – with a wee reminder to those who haven't yet got round to doing it. Please note that you can donate by cheque if you prefer. Either way it is important that we are able to claim back tax on all you give. Please contact David Woolcock on 020 7272 7294 with any queries.

Wednesday Evening Home Group

7.45 - 9.50pm.

During the five Wednesdays in Lent, we are following a York course entitled "**WHEN I SURVEY....**". We are exploring some of the themes arising from Christ's crucifixion. These include: 'despair and hope'; 'a suffering world'; 'the place of silence in our noisy world'; 'the challenge of Christian living in a pluralistic society'.

Contributors include Reverend John Bell (Iona Community), Dr David Hope (former Archbishop of York), General Sir Richard Dannatt (former Chief of the General Staff of the British Army), Christine Baxter (Principal of St. John's Theological College, Nottingham) and Reverend Dr Colin Morris (Former President of the Methodist Conference, author and broadcaster).

Following a special 'in-the-home' Communion Service in Holy Week, we shall break during Easter week and resume our weekly pattern on Wednesday, 14th April.

Wednesday, 10th March	The Child on the Cross.
Wednesday, 17th March	Outside A City Wall.
Wednesday, 24th March	Touching The Rock.
Wednesday, 31st March	Holy Communion
Wednesday, 7th April	No Meeting.
Wednesday, 14th April	John 21:1-19; Acts 9:1-6 (7-20); Revelation 5:11-14; Psalm 30
Wednesday, 21st April	John 10:22-30; Acts 9:36-43; Revelation 7:9-17; Psalm 23
Wednesday, 28th April	John 13:31-35; Acts 11:1-18; Revelation 21:1-6; Psalm 148

Our gatherings at 14, Southwood Park, Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SG are friendly and informal. We should be delighted if you would like to join us.

Should a temporary change of venue be necessary, this will be announced during the previous Sunday morning service. Lifts, door-to-door, can be arranged - please let me know.

020 8458 2144 or 07966956160

Roger Orme

Church Annual General Meeting

This will be on Sunday 25th at 11.45 am after a shorter Worship led by Rev'd Julian Templeton. Please do try to attend this as it is a time when a number of important aspects of the church are reported on and all have the opportunity to comment.

Diary Dates

March

- Wednesday 10** 7:45 pm Home Group, Lent Course, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
8:00 pm HASM Discussion Group, 'Waiting for Godot',
4 Ludlow Way, N2 OLA
- Friday 12** 12:30 – 1 pm Christian Meditation
- Sunday 14** 10:30 am Lent 4, Mothering, Worship with Holy Communion led by
Rev'd Julian Templeton
6:30 pm United Evening Worship at St Michael's Church, South Grove
- Monday 15** 2 – 4 pm Open Door Gathering
- Wednesday 17** 7:45 pm Home Group, Lent Course, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
- Friday 19** 12:30 – 1 pm Christian Meditation
- Sunday 21** 10:30 am Lent 5, Worship led by Rev'd John Scott
6:30–8:15 pm FURY
- Wednesday 24** 7:45 pm Home Group, Lent Course, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
- Friday 26** 12:30 – 1 pm Christian Meditation
- Sunday 28** 10:30 am Lent 6, **Palm Sunday**, Worship led by Rev'd Julian Templeton
- Wed 31** 7:45 pm Home Group, Communion, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG

April

- Thursday 1** 7:00 pm **Maundy Thursday** Meal and
Communion Service,
Muswell Hill URC, Tetherdown, N10
- Friday 2** 9:30 am **Good Friday** CTH Procession of Witness, starting at
St Augustine's Church, Archway Road, N6
10:15 am United All Age Worship at PSC followed by
refreshments in Hall



Abbreviations:

HASM Highgate Area of Shared Ministry **CTH** Churches Together in Highgate

FURY Fellowship of United Reformed Youth **StMPR** St Michael's Parish Rooms, South Grove, N6

Sunday 4	10:30 am	Easter Day All Age worship with Holy Communion
Saturday 10	7:00 pm	Hayward Trio Chamber Music Concert
Sunday 11	10:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion led by Rev'd Roger Orme
Wednesday 14	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
	8:00 pm	HASM Discussion Group, 'Hymn Tunes & Words', Julian Templeton, Free Church, Central Square, NW11
Thursday 15	9:45 am	TLS LITE, 'Theology: Talking about God 1', 42 Onslow Gardens, N10 3JX
Friday 16	10:00 am	Elders' Meeting
	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 18	10:30 am	Worship led by Jean Parton
Monday 19	2–4 pm	Open Door Gathering
Wednesday 21	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Thursday 22	8:00 pm	Highgate Climate Action Network (HiCAN) presents a talk by Paula Clifford, 'Climate Justice: the challenges'
Friday 23	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 25	10:30 am	Shorter Worship led by Rev'd Julian Templeton Church Annual General Meeting
	6:30–8:30 pm	FURY
Monday 26	7:30 pm	CTH Open Meeting, St Joseph's Retreat, Highgate Hill, N19
Tuesday 27		Deadline for submissions to Outlook
Wednesday 28	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Thursday 29	9:45 am	TLS LITE, 'Theology: Talking about God 2', 42 Onslow Gardens, N10 3JX
	7:30 pm	Area Forum, Pond Square Chapel
Friday 30	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation



May

Sunday 2 10:30 am Worship led by Rev'd Roger Orme

Prayer Calendar

Pray and give thanks for...

March

Leaders and Activities of Highgate United Reformed Church

Our Ministers, Elders, Junior Church Leader and Helpers, Director of Music, Administrator

Our regular activities: Sunday Worship, Christian Meditation, Home Group, Open Door Gathering

Individuals in particular need of prayer

Walford and Bridget Harrison – as they make decisions about long-term care and accommodation

Felicitas Grabe – for her formation as a United Reformed Church Ordinand

Jim Ingram – for recovery after recent hospitalisation

Tricia Williams – for strength and recovery from illness

Nora Spence – for relief from her back pain

Others with particular needs...

Wider

Christians in Pakistan, Eritrea, Northern Nigeria, North Korea, Vietnam, Burma, China and Kazakhstan – for strength and faithfulness amidst repressive regimes.

April

Leaders and Activities of other congregations:

Muswell Hill URC – for new Minister, the Reverend Kate Hackett, and Elders

Union Church Crouch End – for Deacons and Congregation in their ministerial vacancy

Free Church, Hampstead Garden Suburb – for the minister Reverend Ian Tutton, and Deacons

For the TLS LITE Study Group as it embarks on a new course.

Individuals in particular need of prayer

Robert Courtney – for his continuing recovery

Tony Morgan – for his recent move to Crouch End

Angela Newton, Laura Templeton's sister, – for relief and diagnosis of her continuing health problems

Max Gorham, Josephine Music's brother, – for continuing recovery

Others with particular needs...

Wider: as we approach a General Election

Lynn Featherstone: Member of Parliament for Hornsey and Wood Green

Glenda Jackson: Member of Parliament for Hampstead and Highgate

Robert Gorrie: Leader of the Opposition for the Borough of Haringey

Claire Kober: Leader of Haringey Council

A Litany for Good Friday by Anne Sardeson

When we stand on the sidelines, but dare not get involved,

draw us in, O God, to all that you are.

When we know that the innocent suffer and the part we play in their suffering,

call us out, O God, to all that we can be.

When we live in a world that demands transformation,

lead us on, O God, to work for your salvation.

Unlocking the doors by Anne Sardeson

Forgive us, God,
our unbelief,
our human expectations,
our less than holy reactions.

Forgive us and transform us,
that we may discover your truth for ourselves,
and share your good news
with those who cannot yet believe.

Both Prayers taken from *Gathered to the Heart of God*, Prayer Handbook 2010, London: United Reformed Church, 2009. (The Reverend Anne Sardeson is Training Officer for Thames North Synod and will be speaking at the Area Forum in our Chapel on the 29th of April at 8:00 pm).



Christian Meditation

"The more we receive in silent prayer, the more we can give in our active life. We need silence in order to be able to touch souls. The essential thing is not what we say, but what God says to us and through us. All our words will be useless unless they come from within – words which do not give the light of Christ increase the darkness."

These are the words of Malcolm Muggeridge, used in a recent Friday meditation. Those who have long memories of a rather garrulous, controversial Muggeridge might be surprised at his words. They come from the book "Love is my meaning: an anthology of assurance" collected by Elizabeth Basset and published by Darton, Longman and Todd 1973.



If you have an interest in silent prayer you might like to know that the World Community for Christian Meditation has organised a programme of talks called Silence in the City. Details of the 2010 programme are on the website www.silenceinthecity.org.uk

Saturday 20th March (10am – 4pm), Fr Gregory Fruehwirth, Order of Julian of Norwich is giving a talk, Relationship, Community and Embodiment: the Gift of Jesus to Contemplative Experience.

The venue is Westminster Cathedral Hall, Ambrosden Avenue, London SW1 and you can book ahead or pay on the door. A donation of £20 is suggested. There's a form on the website to book but maybe, if you don't have internet access, you could just write to them with the name of the talk, enclosing a s.a.e. and a cheque made payable to Silence in the City. The address is: Silence in the City, 77 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 4TW.



The London centre of the World Community for Christian Meditation is St Mark's, Myddelton Square, London EC1R 1XX. They are open from 1 – 6pm, Tuesday to Friday. They have a good bookshop and you can meditate there at 1pm and 6pm. They will post books and tapes to you. The email address is uk@wccm.org, or phone 020 7278 2070.

Gwyneth Wilson

A visit to the Haringey Winter Shelter

Arriving at Westbury Avenue Baptist church near Turnpike Lane there's a warm welcome awaiting us. It's frostily cold and two volunteers are standing outside the church to make sure we find the right entrance.

Inside the hall, beds are lined up around the walls and in the centre of the room the tables are already set for dinner. A couple of guests are lying on the pink covered beds, others are chatting. In fact it's difficult for me to see who are the guests and who are the volunteers, there's such a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.

Often our picture of 'homelessness' is coloured by what we see on the streets of London - someone in shabby clothing, often with a dog alongside them, sitting on the pavement, hoping for some money from passers-by. But becoming homeless can happen to anyone. As Leslie Morphy, of Crisis, said recently 'many affluent Londoners are just a job loss, a relationship breakdown, an unforeseen catastrophe away from homelessness.'

Here in the hall, the guests are smartly dressed and no different to anyone else, apart from the fact that they haven't somewhere to go home to.

One man started chatting to me and I asked him who he was. He didn't give me his name but he told me about his experiences. The hardest thing for anyone homeless is not having a roof over your head, to have to sleep outdoors when it's cold and wet. It's impossible to sleep. He said he would have done anything to get into the warmth somewhere, even lots of things he shouldn't have done, he added. The people here, he told me, are the strong ones, the ones with the strength to seek these places out. He said that help is out there but you have to do a fair amount of leg work to find it. People who aren't as strong fall by the wayside. They often end up committing suicide.

It's such a blow to a man's pride to be homeless, he told me. Your whole life is nullified unless you have an address, a bank account, a debit card. You can't get benefit without an address and if you do, how can you make £100 last two weeks? That's one of the reasons people become homeless, he said, you can't live on that amount. People who want to work don't get the support to work.

The Winter Shelter started off as an idea by a group of people in the Gospel Centre, Turnpike Lane. Their leader, Lia, works with homeless young people, and the group knew that, although churches in Hackney, Camden and other London boroughs have been running winter shelters for some years, there was no such project in Haringey and yet there was an obvious need.

The learning curve has been very high, one of the group told me, but very worthwhile. Were they thinking of running it again? Thinking didn't come into it! I was told.

The churches have had 100 people through their doors since the shelter opened on 9th December. And, since then, around 60 people have found some form of accommodation while staying at the shelter. Some in hostels and halfway-houses, some have found places on their own. The local council give people who come to the Winter Shelter fast track appointments to see housing advisors and this has been a big help in getting people re-housed. The guests are under some time pressure to find somewhere to live as the longest they are allowed to stay at the shelter is 28 days.

The churches involved host the shelter overnight on a rotating basis – one church might do only one night, another might do Saturday night and then again on Monday night. Some churches have provided their buildings, others food, equipment or volunteers. There's scope for everyone to get involved. A group of pensioners from one of the churches held a collection and gave the £35 raised towards food for the project.

Martina and Pat, two of the kitchen helpers told me that the 22 meals that evening had been cooked by a woman at home with an eight week old baby! Another volunteer had collected the food and delivered it to the hall.



Martina said that she thought she was only going to do one meal at the shelter and yet she's still here 12 weeks' later!

Roast dinner and sweet and sour sausage have been two of the most popular dinners they've served. The pastries donated that evening by Dunns the bakers in Crouch End have also gone down well. Boxes of sausage rolls, doughnuts, custard tarts, iced buns and other goodies arrive every week.

What did Pat and Martina enjoy the most about volunteering? Meeting the guests, they said. What's been nice is the churches working together, they added, and also people from their workplaces, who aren't Christians, coming to help.

While I was chatting to them in the kitchen a lady in a brightly patterned dress and headscarf appeared at the hatch. She's now found accommodation, they told me, but she likes to come back for the company. Sometimes people also come back because they don't have the facilities to cook or the equipment.

From the kitchen I was intrigued to hear some beautiful piano playing coming from the hall. I popped out to find one of the guests playing music he'd composed himself. He told me that not only could he teach piano but guitar too. Martina and Pat told me that another of the guests was an artist and one an actor.

The ladies in the kitchen are just some of the volunteers who've been the mainstay of the project, along with Elvis – the project co-ordinator. He told me his is the one paid part-time position and that it was his own experience of homelessness that led him to be a



-time position and that it was his own experience of homelessness that led him to be a support worker for refugees and migrants and to go on to be involved in the Winter Shelter.

Day to day running costs had been high, he said, especially the phone bills as they had to call agencies, clients, and also potential donors. They were particularly grateful for the £1,000 donation from Pond Square as it tided them over at the beginning while they were waiting for more funding.

He explained to me how people are referred, initially for one night, to the shelter by various agencies so that the volunteers know who to expect. When they first arrive the guests sign an agreement which states the aim of

the shelter and the rules and other information such as how to reserve a place for the next night.

The guests leave the shelter at around 8.30 in the morning and then they can go to day centres where there are showers, internet facilities and housing advice.

What sort of feedback had he had from the guests? Most would like to stay longer than 28 days, he told me. They'd also really like to have an address where they could be contacted. Job centres are supposed to provide this for homeless people but often they don't, he said. In fact the only place in Haringey that did was only for street drinkers.

The guests would like showers (not often found in church halls!). And another thing that would really help, he added, would be if there was somewhere they could get pots, pans, utensils, cookers etc when they move into unfurnished accommodation. Social services give a one-off grant to people moving into privately rented flats but it's often not enough to furnish it.

What would enable the project to run again next winter, I asked. Somewhere to store everything over the summer and more funding were the two major concerns.

And what will happen to all the guests once the shelter is closed? The man I spoke to at the start of the evening had some good news. He told me he's now found somewhere to live. But, he says, he'll miss the warmth of the people he's met and he won't ever forget the kindness of the volunteers at the shelter.

Andrea Protheroe

(As well as Westbury Avenue Baptist Church, other churches that provided their halls as winter shelters included: The Gospel Centre, Wightman Road; Freedom's Ark Church, Bruce Grove; Church of Destiny, Tottenham High Road; St James's Church, Muswell Hill Broadway; St Mary's Church, Lansdowne Road.

Tony Morgan, from our congregation, was a regular volunteer. Would we provide our Hall as a Saturday night shelter next winter?

If you know of any storage that the Haringey Winter Shelter project could use please get in touch with Elvis at winter.shelter@yahoo.co.uk

Underground Stations

– can you name them?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. A letter to the Corinthians | 9. Timber ashes | 17. Alpine Hut |
| 2. The longest reign | 10. Arms dump | 18. Irate Monarch |
| 3. Anyone for tennis | 11. Up the wrong tree | 19. Oriental Pig |
| 4. Seven husbands for | 12. H2O for Laurel | 20. Part of the head |
| 5. In the hops country | 13. Botanical bliss | 21. Napoleon's Finale |
| 6. New Street for | 14. Messenger of God | 22. Sea defence |
| 7. Egg shaped | 15. Is falling down | 23. Another tree |
| 8. Pillar of stone | 16. Clerical envy | 24. From a monastery |

Answers on back page

Farewell to David Trafford

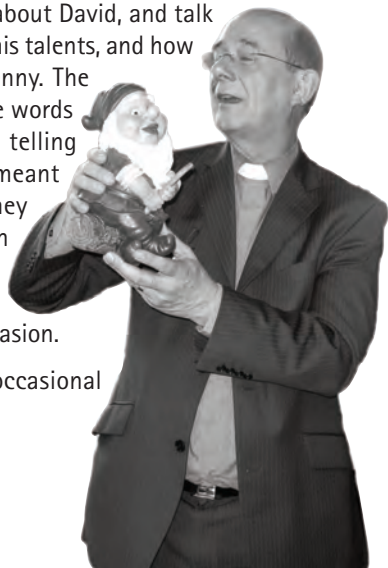


The Rev'd David Trafford preached his last sermon on 21st February after sixteen years as Minister of Union Church Crouch End. Clergy from many denominations were there in large numbers as were friends and family. The church was converted into a huge dining area which was absolutely packed and all were well provided for by a magnificent lunch supplied by the congregation.

Many were invited to speak about David, and talk about how they appreciated his talents, and how they would miss his wife Penny. The most moving for me were the words spoken by the children, telling everyone how much David meant to them and how much they

were going to miss him. They not only presented him with a huge scrap book of memories, but a garden gnome which obviously intrigued him. The afternoon finished with cutting a wonderful cake made specially for the occasion.

We will all miss him but hope that he returns to occasional preaching at Highgate after his one year off.



My Favourite Charity Sightsavers International



Josephine Music writes:

Since its foundation, Sightsavers has been working to cure blindness through specialist treatment and eye care, and supporting those who are irreversibly blind. Blindness and poverty are inextricably linked, but around 75% of global blindness can be either prevented or cured.

There are twice as many blind women in the world as men, in fact more than 20 million women are needlessly blind. The most common reasons for women going blind are cataracts and trachoma, both of which can be treated by simple operations.

Untreated, trachoma can cause great pain as the eyelids turn inwards, making the eyelashes scratch the eyeball. This can prevent women from working, both at home and outside, which has a huge impact on their family.

Women will often resort to pulling out their eyelashes with tweezers, or using tight headscarves to pull up the skin to restrict blinking to eradicate the pain. None of these solutions provide a long-term cure, yet a simple operation costing £5 could save their sight.

One of the stories on the Sightsavers website tells of 40-year-old Lasoi from Kenya who repeatedly suffered from trachoma. She eventually became completely blind and found it hard to care for her seven children. They had to stay home from school to help her. She was also struggling to do her beadwork, an essential income since her family lost their cattle due to drought. It wasn't until Lasoi was screened by a Sightsavers-supported team, who visited her village, that she learned her sight could be restored by a 20-minute operation. It changed her future.

It's stories such as these, and personal recommendations about the work of the charity, that led me to support Sightsavers. That such a small, simple operation could make such a difference to someone's life and bring her out of the darkness.

This year, the charity marks its 60th anniversary. And, as it does every year, Sightsavers is asking churches across the UK to join together in worship to mark World Sight Day. Special services on Sunday 17th October will focus prayers on people who are blind or visually impaired in some of the poorest countries in the world. Perhaps we could mark this at Pond Square?

In the meantime if you'd like to contribute to the work of Sightsavers, you can call the donation hotline on 0800 089 2020.

Alternatively, you can send your donation to: Sightsavers International, Bolnore Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 4BX, UK (please make cheques payable to 'Sightsavers International').

News from Commitment for Life

Commitment for Life is a network of United Reformed Churches and Local Ecumenical Partnerships committed to praying, giving and campaigning for change

BANGLADESH

The World Bank has made a list of the five main threats arising from climate change: droughts, floods, storms, rising sea levels, and greater uncertainty in agriculture. Four of the world's poorest nations top the list of the twelve countries at the highest risk. Bangladesh heads the list of countries most at risk of flooding. Increasing glacial melt from the Himalayan ranges as a result of rising global temperatures is set to swell the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers and their hundreds of tributaries, flooding thirty to seventy percent of the country each year as the water makes its way to the Bay of Bengal in the south, where the coast is also vulnerable to flooding from rising sea levels. They came second to the Philippines for storms and tenth in most danger due to rising sea levels.

Researchers in Bangladesh are in the final stage of testing three new rice varieties, which, they say, will be able to survive the country's annual floods. Most years more than 20% of Bangladesh goes under water, and millions of tonnes of rice are lost.

Whereas normal rice varieties can die after two or three days' submersion in water, tests show that the new ones can survive for longer than two weeks. Researchers say the new varieties could improve the country's annual harvest.

Scientists at the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), on the outskirts of Dhaka, say they hope that the government will approve the new varieties shortly and that farmers will be able to start growing them before the next monsoon.

EVENTS: One World Week

On Saturday, 13th March 2010 One World Week is holding the annual Sharing Day in Reading. OWW greatly appreciates the support it has received from the URC over many years and would love to see our URC friends there. This small and friendly event is suitable for everyone, from those who have been organising OWW activities for years to those who have never (yet!) organised an OWW event. It is completely free and will be a chance to share your experiences of One World Week 2009, share some food and help OWW and you prepare for 2010.

The 2010 theme is:

“Peacing Together One World: creating a culture of peace for all our children”

One World Week is a Development Education Charity that provides an opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds to come together to learn about global justice, to spread that learning and to use it to take action for justice locally and globally.

For more information on the event and the work of One World Week go to www.oneworldweek.org or contact us on 01189394933.

Pancake Wordsearch

Find the words
in the grid

- Blini • Blintzes •
- Butter • Cannelloni
- Crempog • Crepe
- Egg roll • Eggs •
- Fat • Hotcakes •
- Lefser • Pancake •
- Lent • Nockerin •
- Oil • Palacsinta •
- Pfannkuchen •
- Plattar • Shrove
- Tuesday • Tortillas



No one knows how long people have made pancakes. Some people compare them to the flat bread made by primitive families more than 12,000 years ago. Shrove Tuesday, or Pancake Day, highlights the start of Lent. In the past there would have been great feasts held to use up supplies of fat, butter and eggs. These foods were forbidden during Lent. The idea was that people gave up these foods for the whole period. Lent lasts for 40 days and 40 nights and reminds us of the time Jesus spent in the wilderness before his ministry began, praying and being tempted by Satan. During this time Jesus fasted from food. Lent ends with Easter Sunday.

Many countries have pancakes of one kind or another – though they have different names.

Hot cakes (American) Pikelets (Australian) Nockerin (Austrian) Pancakes (British) Egg rolls (China) Crepes (French) Pfannkuchen (German) Palacsinta (Hungary) Cannelloni (Italian) Blintzes (Jewish) Tortillas (Mexican) Lefser (Norwegian) Blini (Russian) Plattar (Swedish) Crempog (Welsh)

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Answers to Underground Quiz on page 13. 1. St Pauls 2. Victoria 3. Wimbledon, 4. Seven Sisters 5. Kentish Town 6. Old Street 7. Oval 8. Monument 9. Burnt Oak, 10. Gunnersbury 11. Barking 12. Bayswater 13. Kensington Gardens 14. Angel 15. London Bridge 16. Parsons Green 17. Swiss Cottage 18. King's Cross 19. East Ham 20. Temple 21. Waterloo 22. Embankment 23. Poplar 24. Blackfriars
