

# ***NEWS & VIEWS***

## ***The Free Church Hampstead Garden Suburb***



***JUNE-JULY 2023***

**PLEASE TAKE ONE**

# **HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB FREE CHURCH**

**(United Reformed and Baptist)**  
**Central Square, London, NW11 7AG**  
**[www.hgsfreechurch.org.uk](http://www.hgsfreechurch.org.uk)**

<b>Sunday Services:</b>	<i>11 a.m. (and 6.30 p.m. when announced)</i> <i>Holy Communion is celebrated at Morning</i> <i>Worship on the first Sunday of every month.</i> <i>The Junior Church meets at 11am every</i> <i>Sunday</i>
<b>Minister:</b>	Vacancy Minister designate from Sept 2023; Revd Aled Jones
<b>Pastoral Emergencies Contact</b>	Derek Lindfield 07803 953483 or Penny Trafford 030 8959 3405
<b>Correspondence Secretary</b>	Penny Trafford 020 8959 3405 <a href="mailto:Secretary@hgsfreechurch.org.uk">Secretary@hgsfreechurch.org.uk</a>
<b>Pulpit Secretary</b>	Carole Lindfield <a href="mailto:derekandcarole.lindfield@earlblue.com">derekandcarole.lindfield@earlblue.com</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Joe Fryer 07814 532049 <a href="mailto:Treasurer@hgsfreechurch.org.uk">Treasurer@hgsfreechurch.org.uk</a>
<b>Lettings Officer</b>	Eddie Hayden <a href="mailto:lettings@hgsfreechurch.org.uk">lettings@hgsfreechurch.org.uk</a>
<b>Finance Officer</b>	Fola Awosika <a href="mailto:finance@hgsfreechurch.org.uk">finance@hgsfreechurch.org.uk</a>

## **Safeguarding Statement**

Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church believes that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all those who are vulnerable (children, young people and vulnerable adults). We expect all of our leaders, volunteers and those who use our premises to share this commitment and value the support of those who worship here in achieving this.

***The Elders (Trustees), Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church***  
***January 2016***

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# NEWS & VIEWS

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB  
FREE CHURCH  
Central Square,  
London NW11 7AG



NO 788

JUNE - JULY 2023

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## Dear Friends

After I had been asked twice if I could write this introductory message, I realised that it was possibly easier to find someone to lead our services than to contribute to the magazine, so I felt I should do my bit. The problem was that anything I could write would not be theological, sociological or even thoughtful, but perhaps I could say something about life in our church during our vacancy as I see it.

We had been accustomed to the same person in the pulpit every week for 18 years and wondered how Sundays would be with different people each week, but two unexpected questions surprised me at first: -

(1) what will they wear? and (2) will they use the pulpit?. The answer was anything from shorts and bright yellow trainers to the full regalia rivalling St. Jude's next door, and nearly everyone preferring a more intimate relationship downstairs with us during all of the service.

We have had a wide range of retired ministers and lay preachers taking our services and providing very stimulating worship. Many of them come regularly and have become old friends. We will retain this friendship when Aled arrives as we will be following URC rules giving him five weeks holiday plus seven other Sundays.

The other essential ingredient for worship has not followed such an easy path. Our organists left at various times early on and the elders felt that, as the relationship between an organist and the minister was so important, we shouldn't make a new appointment until Aled comes. David Trafford plays the piano every other week but often seems to play more often, sometimes at very short notice, because of cancellations.

One sadness is that we no longer have a Junior Church but just one or two children attending now and again.

Turning away from Sundays, one major project has been the refurbishment

of the manse and garden, under the guidance of a small team who have worked very hard. A new bathroom has been installed in the top floor and around £145,000 will have been spent. It is hoped to have an open day in July when we will be able to look over the manse and garden, which also needed extensive work.

We have managed to keep all our church activities going – our food bank donations, Wednesday toddlers, Saturday morning coffees - very popular with the local residents - and the Monday morning study group.

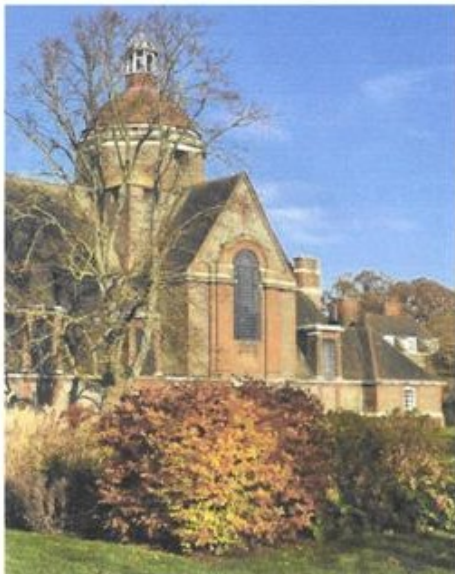
But it has been a strange year because, as well as losing our minister and organist, we also at various times lost our Lettings and Finance Officers. This has obviously created extra work for those responsible for the running of the church. Our lettings are now managed very well and both halls and the church are fully used. It is good to have the church in particular used so much for various concerts and the North London Music Festival. Most churches keep going financially by letting their premises but they do also offer a good opportunity for pastoral work.

Many people were apprehensive about a vacancy after such a long ministry but it does allow that memory to fade. It has also taught us to rely on small teams to keep it all on the road. I have not mentioned any names, as I'm bound to leave someone out, but we do depend on a small number of families and individuals, most of whom will probably not see 70 again (I haven't asked!)

The other very important matter for our church as we look ahead will be the relationship between ourselves and St. Jude's as we both look to the future with new leaders.

*Mary Stacy*





**HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB  
FREE CHURCH**

Central Square, London NW11 7AG

**INDUCTION SERVICE**

Everyone is welcome to join us for the

**INDUCTION SERVICE**

for

**Revd Aled Jones BA, BD, MA, MTh, PGCE**

in the Free Church on

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023 at 2pm**

Followed by refreshments.

For further information contact Penny Trafford

[secretary@hgsfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:secretary@hgsfreechurch.org.uk)

## News of the Family

Congratulations to *Jack Coumbe* and *Rebecca Alton* who have both just qualified as doctors. Jack will be working at Northwick Park and St Mary's Hospitals, and Rebecca working up North for their first posts.

We remember all those young people doing exams at this time of year; in particular *Noah Tutton* and *Abi Hayden* doing their A levels and *Gwyndaf Jones* doing his GCSEs. Others have grandchildren doing exams for whom they are concerned .

*David Speakman* is being well looked after at home with his MND. Carers help regularly and the new flat in Mill Hill has so much more space to accommodate his needs.

Please pray for all those who are stuck at home limited by their physical disabilities.

## Preparing for Aled Jones and Family

### The Refurbishment of the Manse

Many parts of the Manse refurbishment have now been completed.

Externally all the necessary window woodwork renewals are done and the external decoration complete.

There has been an overhaul of the boiler and heating system.

Internal decorations are complete, except the new kitchen and two bathrooms which are being renovated and then decorated. Work starts on these on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and is scheduled to last three weeks.

New carpets will be laid late July ready for the Jones' arrival in August.

We are very grateful to David Morris, Mick Tomlin and Richard Orme for overseeing this work and for using their expertise in the management of this project.

The manse garden is looking very different after trees have been pruned and hedges trimmed, and an awful lot of clearing has been done. It looks so much larger! Thank you particularly Diana Darrer and Richard Orme.

### Viewing the Manse

In July after a Sunday morning service, we will arrange an opportunity for everyone to go into the Manse and view the work that has been done.

### The Jones Family

They are preparing to come to the Suburb in August. Some of us have regular contact with Aled preparing for the future and for their input to the

refurbishment of the Manse. Rhydian (18yrs) has a course at Barnet - Southgate FE College starting September, and Gwyndaf has a place at Woodhouse 6<sup>th</sup> Form college to do his A levels.

On Friday August 18<sup>th</sup> 4-8pm we are arranging a BBQ in the Church Hall garden to welcome the family to the Suburb. We hope as many as possible will be able to join us. Please put the date in your diary!

### **Church Meeting**

There will be a church meeting after the service on Sunday July 16<sup>th</sup> at 12.30pm.

*The Team*

### **Flower Donations**

We are all very grateful to the Flower Team for organizing and arranging the flowers in church every Sunday. They are much appreciated by the congregation; after the service they are taken to people not able to attend or as a thankyou to a particular person. Members and friends donate or arrange the flowers themselves but there are always spaces to be filled. The following is a list of donors for the second quarter of this year.

#### **April**

02 Carole and Derek

09 Trude Oakley

16 Irena

23 Cathy Johnson (in memory of Fred Hannam)

30 Cherry



#### **May**

07 Maureen

14 Yvonne and John

21 Cherry

28 Isobel



#### **June**

04 Lorna and Chris

11 Viv Spiteri (in memory of her father and Ange)

18 Cherry

25 Cathy Johnson (in memory of Joan Hannam)

*With many thanks to all donors and arrangers. Anyone wishing to make a donation for flowers please contact Adrienne Glendinning (tel 078211 20455) or Maureen Schuricht (tel 0208 455 9122).*

*Adrienne Glendinning*

# **Bible study: the Gospel of John Chapter 17 – The Consecration prayer**

## **Background to John's gospel**

The gospel was probably written around 90 AD, some 60 years after the death and resurrection of Christ. From earliest times it has been generally attributed to the apostle John.

The purpose of the book is explicit: "Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which aren't written in this book. But these ones are written so that you may believe that the Messiah, the son of God, is none other than Jesus; and that, with this faith, you may have life in his name." (John 20:30-31).

## **Introduction to John 17**

From John 13 to 17 the setting is the last supper. It includes washing the disciples' feet and the departure of Judas. There is teaching and encouragement for the disciples as Jesus tries to make it clear that he is leaving them with the task of carrying his message out into the world. And there is the promise of the Holy Spirit to come – he is not leaving them on their own. Chapter 17 is the conclusion of this discourse, after which the group depart for the garden at Gethsemane. Chapter 17 is Jesus' solemn prayer of consecration – of himself to God, and of his disciples to be sent into the world as the means by which the world might come to believe.

John did not set out to write a precise historical list of all that Jesus did and said – what we have here in this prayer is not a tape recording, nor yet is it the writer's free imagination. Rather it is a representation of what Jesus was doing when he prayed on this occasion. The central theme is glory. To glorify God is to give him the deep respect and praise that is due to the Lord.

## **17:1-5**

After Jesus had said this, he lifted up his eyes to heaven.

*'Father,' he said, 'the moment has come. Glorify your son, so that your son may glorify you. Do this in the same way as you did when you gave him authority over all flesh, so that he could give the life of God's coming age to everyone you gave him. And by "the life of God's coming age" I mean this: that they should know you, the only true God, and Jesus the Messiah, the one you sent.*

*'I glorified you on earth, by completing the work you gave me to do. So now, father, glorify me, alongside yourself, with the glory which I had with*

*you before the world existed.*

Jesus is asking God, his father, to glorify him – a bit presumptuous at first glance – but there is a purpose to it – Jesus is asking God to confirm his status as God's son to give added weight to Jesus' glorification of God through his shameful and agonising death on the cross. Up to now, Jesus has been seen as a man – a teacher, healer and prophet – but a man, nonetheless. But as he goes to his death, it is important that the world recognises who he is because this is part of God's purpose – to draw people to him through Jesus the Messiah.

Jesus has shown God's glory by his life of total love and obedience, culminating in the cross. In this way he has given honour to God. His faithfulness makes it possible for his disciples, and all of us, to share in this glory.

#### **17:6-19**

*'I revealed your name to the people you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you; you gave them to me; and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything which you gave me comes from you. I have given them the words you gave me, and they have received them. They have come to know, in truth, that I came from you. They have believed that you sent me.*

*'I'm praying for them. I'm not praying for the world, but for the people you've given me. They belong to you. All mine are yours; all yours are mine; and I'm glorified in them. I'm not in the world any longer, but they're still in the world; I'm coming to you. Holy father, keep them in your name, the name you've given to me, so that they may be one, just as we are one.*

*'When I was with them, I kept them in your name, the name you've given me. I guarded them, and none of them has been destroyed (except the son of destruction; that's what the Bible said would happen). But now I'm coming to you. I'm speaking these things in the world, so that they can have my joy fulfilled in them.*

*'I have given them your word. The world hated them, because they are not from the world, just as I am not from the world. I'm not asking that you should take them out of the world, but that you should keep them from the evil one. They didn't come from the world, just as I didn't come from the world. Set them apart for yourself in the truth; your word is truth. Just as you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And on their account, I set myself apart for you, so that they, too, may be set apart for*

*you in the truth.*’

This is the foundation of the disciples’ ability to continue the work of God’s kingdom on earth – that they know, deep down, to the core of their being, that Jesus is the son of God.

The work of Jesus has been to communicate the word – the essence – of God to a community. This is what Lesslie Newbigin says: Jesus does not bequeath to posterity a body of teaching preserved in a book. He does not leave behind an ideal or a programme. He leaves behind a community – the Church. This community exists not because of decisions its members have made. It is not constituted by the faith, insight or moral excellence of its members. It exists because God has called its members out of the world by his own action and given them to Jesus. There are many things they have not understood, many things they have misunderstood, but this they have believed – that Jesus is the one whom the father has sent and that the words of Jesus are the words of God. And it is through them the world will come to believe the same.

As Jesus sends his disciples out on their mission, he prays not that they should be kept safe by being taken out of the world, but that God’s protection will go with them in the world. They will be hated, persecuted, but their faith will give them strength to continue to glorify God.

Their strength will be based in their unity as a community of worshippers – men and women who, with all their misunderstandings, sins and betrayals – are united in their belief that Jesus is the son of God, and his words are the words of God. The church is sent into the world not in its own power or greatness, but to reveal the power and greatness of God through the sacrifice and the glory of his son.

#### **17:20-26**

*‘I’m not praying simply for them. I’m praying, too, for the people who will come to believe in me because of their word. I am praying that they may all be one – just as you, father, are in me, and I in you, that they too may be in us, so that the world may believe that you sent me.*

*‘I have given them the glory which you have given to me, so that they may be one, just as we are one. I in them, and you in me; yes, they must be completely one, so that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them just as you loved me.*

*‘Father, I want the ones you’ve given me to be with me where I am. I want them to see my glory, the glory which you’ve given me, because you loved*

*me before the foundation of the world.*

*'Righteous father, even the world didn't know you. But I have known you, and these ones have known that you sent me. I made your name known to them – yes, and I will make it known; so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and I in them.'*

Now the prayer of Jesus is extended beyond the first disciples to all who will come to believe through their word. Those who come to believe are given the same glory that God has given to Jesus – that honouring which is a participation in the being of God. As children in the family of God, we are intended to be one – united in the name of God. The world has not known God, but through the life, death and resurrection of the Son, through the work that the disciples will do, laying the foundations of the church, and through the witness of generations of Christians to come, the name of Jesus will be known. Those who come to know Jesus will know the light of life and the light will overcome the darkness.

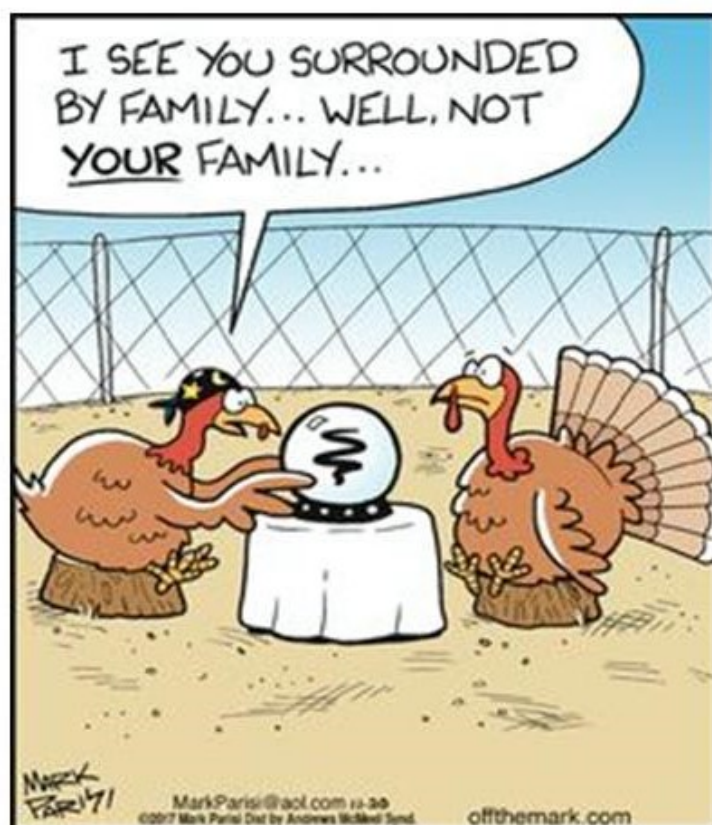
Amen

**Sarah Beaumont**

Bible quotations from N T Wright *New Testament for Everyone*

Reference L Newbigin *The Light has Come – an exposition of the fourth gospel*, Eerdmans.

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## WHAT KIND OF PEACE?

We have just returned from our weekly walk along the estuary part of the sandhills. One of those heavenly mornings - the tide had just turned leaving a large expanse of newly washed sand - a beautifully sunny morning with a very slight breeze and oh, so still and quiet. Behind a fenced-off area three ringed plovers have nested. One or two voices can be heard coming across the water from a long distance; even the local train can just be heard about half-a-mile away, its two coaches looking like a slow moving caterpillar along the edge of the marsh - but apart from all that, all is still and at peace.

Some people might be afraid of this quietness; I know there are two of us walking but even if I were on my own I would not feel lonely. I was very fortunate when young to be brought up by a mother who loved nature, especially wild flowers. We were taught at a very early age to know all their names (wasn't I thrilled with all this knowledge later on at secondary school where there was a flower naming competition - the only time I got 99%!) Much time was spent with a magnifying glass looking under logs or going pond dipping. So the quietness of the countryside has been very reassuring from an early age. But there was one time when I was scared and really frightened of that stillness - feeling it had an evil influence. That experience was when we stayed on the west coast of Scotland. (John had taken the car to a garage and I was left with two or three children on the beach.) Facing us, one kilometer from the shore, was the Island of Gruinard. We didn't know the history behind the island at that time. (The island had been contaminated in 1942 as a testing place for Anthrax spores by the United Kingdom and the United States. It remained uninhabitable for decades, was 'decontaminated' in 1990 and is now declared 'safe.') When I had the children on the beach that day there was an uncanny, almost unnatural stillness (the children were also aware of it too) made worse by the fact that the rockpools at our feet were bereft of marine life - very scary and strange!

So back to the question of peace and how much our own inner peace can be threatened by outside events. On a BBC Daily Morning Service recently, Father Matthew Roche Saunders (who is a priest in Aberystwyth) spoke of his fearful feeling in the minutes before his plane would take off. He remembered (and stuck to) his mother's wise words: "sit back in your chair and allow the plane to take off - fighting it will not stop the plane taking off but will only make you more anxious!" On another broadcast Rev. Richard Littledale touched on the feeling of complete panic at getting behind with so much to do and worrying madly. Delayed with all his jobs

already and cycling down Charing Cross Road to visit a friend in hospital, he heard a bus honking him madly. Pulling into the side, the bus-driver pulled down his window and shouted, "Your wallet has dropped out of your pocket." Rushing back, convinced that he'd never find it again - a lady held it up. He then realized how much more worry he would have had to cope with without that kind action!

Worry, loss of that inner peace all seem to point to one obvious cause - lack of trust. What happened to those disciples on the Sea of Galilee when Jesus fell asleep? How hard it is to be still when waves are rocking your boat? They panicked and the more they tried to do, the more they were incapable of doing anything.

You will be thinking how easy it is to say 'trusting' when you feel God is walking beside you, but there are times in life when you can feel very alone and wonder where God has disappeared. It's then that we have to look down behind us and see, even if we do not feel, those accompanying footprints walking besides ours. Sometimes we get so used to the Bible words of a particular favourite passage we tend to miss all the meaning. I've found it very refreshing recently to look at a book our dear friend to many, Margaret Badcock, gave me - "Psalms Now" by Leslie F Brandt - who had served around the world as a pastor, evangelist and writer. His introduction uses the following extract by John F Brug: "The Book of Psalms is a miniature Bible, a miniature history of God's people. It expresses all the feelings and experiences they will ever have." Psalm 22 begins with the question 'O God, Why have you left me? Why are you so far from me?... I know O God that much of it is a matter of my foolish feelings. The fact is, that you are not far off. You know both my feelings and my failings. Yet you love me and accept me. You will save me even from myself.'

Psalm 23 starts 'The Lord is my constant companion. There is no need He cannot fulfil.' And ends 'My security is in His promise to be near me always and in the knowledge that He will never let me go'.

I'll finish with that challenging question: "Will your anchor hold in the storms of life?" and the answer:

"We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
Steadfast and sure whilst the billows roll  
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move  
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love" and

"Trust and obey for there's no other way  
to be happy in Jesus  
but to trust and obey".

*Rosemary Birch*

## From the Archive

1923

*This photo and travel account show the activities of the Free Church Holiday club in 1923, available to anyone for a fee of one shilling a year! It gives a fascinating account of their journey to Switzerland and how they encountered a heavy snowfall (in June!) while climbing up the Faulhorn, which necessitated the borrowing of clogs and shawls the following morning in order to watch the sunrise. The photos show how far their walking and skiing gear was from the clothes regarded as essential nowadays for this kind of mountain trekking!*

### **The Free Church Holiday Club**

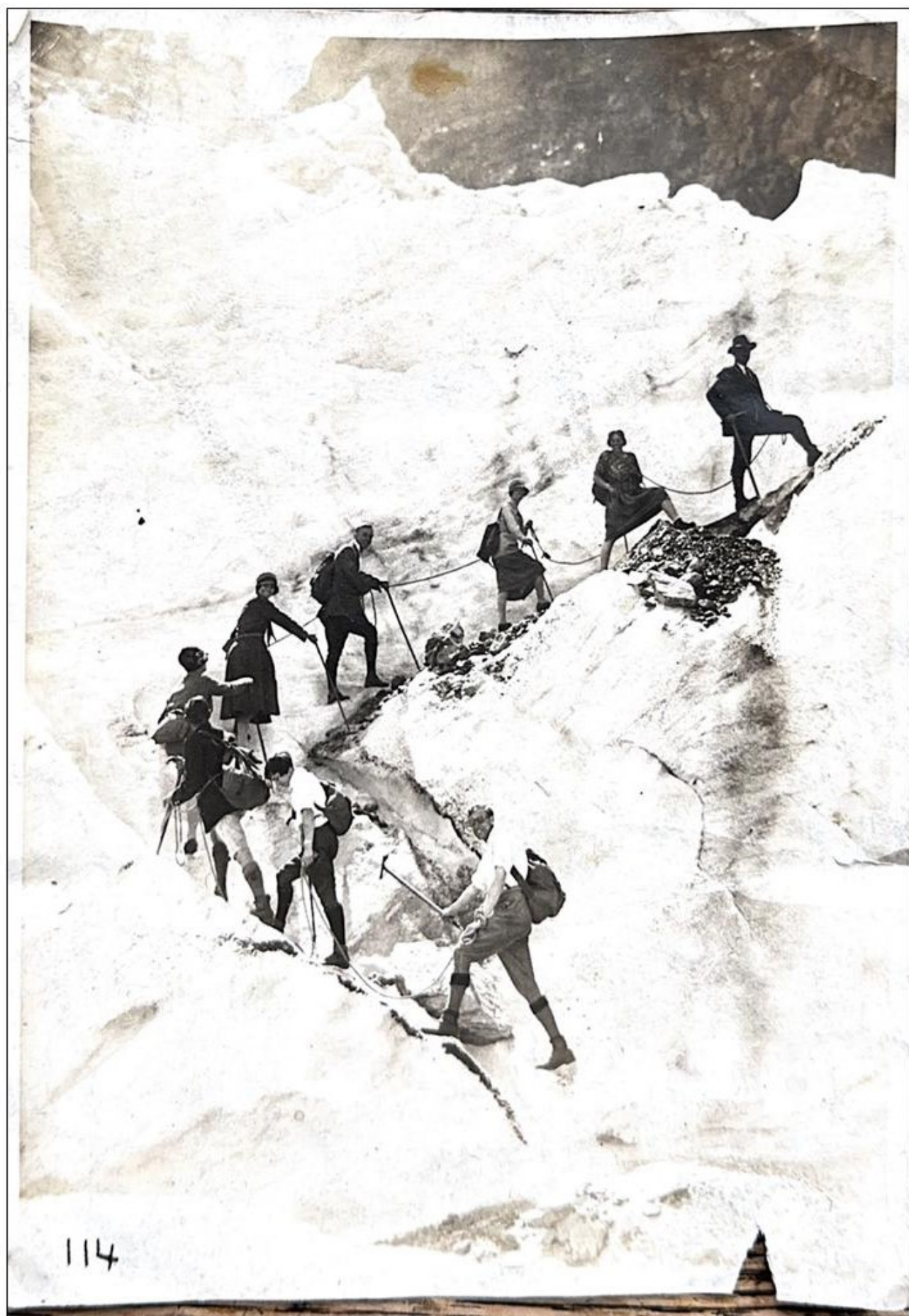
#### **A report by Robert S Fox**

It was a merry party that left Victoria at 10am on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June, 29 in number, including Rev F Fox and Miss Fox and three members of the United Methodist Church at Ashton-Under-Lyme.

The first objective was Interlaken, and from motives of economy as well as interest the route selected lay through Ostend, Brussels and Basle. The sea journey was very enjoyable, being fresh, but not too much so.

We were unfortunate in that we travelled with a gang of pickpockets, who were found afterwards to have made an unsuccessful attempt on a watch-chain, in another case had picked a ticket case and thrown it away, and in another had secured a well-lined wallet. However, neither of these things mattered sufficiently to those concerned to cause more than a temporary feeling of annoyance at being circumvented, and they were soon forgotten. We had plenty of room in the night train, and after the usual wearisome journey came the ever-refreshing breakfast at Basle, which was followed by a hasty rush to the Rhine Bridge, and our departure for Berne.

We saw the usual sights; the old clock in the tower struck 10 as we waited to see the cockerel flap his wings and the musical bears make their procession; we walked through the old arcaded streets, passing the fountains down the centre of the road and listening meantime to stories of the great days of Berne when "Their Excellencies" reserved the right to themselves to promenade the street between certain hours of the day, as well as to impose their views upon other smaller cities. It was pointed out that though Berne was governed by an Aristocracy yet it was ruled through Republican forms and was the friend of every effort to establish the reformed faith, only losing its predominance when "Their Excellencies"



went forth to do battle with the French Revolutionary Army, with the result that they lost everything but honour, as can be seen on the tablets in the Cathedral.

We visited the famous bear pit, of course, and there was great hilarity when the biggest of the bears stood up to catch the juice of a squeezed orange.

After lunch we entrained for Thun and, on arrival, climbed to see the famous view from the churchyard; we sailed down the lake of Thun and landed at Interlaken, where the bus rapidly conveyed us to the Hotel Kurhaus, Wilderswil, about three miles away.

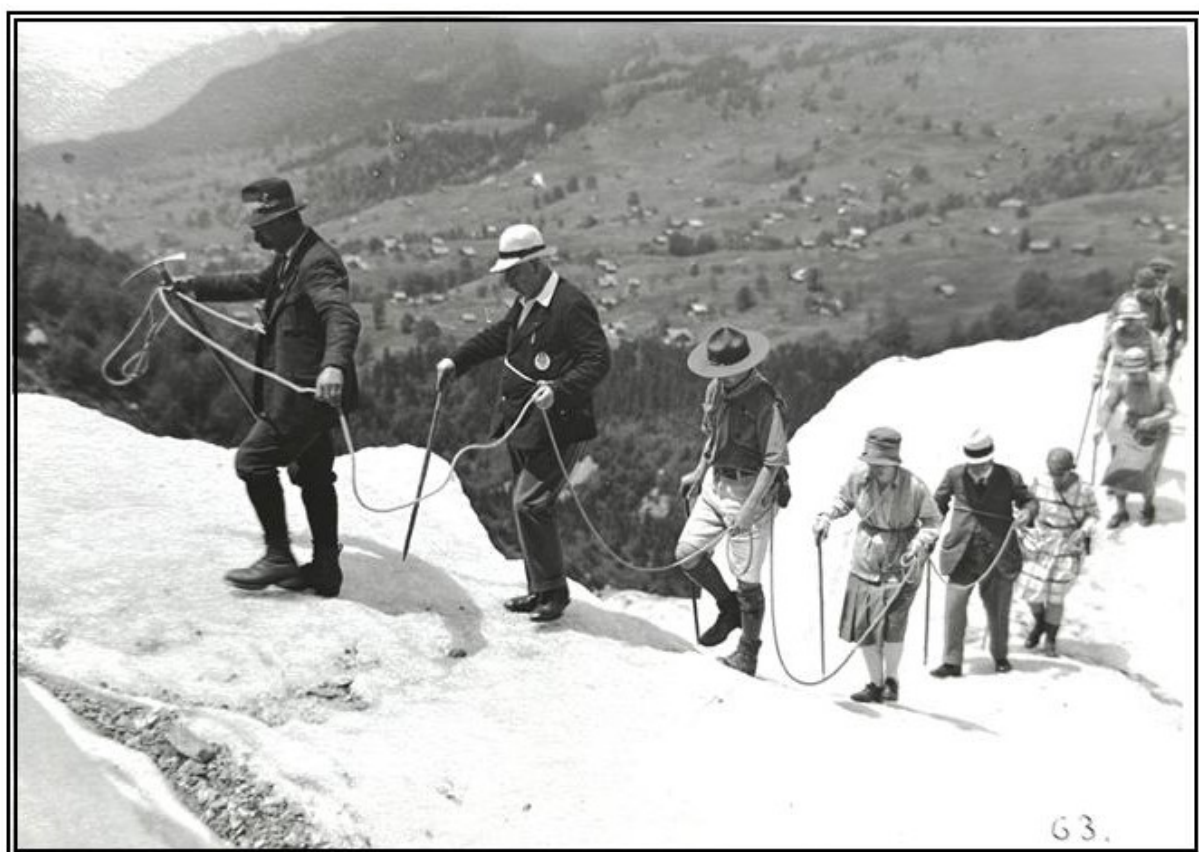
Sunday morning opened gloriously with a view of the Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau in all their splendour of newly-fallen snow. We attended the German service at Gsteig, this being a lesson in patience to some and in the German language to others, whilst not a few were one in Communion with their friends at home. It was very gratifying to all interested in spiritual things to see both men's and women's sides of the church well filled; Protestantism there seems to mean something more than merely being non-Catholic.

Plans were made on Monday for some to climb to Schynige Platte and some to go up by train; after visiting the Daube, we made enquiries and were assured that the path to the Faulhorn, though covered in snow in places, was quite safe.

We had a fine tramp, but after lunch the clouds came down and when we had traversed about three-quarters of the distance a heavy fall of snow added to our difficulties, which incidentally proved a fine test of character. However, these were all satisfactorily surmounted, and when we arrived at the chalet we received a hearty welcome; our wet stockings and boots were removed and we were lent dry ones as well as dry clothing. We arranged to stop the night, but so large a party necessitated somewhat close sleeping quarters, in many cases two persons occupying a bed only meant for one. The snow stopped about two hours after our arrival, and there was a beautiful sunset.

After a somewhat restless night we were wakened at 4am by the clanging of the bell; putting on our borrowed clogs and shawls we made our way to the highest point and waited for the sun.

In the East was a broad horizontal band of purple cloud fimbriated with gold; turning towards and through the South came all the mighty monarchs of the Oberland – starting with the Wellhorn, the beautiful Wetterhorn, Schreckhorn, Finstaraarhorn (highest of all), Eiger, Monch, Jungfrau,



Grosshorn, Briethorn, Tschingelhorn, Gspaltenhorn and Blumlisalp, with a host of minor heights, and away in the West broad bands of blue, green and purple.

There was much badinage regarding the graceful wearing of our shawls, clogs and the variegated stockings, but as the sun shewed its upper edge and the gorgeous spectacle began, everybody was hushed to silence. Suddenly a rosy pink suffused the mountains, and then the summit of the Finsteraarhorn caught fire, almost followed by the Jungfrau; glory exceeded glory as the mountains flamed out in all their splendour until, as the light passed into that of common day, we found our tongues again. Thinking of our privation and toil of the night before I said to my wife, "and the evening and the *morning* were the first day."

It was somewhat unfortunate that our first experience was on so grand a scale as to make everything that happened on the holiday afterwards appear small by comparison.

### **From the last 'Work and Worship' July 1923**

*This excerpt from 'Work and Worship' signals the last of this publication. It raises issues about church magazines still relevant today - should the church make a loss? Should the magazine be bought rather than given? Nowadays, News and Views is regarded as part of outreach, freely given and the cost covered by church funds.*

For nine years this little publication has appeared from month to month chronicling the activities of the Church and fostering so far as in its power lay all that made for the welfare of its fellowship. From a four-page leaflet it has grown to eight and on occasion 12 and 16 pages. During the transitional period of Dr Rushbrooke's ministry and that of Mr Scott it probably served its best purpose – through its columns the Church and congregation was kept well informed of all its work and prospects, while the reports of the many meetings and sermons from time to time of those who filled the pulpit were much appreciated. Unfortunately the Magazine has always been run at a loss – the circulation, of course, was limited, and did not justify an appeal to the local business life of Golders Green to advertise in its columns, and so minimise its loss. Also some of us did not altogether welcome the mixture of advertisements with our Church News, unless the 'make-up' of the publication was considerably enlarged. The Elders have therefore reluctantly come to the decision of *suspending* the further issue of 'Work and Worship' until such time as it may appear in a new dress and embodying features which should make it a pleasure on the part of the Church to support loyally and enthusiastically. This for the time being is uncertain – and it can perhaps be best spared now, in as much as the Weekly Service Notice Paper, which we all appreciate, practically keeps us well advised of all the forthcoming meetings and weekly fixtures of our Church life. We shall have the satisfaction of saving immediately to the Church Funds some £50 per annum – a relief which the Church Treasurer will gladly welcome.

## 1953

*In view of the recent coronation of Charles III, the following pieces from 1953 gives 'loyal greetings' to Queen Elizabeth II, mentions a scheme to have people view the London decorations and arranges a Children's Fancy Dress Parade.*

### **From News and Views June 1953**

#### **The Free Church's Loyal Greetings**

"In the Coronation month, we, the members, adherents and friends of Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church, unite with all loyal citizens throughout this land and the Commonwealth, in tendering to our Gracious Queen our loyal greeting, and in invoking upon Her Majesty the blessing of Almighty God. May she be long spared to reign over us and to lead us in the paths of righteousness and peace."

Coronation Decorations; To enable some of our elderly and/or disabled

folk to view the decorations and floodlighting in London during June and July, perhaps some of our friends with cars would be prepared to take one or two of them for an evening drive to “see the sights.”

If you would like to take part in this scheme, please give your name and address, and indicate whether passenger or driver to Mr or Mrs Hewetson, 101 Oakwood Road. (Regrettably we cannot provide petrol).

A Children’s Fancy Dress Parade will be held on Saturday June 6<sup>th</sup> leaving Central Square at 2.30pm. Children under 7 will join at Lyttleton Playing Fields at 3pm. There will be prizes for the following classes:- National, general, historical, topical, 5 years and under, original pairs. There will also be a class for Decorated Bicycles.

J Stanley Andrews

*Anne Lowe*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **A Table for All**

*The following poem was part of the Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration of the United Reformed Church’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary held at the Methodist Central Hall Westminster, 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2023. It was created by Karen Campbell.*

## **A Table for All**

Come as you are, because you are welcome.  
Come take your place, and hear now the call,  
The table is spread, and the music is playing –  
Come take your place at the Table for All.

Don’t ponder now who you think is worthy.  
When, where of how RSVP they sent:  
Instead come with gladness, and joy overflowing,  
For each person present was God’s first intent.

No special place for royal or mighty,  
Earthly wealth and position a thing of the past  
At the Table prepared with upside-down values  
Where the last shall be first and the first shall be last.

No longer division ‘tween haves and the have nots;  
Here no oppressed, neither those who oppress.  
Where the world has said ‘no’ to dignity of justice,  
Our God, at this Table, says ‘yes’.

## Letter to the Editor

*The Editor*

*The Free Church*

*The article by Ashok Ghosh, (a Bengali speaker, as I am), on Slavery and colonisation is important.*

*I write to express a "different" view of the English East India Company to that as mentioned in the article.*

*The East India Company helped India to reconnect with her history. The English influence with its "colonial nastiness" also freed India from the cruelties of the previous Invaders and Colonisers, ie the Moghuls!*

*I am an outsider to your church but felt the importance of expressing a different point of view.*

*Yours*

*Arati Banerjea (Ms) London NW11*

And don't be fooled into thinking God does not see colour;

God's Table for All is no sea of grey –

God creates and admires, and declares 'it is good!'

No matter what racist or bigot may say.

God calls to all people, from every direction,

From the east to the west, the north and the south;

There's drink for the thirsty of every nation,

A banquet abundant for every mouth.

So come sit with prince, and come sit with pauper,  
With old and with young freely come take your rest;

Whatever the label, the burden you carry,

Lay it down, for now you are most honoured guest.

And let us not wait to dine at that Table,

For though it's not yet, the Table is now –

Where valleys are filled, and mountains are levelled

And a sharing of fate emerges somehow.

Oh the Table is spread, and the music is playing,

Let's listen and hear and respond to God's call,

And live into being the kingdom we cry for –

The Table with room for All.

***Karen Campbell***

## JOHN BIRCH'S DIARY

**"Scottish delicacy"** Any recipe which has among its ingredients a "sheep's pluck" is unlikely to be universally popular (the "pluck" referring to the internal organs of the carcass of a Scottish lamb, namely the windpipe, larynx, lungs,



heart and liver) but haggis still remains as a national dish in Scotland and is appreciated by exiles worldwide. The Haggis World Championship (I wasn't aware of it until now) has been won by Laura Black - a butcher from North Lanarkshire with a 40 year-old family recipe. She beat over 70 other entries and the judge John Wilkin described the winning haggis as "near perfection." Parts of the world still have to be convinced - expats in Argentina were surprised (but not put off) when the haggis they imported for their Burns Night Supper was allowed in classified as 'fertilizer!'

***Taken a time to become appreciated.*** More than 350 years after the Coronation of the last King Charles, a set of rare etchings has been found "in the back of a cupboard" (all I've ever found is dust and dead spiders!). One item common to the two events – the same crown and regalia were used in 1661 and 2023.

***Just say "cheese"*** and you'll find me taking notice. With 19 categories at the Artisan Cheese awards (classes in goat's, vegetarian, smoked and flavoured cheeses as well as awards for best English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh varieties), I would have been in Paradise! I remember years ago creeping down to the kitchen for an extra portion of delicious Cheddar - but (thankfully) being apprehended by Rosemary who said that my fat levels would be over the top - not a good idea with a check-up the next day! *(Insert by the typist - John still raids the fridge and cannot understand why I always 'find out' - not much detective work needed as I always know in what position I left the cheese! RB)*

***Rats*** still find plenty to attract them in city centres. In New York, Kathleen Corradi has become the city's first 'rat tsar' as she is the "citywide director of rodent mitigation."

***Old Pudsey or New Pudsey?*** For over 40 years he has been the mascot of the BBC Charity Children in Need. Up to now Pudsey has had an eyepatch and a smile. Not any longer - no eyepatch, no smile but what is best described as a frown or worry. The BBC have said that the new Pudsey



will spark discussion and encourage talking about children's mental health. In my opinion much more likely to have a negative effect with Pudsey slipping into history!!



### ***Attitudes and possibilities***

have changed beyond comprehension during the last 100 years. In 1921 it was illegal to have a woman's football team. Now nearly 78,000 spectators filled Wembley setting a new world record. After a close game Chelsea beat Manchester United 1.0

***Where would we be without twitchers?*** This may not be a word familiar to everyone: it describes those knowing about and seeing rare birds. The latest was a Grey Headed Lapwing which usually gets no nearer to the UK than India where it spends the winters before migrating to breeding grounds in China and Japan. Twitchers updated each other and upwards of 1,000 travelled to a location in Northumberland to view - and add to their list!

***Not a pair*** In Peru, thieves thought it had been a successful break-in when they stole 200 'pairs' of shoes - only to discover that all of them were for the right foot. Must have left them in a l(e)ather!

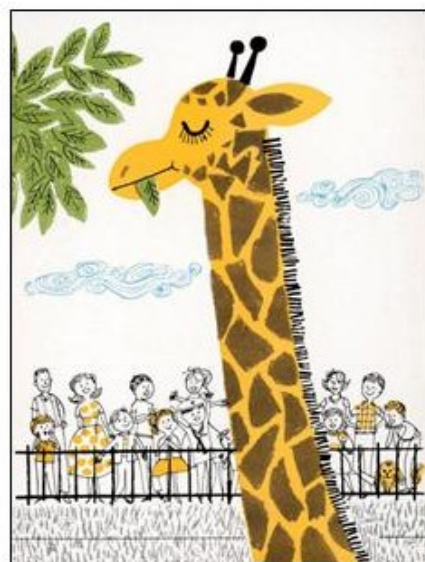
***My Grandma used to say to me*** "you'll always talk your way out of trouble." New research shows me in good company! Chimpanzees can combine their calls to communicate new meaning. They put together calls when exposed to a threat - a snake rather than a Grandma!

***History*** isn't everything, but should certainly not be forgotten. UNESCO (I'll leave you to work this out, if you wish, but it starts with United Nations...) is considering adding two more UK sites to the list of World Heritage status. York is obvious with its history going back to the Anglo-Saxons, Vikings and Normans, but Birkenhead Park (on the Mersey) probably less so. Why then? Because when it opened in 1847, it was the first publicly funded civic park in the world - the precursor to many hundreds which exist today and provide open space for thousands, in all parts of the globe. The decisions as to which sites may be chosen, and kept chosen, can be a matter of controversy - with Liverpool's historic docklands stripped of World Heritage status in 2021 "over a series of modern developments that altered historic sightlines, including Everton's FC new £500 million stadium!"

**Pigeons** may be charming when they ‘coo’ but the sheer numbers can, and have, caused problems since ancient times: wood pigeons caused extreme irritation to Rosemary’s father with their constant repetition of two notes when he tried to cope with reading scripts of ‘0’ level French translations! Rock pigeons have been identified in an Egyptian mural dated back to 1300 BC: I didn’t realize that the ones in Trafalgar Square have such a long public history!

**Not just a long neck:** Nature is often one step ahead of us (or several in my case, as Rosemary may well think as she reminds me for the umpteenth time, about saving my legs). A researcher at the University of Barcelona has now suggested a correlation between the length of the neck and the need to be able to identify at a distance suitable food trees. Findings suggest that in spite of having a relatively small brain size for a mammal, giraffes “may have more sophisticated statistical abilities than previously thought”. Alvaro Caicoya, a PhD student said:

“Statistical abilities might provide crucial fitness benefits to individuals when making inferences in a situation of uncertainty, and it should not be surprising if these abilities are widespread”. ...“Being able to identify from a distance which trees have the best proportion of leaves and flowers ... thus allow giraffes to conserve energy and avoid unnecessary travel.” Need food, need to search, long neck: simple!



**Very mature.** Vines have been purposely grown - and wine produced - for much longer than originally thought. We’ve been at the bottle (or the skin)



for around 11,000 years, starting with the domestication of wheat. This was just not local but throughout western Asia and the Caucasus. So “cheers” for many years!

*P.S. We have now been in Borth for 18 months. We miss face to face contact with the many friends from the Free Church Family. If your travel plans take you near or into West Wales you’d be very welcome to call.*

**John Birch**

## **HYPER-NORMALISATION\***

*In a past issue of News and Views, I recounted a conversation with friends at school (in the mid-1950s sometime) to the effect that no one wanted to have a job or career in banking or accountancy or anything like that. We all agreed that the future belonged to technology and science and that anyone with any ability would prefer that path to these occupations that were clearly on the way out or that would only occupy a marginal existence on the edges of the new world that was being created. Obviously, as the years go by, I constantly recall this conversation as a classic example of 'How Wrong Can You Be?'! But why? After all, it made perfect sense at the time. Banks (a la Mr Mainwaring) were there to collect and lend money and accountants ('book-keepers') were there to keep track of these transactions as best they could and find ways of raising money. It was not rocket science – and people wanted to be rocket scientists.*

*Yet again, I recalled this conversation after watching a film called Hyper-Normalisation,\* a film made by Adam Curtis, a brilliant British documentary film maker. It is a long film, just under three hours and the argument takes a great deal of following. It has its fans and its detractors but everyone seems to agree that it is well worth the effort of watching it and then deciding for oneself whether Curtis is on to something or not.*

### ***The thesis***

Curtis looks at the current state of society, bemoans it, and then traces how he thinks we got there by reviewing the events of the last 40 years.

This is a vast canvas and the result is at times a rather unwieldy 'to and froing' between seemingly disparate events. But slowly, the thesis or argument emerges which is that, little by little, over the last four decades, governments (particularly western governments) have given up on the idea of trying to change society at all; in fact, they have given up on politics altogether and now seek to just 'manage' their societies as best they can. They do it by, in effect, working in close partnership with the great giants of modern society – the financial institutions and the giant corporations, particularly the giant tech corporations. Working together, they do their best to create a world that is increasingly amenable to the forms of control which they specialize in – ie financial control and information manipulation. Events and developments that are not particularly amenable to these forms of control are gradually ruled 'off-limits', in particular ideologies and ideological debates which threaten to bring back 'politics' in the old sense of competing visions of society.

### ***1975 and finance shows its hand***

Back to my schoolboy conversation: Curtis' starting point is 1975 and an event which, in retrospect was absolutely iconic to what subsequently happened over the next 40 years. This was the failure of the New York municipal budget. He

shows fascinating footage of the annual bond sale for raising money for the city's budget. Come 1975 and the banks are getting worried about the amount of debt the city has built up. City officials await the banks' representatives to come to the auction and bid for the new issue; 10 o'clock, 12 o'clock, 2 o'clock, 4 o'clock, no one turns up. Eventually, a representative turns up; he agrees to subscribe to the new issue provided City Hall agrees to the banks' terms; there is no alternative and, in effect the City finds itself under the control of the banks. Almost immediately, budgets are cut and thousands of city employees find themselves unemployed. The City appeals to the President – to no avail. A programme of crushing austerity measures ensues and the City finds itself the first victim of the huge power which the financial system has quietly built up during the 60s and 70s. The idea that financial systems could run society more efficiently than elected politicians is born and is to become more and more powerful as time goes on.

### ***Enter Donald Trump***

(Curiously one of the first beneficiaries of the new order, is a young Donald Trump who buys or leases many of the newly vacated public properties the city has to offer. He announces his intention to convert them into luxury hotels and residences for the wealthy. The banks like the idea and pile in to lend him huge amounts of money. He never looks back).

By the mid-1980s, banks and corporations were connecting through computer networks to create huge information networks which were (and are) largely opaque to ordinary people. At the same time there emerged (from the old counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s) the idea of the internet, 'cyberspace', as an opportunity to create an alternative world free from the tiresome tyrannies of government and big business etc. This was always nonsense of course but was a useful myth to 'sell' or reconcile people to the new order. Time and again hackers were able to demonstrate that supposed 'free' social spaces on the internet were being controlled by the same corporations and hierarchies of power as dominated other parts of the internet. 'Free cyberspace' was a complete myth (cf the current 'selling' of AI as an answer to our problems).

### ***Exploiting social media***

The more recent development of social media was also surrounded by hopes of greater popular agency, of ordinary people being able to exert more power in their day-to-day lives. Once again, however, reality has disappointed. Over time, corporations have become adept at developing and exploiting social media algorithms to provide information pleasing to their users and thus doing nothing to challenge their beliefs, ie 'you liked this' – 'you will love this,' or providing links from one set of opinions to another set of almost identical opinions. It was quickly discovered that most people are only interested in the reinforcement of their opinions and ideas, not in having

them debated or challenged. It is something that has been mercilessly exploited – give people what they want, and they have little incentive to envision anything different. Ideas and philosophies of alternative ways of doing things simply wither on the vine. A more and more ‘predictable’ society, more and more amenable to the forms of control exercised by finance and ‘big tech’ is thus developed.

The American ‘Left’ encountered this problem with Donald Trump. They discovered that any attempt to counter his arguments on the internet had no effect – Trump supporters simply ignored them while, at the same time, the many additional ‘clicks’ made even more money for the social media corporations.

The result is that even when attempts are made to disrupt the system and use the internet in the sort of ways its founders originally hoped for, disappointment awaits. This was demonstrated by the Occupy Wall Street movement which began as a genuine attempt to hold Finance accountable for the 2008/2009 Global Financial Crisis and which had some success in its attempts to democratize popular participation. But it ran into one insuperable difficulty – it had nowhere to go! It discovered that without a clear political alternative, an alternative ideology, protest will simply fizzle out. It discovered that even when the opportunity presents, decades of failing to argue for any alternative to the free market capitalist consensus meant there was no politics available to carry the day.

Thus little by little a world is constructed which more and more reflects the nature and requirements of the three inter-linked pillars of modern western society – finance, (big) tech corporations and governments. It becomes more and more a self-sufficient system with its own aims and objectives which may or may not represent the actual needs, the reality, of the world outside the system. Time and again, complex problems such as global warming, mass inequality, economic failure and stagnation etc, get put on a back burner because the system finds them too complex to deal with. Instead, it encourages us to stay within the world it can control, ie its own favoured set of economic and political preferences, all the while telling us “you liked that, therefore you will love this – be satisfied.”

Curiously, and perhaps counter-intuitively, Curtis’ thesis of a ‘created’ reality works even better in the sphere of foreign affairs. Therefore the next article - ‘The Strange Case of Colonel Ghadaffi’ - looks at this phenomenon in more detail.

**John Ditchfield**

*(\*Hyper-normalisation was a term coined by a Russian professor of anthropology, Alexei Yurchak, to describe the state of Soviet society in the 1970s and 1980s when people knew the system was failing, but could not imagine an alternative and resigned themselves to maintaining the pretence of a functioning society. He argued that over time, the delusion became a self-fulfilling prophecy and the fakeness was accepted as real – a process he termed hyper-normalisation).*

# JOHN BIRCH'S COMPETITION

## *Competition No. 54: Iconic Landmarks and their Cities*

Put each landmark into its appropriate city

### Landmarks

Opera House   Leaning Tower   Viking Ship Museum   Little Mermaid Statue  
Colosseum   Eiffel Tower   Statue of Liberty   CN Tower  
A City of Canals   The Shard   St. Basil's Cathedral   Taj Mahal  
Great Pyramid   Lotus Temple   Parthenon

### Cities

Sydney   Athens   Copenhagen   New Delhi   Giza   Agra  
Rome   Paris   Moscow   New York   Venice  
London   Toronto   Oslo   Pisa



## *Answer to Competition No 53: Mountains and their Location*

Rocky Mountains/United States  
Mackenzie Mountains/Canada  
Brooks Range/Alaska  
Sierra Madre de Sol/Mexico  
Andes/South America  
Guiana Highlands/Venezuela  
Great Dividing Range/Australia  
Bale mountains/Ethiopia  
Ben Nevis/Scotland  
Blue Stack Mountains/Ireland  
Bernese Alps/Switzerland  
Everest/ Tibet and Nepal  
Southern Alps/New Zealand  
Table Mountain/South Africa



*We look forward to your answers - send them either by email to  
jbirch1821@gmail.com or by post to J. Birch, Pantgwyn, High Street,  
Borth, Ceredigion, Wales SY24 5HY*

# WORDSEARCH: VARIETIES OF CHEESE

G	O	N	A	C	S	O	T	A	N	I	R	O	C	E	P
R	O	Q	U	E	F	O	R	T	M	M	O	R	C	Z	M
S	Z	R	A	D	D	E	H	C	A	A	E	O	R	F	A
E	H	O	G	A	I	S	A	N	L	N	T	L	E	G	S
A	P	R		O			C		E	I	K	T	L		C
Y	A		O		N	H		G	J	C	A	O	C	L	A
L	R	D		P	E	Z	A	A	A		U		A		R
L	M	Y	U	G	S	D	O	J		C		N	M		P
I	E	F	O	O	E	H	Y	L	E	M	C		E		O
H	S	E		M	G	E	I	S	A	A			M		N
P	A	N	O		R		T	R	S	D			B		E
R	N	N		E		E		H	E	E			E		R
E	K	I	T		R		I			B	E	I	R	B	V
A		N					R		N	O	T	L	I	T	S
C	O	E	M	M	E	N	T	A	L			U			H
M			R	E	T	S	E	C	I	E	L	D	E	R	C

ASIAGO BRIE CAERPHILLY CAMEMBERT CHEDDAR CHEVRE  
 COTIJA EDAM EMMENTAL FETA GLOUCESTER  
 GORGONZOLA GOUDA LANCASHIRE MANCHEGO  
 MASCARPONE MONTEREY-JACK PARMESAN PECORINA-  
 TOSCANO RED-LEICESTER RENEGADE-MONK ROQUEFORT  
 SHROPSHIRE-BLUE STILTON Y-FENNI *Put the remaining 10 letters  
 together to find the cheese from Italy made from buffalo milk and often  
 associated with pizzas.*

*Compiled by Rosemary Birch*

Answer: Mozzarella

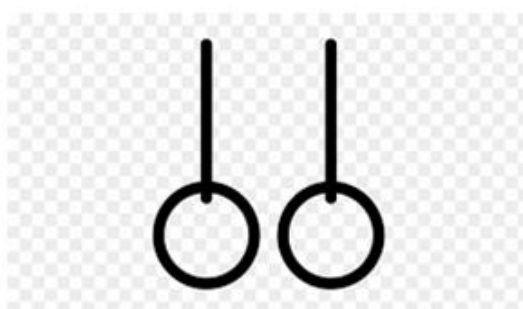
## JUNIOR WORDSEARCH: GYMNASTICS

B	E	A	M	U	I	S	A	N	M	Y	G
A	H	F	E	X	E	R	C	I	S	E	N
R	O	L	B	I	K	E	R	S	W	T	I
S	R	O	W	A	T	S	O	C	E	R	L
L	I	O	A	E	R	O	B	I	C	A	B
E	Z	R	S	F	A	D	A	M	N	M	M
L	O	E	H	G	E	K	T	H	A	P	U
L	N	E	V	E	N	U	I	T	L	O	T
A	T	Y	K	O	I	I	C	Y	A	L	L
R	A	S	T	I	L	L	R	H	B	I	U
A	L	C	I	T	S	I	T	R	A	N	A
P	O	M	M	E	L	H	O	R	S	E	V

GYMNASIUM  
FLOOR EXERCISE  
VAULT  
STILL RINGS  
BALANCE BEAM

ARTISTIC  
UNEVEN BARS  
PARALLEL BARS  
HORIZONTAL BAR  
POMMEL HORSE

RHYTHMIC  
TUMBLING  
TRAMPOLINE  
ACROBATIC  
AEROBIC



*Compiled by Liz Alsford*

# DIARY

*Monday 10.30am to 11.30am Studying together in Church*

*Wednesday 10am to 12 noon Toddler and Parent/Carer group in church*

*Saturday 10.30am to 12.30pm West End Café open*

*Thursday 6.30pm Choir Practice in Church on alternate Thursdays*

*Christian Meditation - Meditators meet online. For further information, contact: Georgia Tutton at [gmrtutton@aol.com](mailto:gmrtutton@aol.com)*

*The services are also live streamed via YOUTUBE*



## JUNE

**4 11.00 am Gift Day and Communion Service led by Revd Derek Lindfield**

**11 11.00 am Family Service led by Revd Jon Dean, Retired URC Minister**

**13 7.30pm Elders & Deacons Meeting**

**18 11.00 am Family Service led by Revd Ewan King, Interim Moderator HGSFC**

**25 11.00 am Family Service led by Wilf Merttens, Baptist Lay Preacher Hampstead Baptist Church**

25<sup>th</sup> June – 3rd July Proms at St Jude's

**30 12.00pm Proms at St Jude's Lunchtime Recital with Sasha Canter, Trumpet & Rustan Khanmurzin, Piano in Free Church**

## JULY

**2 11.00am Family Communion Service led by Revd Derek Lindfield**

**9 11.00am Family Service led by Revd Ian Green, Amersham Free Church**

**11 7.30pm Joint Elders & Deacons Court**

**16 11.00am Family Service led by Revd Dr Martin Wellings,  
Superintendent Minister, Finchley Methodist Circuit**

12.30pm Church Meeting in Little Chapel

**23 11.00am Family Service led by Revd Ian MacDonald  
retired URC Minister**

28 1.00pm Lunchtime Violin Concert by Adriana Christea. Light  
lunch 12.15pm

**30 11.00am Family Service led by Revd Dominic Grant,  
Minister Barnet URC**



## NEWS AND VIEWS



PRODUCTION

DISTRIBUTION

EDITORIAL PANEL

TYPESETTER

EDITOR

John Ditchfield

Jill Purdie and others

Joan Holton and Marion Ditchfield

John Ditchfield

Marion Ditchfield

The August edition of News and Views will be published on Sunday August 6th 2023. Articles should therefore be delivered to the editor, Joan Holton or the typesetter, John Ditchfield, (john\_ditchfield@hotmail.com) by Sunday 16th July.

*We welcome articles, as well as reviews of books, films, plays etc. from members and friends. These will not always represent the views of the editorial panel or of the Church. Publication is at the discretion of the Editors.*

***Remember - we are on line at [www.hgsfreechurch.org.uk](http://www.hgsfreechurch.org.uk) where  
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