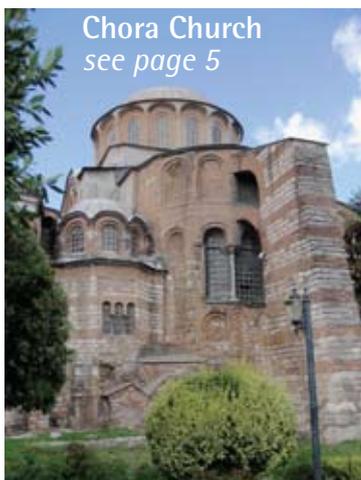


# Oct–Nov 2012 outlook

Newsletter of **Highgate United Reformed Church**

## Contents

- 2** Cold Weather Shelter  
Wedding Blessing and  
Historic Sermon
- 3** Saturday Café  
Harvest Festival
- 4** The Good Companions
- 5** Chora Church
- 6** Calendar
- 8** Bible Sunday  
HASM Discussion Group
- 9** Community and  
Recycling Project  
Organ Recital
- 10** Home Group  
Lectionary Readings  
Coffee Morning
- 11** The Plant Hunters



Chora Church  
see page 5

## Solidarity and Liberation

**“ If you come here to help me, then you are wasting your time.  
But if you come here because your liberation  
is bound up in mine, then let us begin.”**

*Lily Walker, Australian Aboriginal leader*

This striking statement suggests that we are all less free than we think we are—we all need to be liberated from something—and that our liberation is bound up together. It suggests that I am not truly free while you are enslaved by something, and vice versa. This strongly suggests that liberation is a matter of solidarity. Solidarity is the practice of people who share deeply in one another's experience and struggles. In the Old Testament, God is Liberator. God works through Moses to liberate the Israelites from captivity in Egypt. God works through prophets and through a Gentile ruler to liberate the Jews from exile in Babylon. In the New Testament, the Jews are again a subject people, this time to the Romans. But the liberation offered is not that of throwing off a foreign yoke by force; the liberation offered in the New Testament comes through one who lives in solidarity with the people: Jesus of Nazareth. In the experience of eating with people, listening to them, walking alongside them, Jesus showed solidarity. Out of this solidarity, Jesus proclaimed that he had come to liberate the captives. But the captivity of which he spoke was not captivity to a foreign political power; it was captivity to a spiritual power: the power of sin. The healings and exorcisms that Jesus performed were instances of the power of God's Kingdom triumphing over the power of sin. Jesus personifies sin as a thief: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come that you may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10) While many of us may not have experienced sin personally in such a dramatically destructive manner, many others have. Think of the victims of abuse, addiction, violence, persecution, discrimination, and war. Yet even if we have escaped these, we are still affected by the subtle and insidious influence of sin. This is experienced in the preoccupation with self that spurns solidarity and regards others as either 'less fortunate' or 'more

**Minister:** Rev'd Julian Templeton, 42 Onslow Gardens, N10 3JX. Tel: 020 8444 5076  
**Associate Minister:** Rev'd Roger Orme Tel: 020 8458 2144  
**Administrator:** Patricia Judd, Tel: 020 8341 5463 or 07772 220189 Email: admin@highgateurc.co.uk  
**Church Secretary:** In vacancy  
**Treasurer:** Robert Gorrie, 10 Wood Lane, N6 5UB  
**Outlook Editors:** Laura Templeton & Andrea

Charity no: 1131691

Pond Square Chapel,  
 South Grove, Highgate,  
 London N6 6BA  
[www.highgateurc.co.uk](http://www.highgateurc.co.uk)

privileged' than oneself; resulting in either pity or resentment towards them.

Jesus advocated a different approach when he held up as a model the tax collector who, when he went to pray at the temple, kept his eyes downcast, beat upon his breast, and prayed: 'Lord, make atonement for me, a sinner.' Sin, like death, is the great leveller. None can escape it; all are subject to it. Acknowledging that I am a sinner who makes mistakes and messes things up is the vital confession that leads me to seek forgiveness from others and from God. Others may or may not forgive me; but God is Liberator in that God is always gracious and forgiving to the penitent. Jesus is the human revelation of this divine nature. He showed solidarity with sinful humanity but with one important difference: "Christ was innocent of

sin, and yet for our sake God made him one with human sinfulness, so that in him we might be made one with the righteousness of God." (1 Corinthians 5:21) The phrase 'made one with' is another way of expressing the idea of solidarity. In Christ, God has showed solidarity with us; in exchange, God grants us solidarity with his divine nature, as 'the One who loves in freedom' (Karl Barth). This brings us back to Lily Walker's profound insight: offering to help those whom we perceive as 'less fortunate than ourselves', while well-intentioned, is not the best approach. Acknowledging that I too need liberation, and that my liberation is bound up with yours, is the costly but more effective way to freedom and fulfilment. This is the work of the gospel: let us begin.

**Julian Templeton**

---

## **Cold Weather Shelter** **November-December 2012**

It is proposed that we again participate in the Community of Camden Churches' Cold Weather Shelter scheme. The proposal is that we host homeless guests on Sunday evenings between 2 November and 16 December in St Michael's Halls and Crypt. However, there are three evenings—11 Nov, 2 Dec, 16 Dec—when St Michael's upstairs Hall will be occupied in the early evening, and therefore the guests will come to the Pond Square Chapel Hall to be served dinner, and then after this go to St Michael's to bed down for the night and have breakfast on Monday morning. We will again be grateful for donations of dinner and breakfast food

and supplies, or monetary donations to buy food and Z-beds. We hope those who volunteered last year will also be willing to volunteer. We hope those who volunteered last year will also be willing to volunteer again. We would, of course, be delighted if there are any new volunteers!

Please contact me if you feel able to help in any of the aforementioned ways. Please include the shelter in your prayers as we cooperate with St Michael's to express the hospitality of Christ and sow seeds of the Kingdom of God.

**Julian Templeton**

---

## **A Wedding Blessing** **and a Historic Sermon**

The service on Sunday 23rd September was special for two reasons. First was the blessing of Jackie and David Thompson's wedding, which took place on the Isle of Mull in June. Jackie and David made their vows before Julian and the congregation before we all sang a hymn which Julian had composed for his and Laura's wedding.

Afterwards there was bubbly and lots of cake made by their daughter Lara. Before that we'd the second special event - a very interesting sermon from Stephen Orchard on the Great Ejectment of 1662. A copy of this was sent round by email but if anyone would like one printed please let me know. We can't publish it in Outlook as Stephen would like to retain the right to publish it at a future date.

**Andrea**

**P**atricia Judd, our administrator – amongst other roles – has decided to start a cafe for the parents of the ballet school to raise money for the winter shelter. We will also have mugs designed incorporating images from Ivel Muller's painting that hangs in our lounge. We plan to sell the mugs to anyone in the church or users of the cafe as a further fund raiser.

## Saturday Morning Café

Highgate United Reformed Church

9 am-12 noon

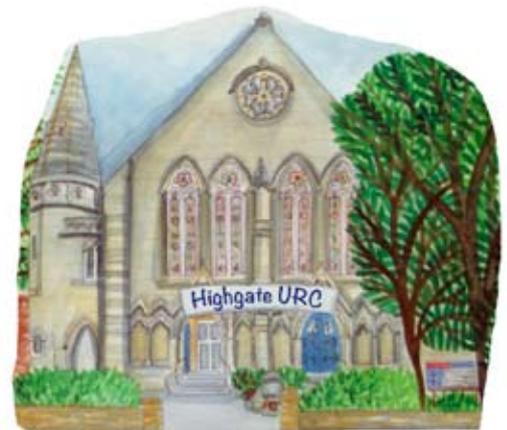
starting Saturday 6 October 2012

Last year our church hosted a winter shelter for homeless people on 4 nights in February through an organisation called C4WS <http://www.c4wshomelessproject.org/> involving many churches in the borough of Camden. This provides a hot meal, a bed for the night and breakfast during the cold winter months of November - March. We are planning to do this again this year, in conjunction with St Michael's Church of England church in Highgate.

Many people volunteer and provide food and other items to help make this happen, but we do need to raise money to buy some items and to pay for things like having bedlinen laundered.

We will be running a café serving Fairtrade coffee, many types of tea, juice and homemade cakes from 9-12 on Saturday mornings in the upstairs lounge of Highgate URC.

If you would like to volunteer in helping organise the winter shelter please contact Patricia at: [admin@highgateurc.co.uk](mailto:admin@highgateurc.co.uk) or Tel: 020 8341 5463



## Harvest Festival

**Sunday 21 October**

### Offerings for Muswell Hill Soup Kitchen

The Rev'd Roger Orme will lead our Harvest Festival worship. As we have done in the recent past, we will again be collecting non-perishable food for the Muswell Hill Soup Kitchen, which serves two-course hot dinners to up to 50 guests in the Hall of the Baptist Church, Muswell Hill. The Soup Kitchen relies upon harvest offerings from churches to stock its larder. Please bring tinned and packeted food with a well-advanced "use by" date.



# The Good Companions

On 27th June, Robert Manning gave a duo organ recital at Southernhay URC in Exeter with his friend and organ duo partner Dr Tom Corfield from Derby Cathedral. Their programme included works by three composers we have welcomed to Highgate - Dr Brian Collins, Alan Gibbs and Peter Monk; all were present at the concert. Brian's daughter, Beth Hartley, has preached several times at Highgate. The Minister at



Peter Monk, Dr Brian Collins and Alan Gibbs

Southernhay is the Revd Iain McDonald, formerly a member of the congregation at Muswell Hill URC; a talented musician, he has twice deputised for Robert at Highgate as an organist! The concert was built around an organ duo written by Alan in memory of Peter's son Jonathan, who was killed in action in Afghanistan in June 2010. Three poems by Robert's late friend and mentor-figure John Nicholls Westcott were read; one of these dealt with the subject of remembrance which was the starting-point for the programme, though the second half of the concert - which included an improvisation by Peter on 'I got rhythm' - was more light-hearted. Robert has twice read poems by John at Highgate Christmas services; all in all, this concert had many Highgate connections!

## **Robert asked Brian Collins to give a personal view of the event:**

I once made an excursion to Lingfield, a journey of about an hour each way, to listen to a performance of an organ piece of mine that lasted 90 seconds. On that basis a trek to Exeter and back - nearly four hours each way with an overnight stopover - for another piece that lasts but some seven minutes might seem even more extravagant.

However, when such an occasion is also an opportunity to spend time with old friends and colleagues, distances and times are of little importance. And so, there was Dr Manning in action not at Highgate URC this time but at Southernhay URC in his native city. The occasion was ostensibly to raise money towards the church's building fund and in this it was very successful. But it brought together what is becoming a kind of travelling circus, a quintet of Good Companions - performers Tom Corfield and Robert Manning, composers Alan Gibbs, Peter Monk and myself (with J S Bach, Samuel Wesley, Joseph Haydn and César Franck also making their presences felt although less corporeally).

Southernhay URC and its organ have an interesting history. The church spire is a local landmark, all that survives of a building largely obliterated by Nazi bombs. The congregation of this time of the Exeter blitzkrieg was given hospitality by the local Methodists in their church. That building itself no longer exists but its organ does and is now re-installed in the rebuilt URC. And very fine it sounds too.

At the core of the evening's recital was a series of reminiscences and memorials - recognitions of lives and communities. These were not exclusively musical for, interspersed with the organ pieces, there was verse by local poet John Nicholls Westcott who died in 2005. Here too, then, was that same element of a life celebrated.

The evening passed and the Good Companions would meet again the next day for farewells and returns to their respective bases - London, Derby, Exeter itself. There was also a feeling that it wouldn't be too long before we'd all be together again, even if the venue is, at that point in time, unknown.

**Brian Collins**

# İstanbul (or should it be Constantinople)

The call to prayer five times a day is one of the many sounds of modern, bustling Istanbul. The domes of mosques and spikes of minarets punctuate the horizon wherever you look.

Several of Istanbul's mosques started out as Christian churches and one of the most impressive of these is the Chora Church which today is a state-run museum.

The Chora church was originally built outside the walls of Constantinople in the 4th century although the current church building was started in the 11th century. Further construction was carried out and the building as it stands today was completed around the 13th century. There are several chambers with domed ceilings and plain stone walls. The powerful Byzantine statesman Theodore Metochites endowed the church with many of its fine mosaics and frescos which were carried out between 1315 and 1321.

In the siege of 1453 the city fell to the Ottomans. Around 50 years later the church was converted into a mosque and the mosaics and frescos were covered with a fine layer of plaster. This may have helped preserve these beautiful mosaics. The mosaics depict the Nativity, miracles and other Bible stories as well as detailed images about the birth and girlhood of Mary taken from the Apocrypha. There are many gold tiles but also fine colour detail in the beautiful mosaics. One of the series of mosaics concerns Jesus's early years and then another series covers His ministry.

A very helpful audio-guide meant we learnt a lot about the history of the mosaics as well as the explanations about the scenes depicted – many, but not all, of which were familiar.

Should you ever be in Istanbul make time to visit this beautiful church!



Patricia Judd

### October

Monday 1	2 – 4 pm	Open Door Gathering, Trees, 2–4 Broadlands Road, N6 4AN
	8:00 pm	CTH Theology Group, 17 Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SD
Wednesday 3	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Thursday 4	7:30 pm	Elders' Meeting
Friday 5	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation
Saturday 6	7:30 pm	Musical Melodies in Muswell Hill. Songs from the Shows. Life and Mission Choir, Muswell Hill URC, Tetherdown, N10 1ND
Sunday 7	10:30 pm	Worship led by the Rev'd Geoffrey Roper
Wed 10	7:45 pm	Home Group, 1 Brookfield Park, NW5 1ES
	8:00 pm	HASM Discussion Group, Dickens & Victorian Poverty, Elders' Vestry, Free Church, Hampstead Garden Suburb, NW11 7AG
Thursday 11	7:30 pm	Area Forum, Union Church, Northiam, Totteridge, N12 7ET
Friday 12	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation
Saturday 13	6:00 pm	Organ Recital, St Michael's Church, South Grove, Highgate N6
Sunday 14	10:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion led by the Rev'd Julian Templeton
	12 noon	<b>Church Meeting</b>
Monday 15	2 – 4 pm	Open Door Gathering, Pond Square Chapel
	8:00 pm	CTH Theology Group, 17 Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SD
Thursday 18	7:30 pm	Management Committee
Friday 19	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 21	10:30 am	Harvest Festival Worship led by the Rev'd Roger Orme. Collection of tinned and packeted food for the Muswell Hill Soup Kitchen
Wednesday 24	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Friday 26	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 28	10:30 am	Bible Sunday Worship led by the Rev'd Julian Templeton, with sermon about the Geneva Bible
Monday 29	8:00 pm	CTH Theology Group, 17 Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SD
Wednesday 31	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG

## CHURCH MEETING Sunday 14 October

**A**fter worship on Sunday the 14th of October a Church Meeting will be held. I urge you all to attend, as there are some very important matters to discuss about the present and future life of our congregation. Among these will be: **1.** How we reach

out more effectively to our wider community in service and mission; **2.** An update on our children's ministry. **3.** An update on the forthcoming Cold Weather Shelter hosting at St Michael's Church.

**Julian Templeton**

## November

Friday 2	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 4	10:30 am pm/am	Worship led by the Rev'd Roger Orme Cold Weather Shelter, St Michael's.
Monday 5	2 – 4 pm	Open Door Gathering, Trees, 2–4 Broadlands Road, N6 4AN
Wednesday 7	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Friday 9	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 11	10:30 am pm/am	Worship with Holy Communion, led by the Rev'd Julian Templeton Cold Weather Shelter. Dinner at PSC. Sleeping at St Michael's
Monday 12	8:00 pm	CTH Theology Group, 17 Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SD
Wednesday 14	7:45 pm 8:00 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG HASM Discussion Group, Missionaries – Then and Now, 31 Fordington Road, N6 4TD
Friday 16	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 18	10:30 pm pm/am	Worship led by the Rev'd Phillip Stewart Cold Weather Shelter, St Michael's
Monday 19	2 – 4 pm	Open Door Gathering, Pond Square Chapel
Wednesday 21	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Friday 23	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 25	10:30 am pm/am	Worship led by the Rev'd Dr Ian Tutton, HASM Exchange Cold Weather Shelter, St Michael's
Monday 26	8:00 pm	CTH Theology Group, 17 Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SD
Wednesday 28	7:45 pm	Home Group, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Thursday 29	8:00 pm	HASM Liaison Group, Pond Square Chapel
Friday 30	12:30 – 1 pm	Christian Meditation

## December

Sunday 2	10:30 am 6:00 pm pm/am	Advent 1, Worship led by the Rev'd Robert Courtney Highgate School Carol Service, Pond Square Chapel Cold Weather Shelter. Dinner at PSC. Sleeping at St Michael's
----------	------------------------------	--

## VISITING MINISTERS by John Thompson

We have only two visitors in October and November. **Rev Geoffrey Roper** of Lumen URC, King's Cross, will lead worship on 7th October. A keen cyclist before Wiggins & Co made it expected, he hopes to ride up Highgate Hill as usual. Driving from his new home in Potters Bar, **Rev Philip**

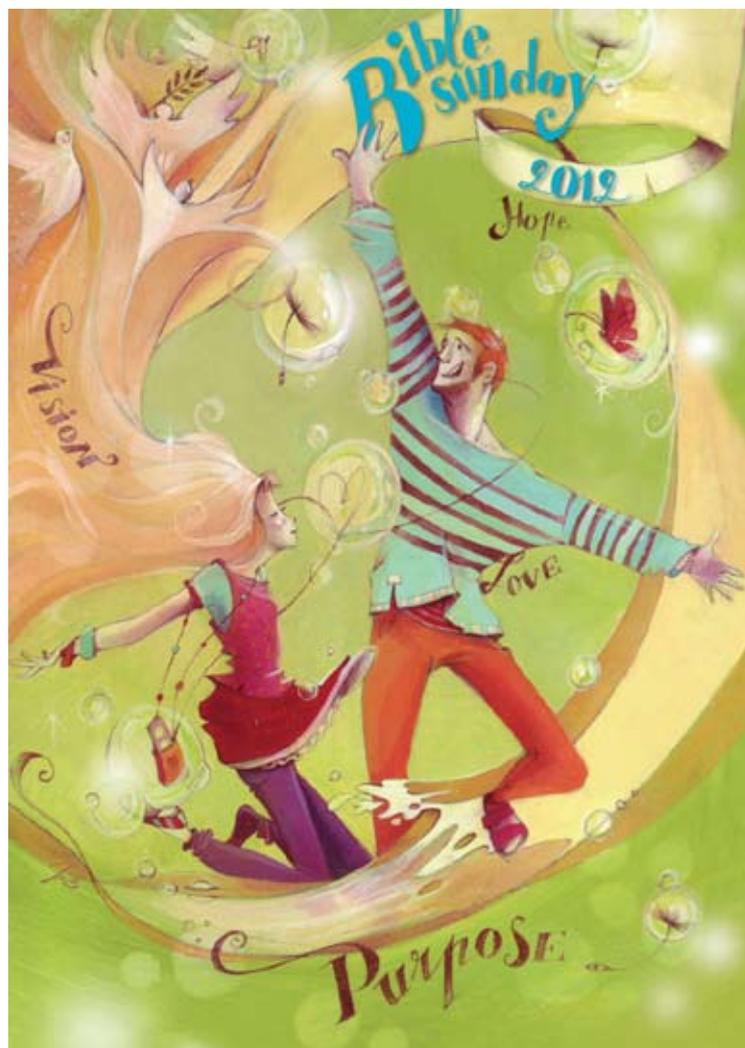
**Stewart** will preach on 18th November. They are both old friends and we look forward to welcoming them. Though he is hardly a visitor, I should perhaps add that **Rev Robert Courtney** will take our service on 2nd December. The Associate minister, **Rev Roger Orme** will preach on 21st October and 4th November.

# **Bible Sunday**

## **The Geneva Bible**

### **Sunday 28 October**

In 2011, much was made of the 400th Anniversary of the publishing of the King James Bible. What is not so well known is that this Authorised Version of the Bible was produced at the behest of James I, largely for political purposes to unite a warring Church of England, and in order to supplant a recent translation of the Bible that had been a runaway publishing success. This recent translation was known as the Geneva Bible. First published in 1560 in Geneva by a group of no more than 15 British Protestant scholars who were refugees from Queen Mary's Catholic regime. It was the first English translation to have numbered verses for ease of reference. It included marginal notes for explanation, and thus was the first English Study Bible. Most editions were pocket-sized and affordable. It was the Bible used by Shakespeare, Milton, Knox, Donne and Bunyan. It was the Bible favoured by the Plymouth and Virginia settlers in North America. Cromwell authorized the Soldier's Pocket Bible to be issued to his troops with extracts from the Geneva Bible. The decline in its popularity was mainly to do with royal and ecclesiastical pressure that banned its printing and made its possession incur a heavy fine, effectively clearing the way for the new Authorised Version of the Bible first published in 1611. The Bible readings on the 28th of October will be from the Geneva Bible, and the sermon will expand on the significance of this translation.



Bible Society  
Stonehill Green, Westlea,  
Swindon SN5 7DG  
Charity Registration No 232759

01793 418222  
biblesunday@biblesociety.org.uk  
biblesunday.org

F BPM: 001

## **HASM Discussion Groups**

### **Wednesdays, 8:00 pm**

**October 10 Dickens and Victorian Poverty**  
*Marion Ditchfield*

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

"My whole nature was penetrated with grief and humiliation." Dickens hated the time he was put to work in a blacking factory near Hungerford Bridge at 12 years of age, because of his family's poverty. Perhaps this gave him his profound sympathy with the poor so apparent in his novels. In his life, he helped poor individuals and good causes with money and support, including for a time a house for 'fallen women'. We will think about Dickens's attitudes to poverty in the context of his times.

**November 14 Missionaries – Then and Now**  
*Derek and Carole Lindfield*

**31 Fordington Road, Highgate, N6 4TD**

2013 will be the bi-centenary celebration of the birth of David Livingstone, perhaps one of the best known of all missionaries. Boers from South Africa objected to Livingstone giving the natives ideas 'above their station'. Another notable 19th Century missionary, John Williams, was eventually martyred. Missionary work has changed considerably since. Derek and Carole Lindfield, who served as Council for World Mission missionaries in Botswana and Samoa, will explore the significance of the ways in which missionary work has changed.

# Community and Recycling Projects

If you'd like to get rid of some unwanted furniture or an old computer here are some local projects which would be glad to accept them. (extract courtesy of the Muswell Hill and Hornsey Friends of the Earth newsletter)

## Green Routes

Metropolitan Care & Repair has set up a computer recycling project for volunteers to gain work experience and enhance life skills. The project is known as 'Green Routes'.

What we need: computers/other IT equipment

What we can offer:

- safe asset disposal
- in return from donating your IT equipment we will securely erase your data, in accordance with UK CESG infosec requirements.
- large quantities of computers can be collected from your premises
- on site data erasure, if you prefer to keep your equipment
- supply of refurbished computers

Please contact James Franklin for further information: [greenroutes@metropolitan.org.uk](mailto:greenroutes@metropolitan.org.uk).

Telephone 020 353 54700/0208 809 4832



## Restore Community Project

Another good project: [www.restorecommunityprojects.org](http://www.restorecommunityprojects.org)

The project collects furniture and appliances

from households, hotels, recycling centres and other locations. It serves a treble purpose: helping us to get rid of unwanted stuff, giving work and training, producing restored furniture for those who need it. Restore's collection area covers a wide range of places.

To arrange a collection, please phone 020 8493 0900.

## Don't bin it

To recycle almost anything, visit this useful website. You put in your postcode and what you want to get rid of: [www.dontbinbringit.org](http://www.dontbinbringit.org)

Pamela Furse (from Muswell Hill and Hornsey Friends of the Earth)

## Organ recital at St Michael's

On Saturday 13th October at St Michael's, five Highgate church organists will be taking part in a composite organ recital; it will start at 6pm and

last for approximately one hour. Robert Manning's contribution will be the two organ movements from Peter Monk's 'Pond Square Cantata', written for the concert which formed part of our 150th anniversary celebrations in April 2009. Do support this event if you can!

**Robert Manning**

Following the summer break, the Home Group has resumed its meetings on Wednesday evenings, with good support, interesting discussion and lots to think and pray about.

We will continue to meet at 14, Southwood Park, Southwood Lawn Road, London N6 5SG starting at 7.45pm, other than on Wednesday, 10th October when we shall meet at 1, Brookfield Park, London NW5 1ES.

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.**

<b>October 7</b>	Job 1:1; 2:1-10; Psalm 26 or Psalm 25 Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12; Mark 10:2-16
<b>October 14</b>	Job 23:1-9, 16-17; Psalm 22:1-15 Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31
<b>October 21</b>	Job 38:1-7 (34-41); Psalm 104:1-9, 24, 35c; Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 10:35-45
<b>October 28</b>	Job 42:1-6, 10-17; Psalm 34:1-8 (19- 22); Hebrews 7:23-28; Mark 10:46-52
<b>November 4</b>	Isaiah 25:6-9; Psalm 24; Revelation 21:1-6a; John 11:32-44
<b>November 11</b>	Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17; Psalm 127 or Psalm 42; Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44
<b>November 18</b>	1 Samuel 1:4-20; 1 Samuel 2:1-10 or Psalm 113; Hebrews 10:11-14 (15-18) 19-25; Mark 13:1-8
<b>November 25</b>	2 Samuel 23:1-7; Psalm 132:1-12 (13-18); Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37
<b>December 2</b>	Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

## Autumn Coffee Morning

**Saturday 6th October**

**10.30 am - 12 noon**

**C**offee morning and bring and buy stalls at the St James's Centre, Muswell Hill. **Do come for coffee, a chat and a bargain!**

The stalls will have cakes, savouries, books, preserves, plants and bric-a-brac. There will also be a round-the-world slideshow tour 'Real people, real places' to watch.

The coffee morning is being held to raise money for the Women's World Day of Prayer which takes place on the first Friday of March each year. In 2013 the service comes from France and the theme is 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me'.

On Friday 1st March 2013 there'll be services at 10.30 am at the URC, Muswell Hill and at 2pm at All Saints (C.E.) Church, Highgate. The proceeds from the coffee morning will be used to meet the expenses of these services.

If you would like to donate baking, jams, books, or any of the other items mentioned above, they would be most welcome. Please get in touch with me and please do come along and support us. Hope to see you there.



**Christa**

# The Plant Hunters

Chatting with John Thompson after the service one Sunday about an interview I'd done at the National Trust for Scotland gardens at Crarae in Argyllshire we got on to the subject of plant hunters of the past. John was kind enough to suggest that some of the members of the congregation who are keen gardeners might be interested in reading a bit more.

Crarae Garden was created by Lady Grace Campbell in 1912 on the shores of Loch Fyne in Argyllshire. Her nephew was the famous plant hunter Reginald Farrer and the steep ravine rising up from the burn in the damp, warmish climate of the west coast of Scotland provided just the habitat for plants brought back from China, Tibet and Burma. It really is how you'd imagine a Himalayan garden with its hundreds of different species of rhododendrons, azaleas and other exotic plants. The garden also has a National Collection of southern beech and an

amazing plantation of sequoia sempervirens.

Nigel Price, the gardener, has a particular love of rhododendrons and has been plant hunting in China since 1996. Now of course they are only allowed to bring back seeds, because of the risk of

introducing invasive species. Wandering through the garden he told us stories of the plant collectors who'd introduced so many new species to British gardens. One of his favourite rhododendrons – *R. Thomsonii* – has a flaky, cinnamon-coloured bark, and was found by one of the early plant collectors, Joseph Hooker, in the 1850s. *Rhododendron sinogrande*, with its glossy, rugby-ball sized leaves, was discovered by George Forrest in north-west Yunnan. He was lucky to survive one plant collecting expedition in 1905. Their party of 18 collectors was attacked by a group of Tibetan lamas and he was one of only 2 to escape. The man who discovered *Rhododendron Montroseanum*



– Frank Kingdon Ward, also had an eventful life, he impaled himself on a bamboo, survived an earthquake, and a tree fell on his tent. He was unusual among plant collectors in living to the age of 72.

Many of the plant hunters went out in search of new species on behalf of the Royal Horticultural Society or commercial nurseries but Robert Fortune made his second expedition to China in 1848 for the British East India Company. He disguised himself as a Chinese merchant and stole one of the country's most valuable exports – tea. He transported tens of thousands of seedlings of *camellia sinensis* to the Himalayas.

Reginald Farrer died on a plant-hunting trip to Burma in 1920. As well as his plant collecting, he was also a keen rock gardener who favoured a naturalist planting style in contrast the formality of the Victorian garden. He wrote novels and gardening books and not only changed the way people wrote about gardens and gardening, but the way they gardened too.

The life story of just one of these plant hunters makes for an exciting read and there are many books and novels based on their exploits but to really get a feel for the passion which motivated them to risk their lives do go to The Plant Seekers exhibition at the Garden Museum near Lambeth Palace. You can see original journals and botanical illustrations from the RHS Lindley Library collection along with Farrer's lantern slides from the lectures he gave when he returned home.

'The Plant Seekers' is on at the Garden Museum, Lambeth Palace Rd, London SE1 7LB, until 21st October. [www.gardenmuseum.org.uk](http://www.gardenmuseum.org.uk). Entrance fees are £7.50 for adults, £6.50 for senior citizens and half price to members of the RHS. Free to friends and patrons of the Museum, children under 16, those on JSA and carers of disabled people.

If you'd like to see the soundslide of The Plant Hunter's Tale it's at [www.nts.org.uk/ScotlandsStories/PlantHuntersTale](http://www.nts.org.uk/ScotlandsStories/PlantHuntersTale).

Andrea



# What can we learn from the World Church?

**You are invited to attend the Area Forum**  
(a twice-yearly meeting of URC congregations in the Central and North London Area of the Thames North Synod)  
for fellowship, worship, and to listen to:

**Reverend Naison Hove**, *originally from Zimbabwe* and  
**Mr Ratna Pradhan**, *originally from Nepal*

who will share their experiences and thoughts about what we can learn from Christians from other parts of the world.

**Thursday  
11th October**

**7:30 pm**

**All are welcome**

**Union Church,  
Northiam,  
Totteridge, NI2 7ET**



Union Church has a large car park. Street parking is unrestricted.

Nearest underground station: Woodside Park, Northern Line, Zone 4.

