

Christ Church

New Southgate & Friern Barnet
(Baptist/United Reformed)

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NEWSLETTER

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PASTORAL LETTER

Following Jesus' Baptism by John the Baptist in the River Jordan; "Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by The Devil. After spending 40 days and nights without food, Jesus was hungry. Then, The Devil came to him and said, "If you are God's son, order these stones to be turned into bread". (Matthew 4. 1-4) He was tempted to show his true power three times by The Devil.

As we are in the period between Ash Wednesday up till Easter, Ruth is sharing thoughts and Bible passages throughout March. We are all following "Worship in the Wilderness" as our guide, meeting weekly on Zoom while studying, praying and reading Bible passages laid out for us. I am looking forward to this journey of Lent.

After I retired from Holly Park School my close friend Linda and I embarked on a journey to Egypt for two weeks. As our plane crossed the Sahara Desert, we spotted the River Nile, snaking its way towards the vivid green arc of land either side of the river.

Daily we were up at the crack of dawn, or even before that, to travel into the desert by crossing to the other side from Luxor City. We visited the Valley of the Kings, where numerous Pharaohs were buried, way underground.

We were back on our ship sailing down the Nile well before lunch and mainly the heat of the day, even in early January!

Before we left our cruise, we decided to take a hot air balloon ride across the desert and all the historical sites. We crossed the river in the early hours of morning wearing warm clothing and eventually reached our balloon holding 24 of us in its basket!

We glided along gently and even saw our balloon's shadow on the sandy, rocky desert below. If we had not been with a very competent pilot, I've been wondering how we would have fared, with no water or food or map to help us had we been very unfortunate.

What joy as we climbed out after an incredibly gentle landing, dancing in a big circle to celebrate our flight!

To set off as Jesus did, without food while he contemplated his calling to be God's blessed son on earth without abusing his power. He had to face many temptations to proclaim himself all powerful. He knew he was meant to be humble and to show us the way to live by not boasting of our giving and told us how to pray in private. So many of our Bible stories tell of going into the desert to think, to escape or to suffer great hardship on that journey.

Some may think of our 3rd lockdown sheltering from the "heat" of Covid-19 which persists in roaming around across the whole world, as very depressing.

When I encountered severe depression some years ago, I felt as though I was in a black cloud, isolated, lost, depressed and anxious beyond reason and utterly "bewildered". We pray for all those who feel that way now and to know that God is there for them holding out his hands to welcome us back to him. We are asked to "Repent and Return to God".

Yours in Christ

Anthea Denham

LENT EVENING PRAYER

Thursdays 8-9pm. - 25 Feb, 4 Mar, 11 Mar, 18 Mar, 25 Mar

Time to pray together, read scripture and journey with God in Lent. We'll use scripture from the 'Worship in the Wilderness' booklet for a short discussion too. You do not need to read the book to take part.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5408158881?pwd=ank5UmJGRGVmVXJWVFRSL1lPSVBnZz09> Meeting ID: 540 815 8881 Passcode: ccnsfb
(This will be the same for every meeting).

For more information and how to obtain the book, see February edition.

FAMILY NEWS

We continue to think of and pray for all Members and Friends who are or have been unwell recently, especially any who have had illness or injury and may be in hospital.

It is always good to keep in touch and an email, letter or phone call is particularly welcomed by so many, particularly all who may be unwell or are on their own at this time.

We remember all who are bereaved and pray for all who mourn for relatives and friends both here and in countries abroad.

As Covid-19 vaccinations continue apace and the recently announced Government “Roadmap” will now progress along the route to coming out of Lockdown, we think of all children starting back at school from the 8th March. We not only pray for the children but for all teachers and other staff in our schools as they return to In-person lessons.

As part of BBC “Headroom”, the Toolkit brings you tips and advice on Mental Health and Wellbeing for parents and children, with practical tips, mood mixes, personal stories and daily inspiration. (Search www.bbc.co.uk/headroom for so much interesting information.)

SUNDAY SERVICES WILL BE ONLINE DURING MARCH

Sunday 7th March – including Communion

Sunday 14th March

Sunday 21st March – including Communion

Sunday 28th March

**IT IS HOPED THAT WE MAY RETURN FOR AN IN-PERSON
SERVICE ON EASTER SUNDAY, 4TH APRIL**

MISSION GROUP

EASTER HAMPER COLLECTION

We are wishing you all a Happy Easter.

The Mission Group propose to have an Easter collection for the Family Resource Centre and we hope to give them Tesco Food Vouchers, as last Christmas. Staff at the Centre told me the vouchers at Christmas were very well received. It was a good idea! They help children and families in much need and care for foster children too on a daily basis.

As we will not be returning to Church until Easter Sunday on the 4th April, we will not be giving out donation envelopes as in previous years.

If you want to give to this, we will be collecting from next week Sunday 7th March till Sunday March 21st.

Tanya and I will then buy the vouchers during the next week and take them straight to the Centre.

Please send any donations for this to –

- a) The Manse N11 1BL
- b) My house, Anthea at N11 3HN
- c) Online, direct to the Church Bank Account at Barclays Bank, Sort Code 20-95-61, Account Number 20596027 in the Name of Christ Church New Southgate & Friern Barnet (Baptist/United Reformed), Quoting “Easter”.

You can send cash or a cheque but it may be safer for cash donations to be delivered personally.

God Bless you all.

Anthea Denham

CHURCH MEETING NOTES

Sunday, 28th February 2021

Over Zoom

Present 11 people

19 were present at Lent prayer meeting during week

Ola was preaching at Trinity Golders Green this morning. They are opening up next Sunday. Had 20 people present. Ola will be preaching there again for Mother's Day service.

Ruth **opened** meeting in prayer

Due to lack of positive responses to email enquiry about church meeting over Zoom the Deacons had chosen not to do this up to now. However, by now the Deacons felt we needed to update people on what has been going on.

Today is to share what has happened over last year (really)

Following agenda that has been circulated

Last meeting minutes (23/02/20) were agreed

Development update

Ruth spoke about processes

21 April planning permission received

There was a secondary application to challenge conditions that were applied - these have been agreed just before Christmas

Ecclesiastical exemption has been granted through the URC - this helps with listed building issues and gives VAT exemption

Closed Grove Road hall on 28 September 2020

We have an accepted offer for Grove Road

However, nothing is straight forward

We started selling in March - and then lockdown. Had 100 interested; 4 most serious were all developers. We went with the highest bid.

When got to heads of terms - there were lots of conditions - CIL, and groundworks. Thus, the Deacons asked Beverley to revise their offer - this was £1.6M

3 Feb 2021 accepted and now in process with their solicitors

Will now be tested and verified by London Baptist Property Board who hold the building in trust for us; best value test needs to be done by our surveyor for Charity Commission

Development at Christ Church

Building controls with council now being done. Francis has been very thorough on this. Diana and Anne have produced a basic plan for the kitchen requirements.

There was then a period of open prayer for these issues mostly focusing on these prayer points - sale and preparation.

Clare went through summary of **story of 2020**

Also: Joyce Percy and Christine Savvides died during this period

Ola thanked Ruth for all she has done to help the church spiritually

People thanked each other for contact and efforts to not let people feel so isolated from each other during this year and helping each other learn how to use the technology.

There was then a period of open prayer about the year that had gone.

Digital Mission

Previously was the preserve of wealthy churches

Typically, we receive 60 people watching our video Friday to Tuesday
Ruth circulates the full script on paper to Wendy, Jean and Lily and via WhatsApp to Amir so that he can use Google translate to read the service in Farsi.

There are various options that other churches are using - some doing just zoom, some pre-record and some live stream

One reason we chose YouTube was technology and ability to produce.

What we are thinking about is making it a bit easier and less time consuming. We would live-stream on a computer and camera. So, people can watch our service at home - like our current YouTube. The recording of this would then be available on YouTube.

At Steph and Glenn's wedding we found the limitations of technology. But also, people want recordings of life events.

We have had one company (Serenity media) in to give a quote - son of Baptist minister; £5.5K; 2 cameras, box and training.

Aim to make robust - save half a day a week and make more 'normal'

There was a wide-ranging discussion where everyone present expressed an opinion including - can relate to time taken; live streaming would be easier in long term; not just during pandemic, something that has been needed for a while. It was suggested that it will be useful for hall - not just in sanctuary, live stream capacity in Hall

However, the issue of who would be in charge of this was raised - and who would be able to use. There was also a comment about not understanding this technology. It was also pointed out that this gives an opportunity to catch up if someone work on Sundays. Invest in best we can afford - we need more people to know how to do this too

Will get 2 more quotes. Will try makeshift livestream first to trial ideas

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

It is incredible the 2021 season of Lent is here and the situation hasn't really changed much since the 2020 one. We spent some of that in lockdown too. We prayed and hoped then, that things would return to normal very soon. Well, it has not. One may thus be tempted not to observe this Lent with prayer and if possible fasting. Life, after all had become rather more difficult, and sad, for many in spite of all the prayers.

Things might not have improved much but God answered some of the prayers with the four different types of vaccines now available worldwide to protect us from the Covid-19 virus. New drugs had also been found to reduce the fatality amongst those that caught the virus. All these happened because of God's mercy and wisdom.

Do not become frustrated. If anything, try to draw closer still to God during this Lent with prayer, bible reading and participation in most, if not all of the Church's Lent activities. Try to keep in mind that our Lord God deeply loves us. Let us try to remember and hold on to His promises of Isaiah 41 written below.

Isaiah 41:10 & 13 (NKJV)

Fear not, for I *am* with you;
Be not dismayed, for I *am* your God.
I will strengthen you,
Yes, I will help you,
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'
For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand,
Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'

Ola Lawal

REMEMBER - STAY AT HOME, PROTECT THE NHS, SAVE LIVES