

NEWS & VIEWS

The Free Church Hampstead Garden Suburb



MARCH 2022

PLEASE TAKE ONE

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB FREE CHURCH

(United Reformed and Baptist)
Central Square, London, NW11 7AG
www.hgsfreechurch.org.uk

Sunday Services:	<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>
Minister:	Revd Dr Ian Tutton The Manse, Central Square, NW11 7AG 020 8457 5898 itutton@aol.com
Correspondence Secretary	Penny Trafford 020 8959 3405 ptrafford07@gmail.com
Treasurer	Joe Fryer 07814 532049
Lettings & Finance Officer	Claudia Millhoff finance@hgsfreechurch.org.uk
Director of Music	Peter Hopkins

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



NO 776

MARCH 2022

Dear Friends,

As we enter the month of March, so too we enter the season of Lent – March 2nd being Ash Wednesday – and for the next 6 weeks, leading up to Easter, Christians are encouraged to prepare themselves, spiritually, so that when the time comes, we will be able to fully appreciate the ongoing – the enduring - significance of Good Friday and Easter Day, of the Cross and the Empty Tomb. Every year is different, and while it is a cliché it is no less true that this year is ‘unlike any other’. I am writing this with the television on in the background, 24 hours news coverage of events as they are unfolding in Ukraine. By the time you read this, the situation will no doubt be very different. And so, what might this mean for us during this Lenten season? For our particular spiritual discipline? Might I suggest that we ‘rediscover’ the ‘power of prayer.’ In previous years we have produced a day by day, week by week prayer diary to aid us through Lent, but this year perhaps we might do something different. To say the same prayer every day.

‘...In this season of Lent, we are reminded of our own difficulties and struggles. Sometimes the way has seemed too dark. Sometimes we feel like our lives have been marked by such grief and pain, we don’t see how our circumstance can ever change. But in the midst of our weakness, we ask that you would be strong on our behalf. Lord, rise up within us, let your Spirit shine out of every broken place we’ve walked through. Allow your power to be manifest through our own weakness, so that others will recognize it is You who is at work on our behalf. We ask that you would trade the ashes of our lives for the beauty of your Presence. Trade our mourning and grief for the oil of joy and gladness from your Spirit. Trade

our despair for hope and praise. We choose to give you thanks today and believe that this season of darkness will fade away. Thank you that you are with us in whatever we face, and that you are greater than this trial. We know and recognize that you are Sovereign, we thank you for the victory that is ours because of Christ Jesus, and we are confident that you have good still in store for our future. We thank you that you are at work right now, trading our ashes for greater beauty. We praise you, for you make all things new....'

From a political point of view, we seem powerless to effect change. It is the politicians who hold the levers of power in their hands. They are not easily persuaded. We can seek to influence them as best we can. But more often than not we find ourselves feeling helpless, frustrated, disillusioned, angry. Nevertheless, for people of faith there remains the hope, grounded in God's Sovereignty, revealed in and through the death and resurrection of Jesus, communicated to the world at Pentecost, and it is to this hope that we cling...

'Christ has died: Christ is Risen: Christ will come again'

And so, during this Lenten season, may we all draw strength from that 'living hope' and know it reinforced in and through the discipline of daily prayer. As has often been said of Easter, 'It's Friday, but Sunday's coming.' In that Spirit, and in spite of everything, I wish you all a happy and fulfilling Easter. Continue to pray for one another, and for yourselves, and for others too.

Ian Tutton



Ministry and Church Life during the Vacancy

1. Future Ministry

At the Church Meeting on February 12th it was decided that we would appoint a minister to work full time at the church. As the URC church would only allow us to have a part time minister, this means that we will be looking for a Minister from the Baptist or other reformed traditions, that is Church of Scotland, Congregationalist etc.

Our Interim Moderator, who will chair the meetings on the recruitment process, will be Revd Ewan King, the minister of Hampstead Baptist Church and someone well known to many of us.

The Manse will be refurbished for the new minister, led by David Morris and the buildings team.

2. Pastoral Care

The Elders are concerned that we continue to have strong links within the church family to support each other. During the vacancy we trust the informal links both in visiting and phoning each other will continue. The Elders will visit those who are house bound.

Where acute illness intervenes, emergencies or life crises please contact Derek Lindfield or Penny Trafford for support. Derek is willing to conduct funerals.

3. Communication Strategy

Although some items that we have come to value will not happen, e.g. Ian's midweek letters which he started during Covid, we intend to regularly communicate through email or post, both internally with the church family and externally with the suburb community.

The editorial team of News and Views will be glad to receive articles and will be requesting those gifted in writing to pen the opening letter.

4. Sunday Services, Concerts and Meetings

- Sunday Services, led by visiting preachers or the worship group, are being arranged by Carol Lindfield
- Monday Study Group - a programme is planned led by Derek Lindfield
- Wednesday Parent and Toddler group will continue led by Honor Orme and different volunteer helpers each week
- Choir practice will take place on alternative Thursday evenings led by Mark Underwood

- Ecumenical Meditation group will continue online led by Georgia Tutton
 - Friday lunchtime concerts will be arranged by David Trafford.
- Saturday West End Cafe will open each week staffed by volunteers

5. Lettings of Hall and Church

Claudia Millhoff has taken over management of the letting of church and hall premises.

6. Using our gifts

‘The body is made up of many parts with various functions’ .

We hope members of the church family will offer their gifts in areas where they feel comfortable and can support one another.

The time of vacancy will be different, but together we will continue to share our faith and lives.

Penny Trafford

Church Flower Arrangements

Following the recent ruling by the Church of England to ban the use of plastic-based foam type products used in flower arranging, we wanted to inform everyone that the flower team in the Free Church have been putting this idea into practice for the last few years. You may have noticed that the majority of flower arrangements on Sundays have been in vases, a trend we plan to continue. While we still have some flower foam in our store cupboard, we may use it now and again for a special arrangement. However when this has all been used, we will not be ordering further supplies.

Don't forget, donations for flowers are always welcome. We are very grateful for those who donate to funds generally or who donate for flowers on a relevant Sunday in memory of a friend or relative. If you wish to discuss a donation, please speak to Maureen Schuricht or Adrienne Glendinning. At the moment we have gaps.

Flower Team



Fair Trade

Ian's Fair Trade service on the 20th February inspired me to share with you, the readers of News and Views, a letter from the latest Traidcraft catalogue.



“Picture how the world would look, if every purchase we made was necessary, and promised to take care of people and the planet. A world where ‘buying right’ was the norm. A world where truly sustainable and future-proof goods lined the shelves and furnished the homes of all.

“What does that world look like? How does the earth appear, how are the people and what do you imagine the future holds for them? Hold that thought in your mind. It's not too late to make that a reality. Just imagine the difference we can make together.

“We want to facilitate your journey to living an even more conscious lifestyle, by delighting you with the very finest fair trade, ethical, organic, recycled, reusable and socially conscious goods.”

Claudia, with her family, is carrying on the wonderful Tradecraft work promoted with such dedication by Rosemary and John Birch. Please help them by buying regularly from the Traidcraft stall at the back of the church. Thank you.

Carole Lindfield



A Farewell Bible Study

For over 16 years I have the opportunity to share with the readers of News and Views a Bible Study. During that time, we have ranged far and wide, reflecting on the contemporary significance of much of both the Old Testament and the New Testament. This is my last such contribution, and so I thought I would share with you passages from Scripture which have had a particular significance for me during my life and ministry as a Christian.

1. Read at my baptism... Although the actual text of the sermon was: '...He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant - not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life....' (2 Corinthians 3, 6)

‘...“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant

with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.
It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt,
because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,”
declares the LORD.

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel
after that time,” declares the LORD.

“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God, and they will be my people.

No longer will they teach their neighbour,

or say to one another, ‘Know the LORD,’

because they will all know me,

from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD.

“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no
more.”...’

(Jeremiah 31, verses 31 – 34)

2. After realising myself called to the ministry, I had to preach a ‘trial sermon’ in my home church in order to secure their commendation to go forward as a candidate... This was the passage that I chose for that occasion...

‘...“See, I will create new heavens and a new earth.
 The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.
 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create,
 for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.
 I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people;
 the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more.
 “Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days,
 or an old man who does not live out his years;
 the one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere child;
 the one who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed.
 They will build houses and dwell in them;
 they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
 No longer will they build houses and others live in them,
 or plant and others eat.
 For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people;
 my chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands.
 They will not labour in vain,
 nor will they bear children doomed to misfortune;
 for they will be a people blessed by the LORD,
 they and their descendants with them.
 Before they call, I will answer. While they are still speaking, I will hear.
 The wolf and the lamb will feed together and the lion will eat straw like
 the ox,
 and dust will be the serpent’s food.
 They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain,”
 says the LORD...’
 (Isaiah 65, verses 17 – 25)

3. And then, after four years in theological college, there came the time to be valedicted – sent out to minister – and each leaving student was asked to share just one verse that captured for them, at the time, the essence of the ministry they were about to embark upon...

‘...For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him....’
 (John 3, verse 17)

4. Whenever I have started anywhere in ministry, the very first sermon preached by me in that position would have as its text... An example of a

verse set in its context, but then made to serve a context far removed from its original setting...

‘... When Esther’s words were reported to Mordecai, he sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. **And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?**” ...’

(Esther 4, verses 12 – 14)

5. And then, finally, the passage to be read at my last service in the Free Church on March 13th 2022...

‘... Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. If we are “out of our mind,” as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So, from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God...’ (2 Corinthians 5, verses 11 – 21)

Thank you for reading my ‘ramblings’ over the years. Goodbye, and God bless you all.

Ian Tutton



Those green shoots are still under the soil!

Wikipedia describes soil as a mixture of “organic matter, minerals, gases, liquids and organisms that support life.” Yet think about all the diversities of types of soil around the world. Think of the millions of organisms all playing their part - all providing nourishment for something a little larger, and then the cycle repeats itself time and time again. All of this wonder of nature - one part depending on another - all this continues right under our feet, right under our noses so to speak, but we take it all for granted. This thought came to mind walking down a lane near us and seeing the field either side a complete mass of mole hills, even burrowing deep below the structure of the lane’s tarmac. There must be a complete maze of tunnels underground and I’m surprised the sheep haven’t caused subsidence in one or two places where the molehills are so dense!

Where we now live - Borth - is a unique village built upon a spit of pebbles, a shingle bank, having length but little breadth; such an unusual foundation being one of the reasons why there are no gas supplies to the village!

We have a small inner garden and long paddock-style grassy area beyond, ending in a ditch and long vegetation which is inhabited by adders. The inner garden’s original hedge of laurel was replaced by fencing to give a bit of protection. We learnt by experience that fencing with vertical planks is stronger than horizontal ones, and Borth is not called ‘Breezy Borth’ for nothing! As we were unable to come here, except for a very short time last year, the garden is much neglected; but already the honey-suckle leaves are green and, even more encouraging, the long grass is dotted with flowering purple croci, which my Mum must have planted over 20 years ago. I have found this really exciting and can understand Mary Lennox’s similar feelings of delight as described in the children’s book ‘The Secret Garden’ by Frances Hodgson Burnett (one of my favourites still) when she feels the neglected garden coming back to life.

But growing plants is not so easy as the plants have to be used to this environment - salty air, strong winds and soil with a large proportion of sand! Unless it is dug out, marram grass can take over very quickly. Its roots can go down for about three yards - a factor which is so important in the foundation of sand-hills of which we have several at the edge of the Dovey estuary, where new dunes are still being formed.

Many of you will have been wondering how we got through the recent storms. We survived and having been prepared did not attempt to go out. The force of the wind and waves was incredible and, even more amazing, was seeing large pieces of foam blowing over the cottage and ending up in

the garden. Even now, a few days after, one can still see, and feel, the force of a long sweep of pounding white waves crashing onto the beach, looking very similar to groups of racing horses - straight necks flat out, straining at their bits, giving their all, to get to the winning post - one of those "wow"



moments that I mentioned in the last News and Views. As the Rev Canon Ann Easter reflected those 'Wow' moments are "gifts from God to upport us through the changes and chances of this fleeting world." Our young people gave us a bird table and binoculars for our birthdays and we've been watching sparrows and starlings. We've been to trying to encourage more birds into the garden with seeds and fat-balls, but when we draw back the bedroom curtains we are often greeted by a group of starlings on the telephone wires - a few inches away - all pruning themselves, wobbling with the wind and all socially distancing! Later in the morning, they will join other groups and whirl around in perfect formations, which brings me to another of those absolutely stunning 'wow' moments. We were taken one evening a few years ago, by one branch of the family, to the Somerset levels to watch a murmuration of starlings. When we arrived the birds were sitting in the reed-beds chattering away like a mighty army of school children. Then with an increased crescendo of chirping and wing flapping they all arose in one great mass. They did several incredible acrobatic swoops and - suddenly - all dropped like a stone to the reed-beds; there was an uncanny silence for a few minutes before the chirping started again, increased in volume and all rose again to repeat the performance! I had never seen anything so stunning, so awesome is the phrase that comes to mind, something to stop us in our tracks, something bigger than us mere mortals however important we think we are.

From time to time I'm sure all of us have those moments when, in the midst of every negative situation, it's difficult to stop your thoughts in mid-stream, to adjust your mind-set and think positively; it's then we have to remember and hold on to those 'wow' moments. I believe very strongly they are not accidental happenings. When I see them they remind us that we have an almighty God who is powerful and majestic. But when I see the force of those waves or feel the strength of the wind, I also know the same God is a God who speaks gently and understandingly through a neighbour's helping hand, through a re-assuring pat on the shoulder, a

phone call from a friend who cares; these are God's gentle touches to remind us we are human and that we're never alone. So back to those green shoots. They may not be showing yet but they're wriggling - testing that they are getting all their strength back as life becomes more settled and 'normal' after the last few months of upheaval and change. As a Stuart Townend chorus says and which seems particularly appropriate:

There is a hope that burns within my heart,
That gives me strength for every passing day;
A glimpse of glory now revealed in meagre part,
Yet drives all my doubts away.
Through present sufferings, future's fear,
He whispers "courage" in my ear,
For I am safe in ever-lasting arms,
And they will lead me home.

Rosemary Birch

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH

My life is like a weaving
Between my God and me.
I cannot choose the colours,
He weaveth steadily.

Oft times He weaveth sorrow,
And I in foolish pride
Forget He sees the upper
And I the underside.

Not 'til the looms are silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Will God unroll the canvas
And reveal the reason why.

*Author unknown,
sourced by Rosemary Birch*

The dark threads are as needful
In the weaver's skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.

He knows, He loves, He cares,
Nothing this truth can dim:
He gives the very best to those
Who leave the choice to Him.



JOHN BIRCH'S DIARY FOR MARCH

We moved from London to Borth just over three months ago - which, I think, is a long enough period to assess expectations and realities, especially as it has involved a significant change in life-style – not only in location but with Rosemary and I being together 24/7. In London, since moving there in 1960, I had always been at work five days a week, leaving early and returning after afternoon had become evening. Borth, to emphasize the obvious, is a very different place from London. We knew that there would be more contact with neighbours, particularly as people are settled not transient. In fact, Winter is a good time; it separates the indigenous population from the Summer visitors. Everyone is friendly without being intrusive. We miss the Suburb, the Church and our London neighbours but we have moved from a relatively transient community to one where virtually everyone is settled – some already here for several years.

Flashback 6 February 1952. I'm at a preparatory school in Shrewsbury waiting to take the exams for a place at the local grammar school starting in September. (I got in and was at that school until I came to London to work for the London County Council, as it was, in 1960). On that early February day the Headmistress, Miss Todington, paid the class a rare visit. She said: "I'm sorry to tell you George has died." My thought - and probably that of the rest of the class - was the unfortunate demise of 'the school cat' but it became clear it was our King. "We now have a new Queen Elizabeth." I knew enough about history to understand she would be Elizabeth II following George VI. "Long may She reign." She has and is. No personal contact but I had a work colleague who had strong connections with the voluntary sectors. He met the Queen twice, with a considerable gap. The second time he was greeted with: "Haven't we met before?"

Borth: The openness and isolation of this area - apart from the village itself - has just been emphasized by loud aircraft engine noises with a large plane flying over Borth Bog, having to climb steeply as it reached the Cambrian mountains. Probably came from the airbase at Valley in Anglesey, which guards our "Western approaches".

Plastic pollution: – previously referred to in this diary - is a global problem. The first treaty aimed at tackling this is now (only now!) before the UN. Oh! a draft should be ready to be enforced by 2024. Plastic has been an increasing part of everyone's life for over 70 years. Why the delay? Probably stems from commercial concerns. Not only do we all feel the effects of the unfettered use of plastic but animals suffer as well: a

news item highlighted - not plastic this time - two distressed baby otters, one found dumped in a waste bin. They will be cared for up to 12 months and then put back into the wild, at a time when they are of an age and size when they would naturally look for independence.

DNA: I had not previously recognised that the taking and storage of DNA, is not so common in this country but is usual in Europe - for which Paul Bishop (63) of Manchester is presumably grateful. Whilst in Benidorm 10 years ago, he lost his dentures when he was violently sick. They became an object in a DNA study at a research institute and were then returned though the post with an accompanying letter stating: "Your DNA is stored on the Euro-Nationals DNA account." A happy ending!

From teeth to tooth! The finding of a child's molar in a cave in the Rhone valley has added 10,000 years to the history of modern Europe. 'Homo Sapiens' has been around for much longer than previously thought, settling in about 45,000 years ago!

Watch the birdie! The age-old call from photographers to subjects has now been upturned on its wings. A New Zealand parrot snatched up and flew off with a working cine camera. It was finally put down on a rocky outcrop - no doubt after an attempt to eat it - and the owners were looking at unexpected pictures; 'Snatch, snap and save!'



"Spud you drink". Potato milk is described as "very neutral, really creamy, good texture," which apparently are all plus points. Production costs are an important key to success but, in the future, we might all be asking for a "pint of spud please!"

A blow for the good: it's not just West Wales that gets battered but all of the west of the UK. Recently (a record which may well have been broken by the time you read this, if the forecast is right) over half of UK electricity was from renewables - the 'technical term' applied to wind power.

Sentient is a word - and what it means is now being given more attention. In one word, its "feelings", ie being able to experience emotional qualities. Historically, largely confined to homo sapiens (us), it is now recognised in many animals including dogs and cats. Not being able to vocalize them doesn't mean that you don't experience them. This means, for example, that when a couple breaks up, their pet animal's feelings have to be taken into account. Truly to me a revelation, but one which is important and should be recognised and thought through carefully in all relevant

NEWS OF PEOPLE

We were very sorry to learn of the passing of BARBARA WARDLEY, just a few days after she had celebrated her 90th birthday. Most recently, Barbara had been living in a nursing home in Watford, near to her nephew, Robin and her family. Before then she lived in The Orchard, and before that at Falloden Way. She had been a faithful member of the church for many years, having been brought to the church during the war years by her mother. She was a member of the choir for many years. She made sure that everyone had a birthday card every year. She was always smiling. We miss her very much, but we thank God for a life of service to the Church and to the Community.

Ian Tutton



situations.

The Winter Olympics are still in progress as I write this. If you think in terms of winning and medals, it is a fact that the UK team's performance has not been a great success. However, it reflects the fact that we do not have cold snowy winters in this country. To me, the emphasis should be on the effort and the personal dedication of the athletes and their trainers. I haven't forgotten the old adage: "It's the taking part which is important not the winning".

John Birch





From the Archive

March 1922

These 1922 extracts high-light poverty in Hoxton, London and extreme poverty and famine in Russia, and the concerted efforts to raise money for these and other needy cases. It is interesting that a representative of the Free Church - Mr Edgar T G Smith - went with a deputation from the Suburb to the House of Commons, asking for more help from

the British Government to our World War One ally, Russia.

From Work and Worship March 1922

Where the Money Goes

Our Sunday School, when the Home and Foreign Missionary Collection Account is published for 1921, will show a generous spirit existing in its allocation of the afternoon gifts of scholars, teachers and officers.

Donations have been sent to the London, Baptist and United Methodist Foreign Missionary Societies.

The Junior School has sent through the BMS to Miss Guyton, Bhwani, India, over £7 for the support of a native boy named Sonnie, the son of two native Christians, members of the local church. He goes to the Mission School in Delhi and Miss Guyton describes him as a "very jolly lovable boy." Mrs Gudridge receives letters describing his progress and Miss Guyton's work, which creates increasing interest.

The down town missions have practical considerations. The flotsam and jetsam of our civilisation, Hoxton notorious for prize fighters and thieves den, and now its 10,000 unemployed. Latymer Road Mission with its associations of Notting Dale, Shaftesbury Society (RSU) and other valuable mission work is remembered. Kingsdown Orphanage and Home for Motherless Children. Organisations made as much like home as possible after the loss of father or mother. These homes are dominated by Christian love and so Suburb children respond from their comforts for those who have had such severe losses.

In addition to all this gifts of toys and Christmas tree for poor children, and grocery and dinners for the mothers and grandmothers. When opportunity has permitted, entertained them at Hoxton with humour, mirth and song: our Sunday School children are richly endowed with these gifts. Whether in money or in kind, it has gone to only necessitous cases as there

has not been enough to be generous elsewhere.

The summer is coming and the two photos show the result of practical Christianity as practised at Hoxton.

(Two 'Before and After' photos show a girl in a ragged skirt entitled 'NEEDING A HOLIDAY', then the same girl in a dress with borders and lace collar, hat and sturdy shoes and stockings entitled 'READY TO GO - CLOTHED BY THE HOXTON MISSION')

When estimating your summer holiday expenditure, will you remember the down town children and thereby doubly enjoy your holiday: it will assist in recreating the spiritual life.

Russian Famine Relief

At the House of Commons on 23rd February Sir Philip Lloyd-Greame, KBE, MP, received a deputation representative of the Suburb societies. The deputation sought to convince Sir Philip of the need for Governmental financial assistance to the Russian relief societies and also to urge that the Trade Credits scheme should be extended so as to include Russia. He congratulated the deputation on the skill with which they presented the case and discussed matters with them.

The Free Church was represented by the Elders' Secretary, Mr Edgar T G Smith.

March 1942

The Minister Frank Ballard, during World War Two, writes of double Summer Time coming into force on Easter Day that year, a change that must have been very hard to cope with. It was said to help farmers with their daily outdoor work. Another paragraph reminds us that the war was still continuing in Britain and abroad, with Church members involved in active service and their families anxious for their safety. Sadly, some of these young men's names start to appear on the World War Two memorial in our church.

From News Letter March 1942

In my last letter I hinted that I should like to follow up the course of sermons on Immortality with another course on the Resurrection of our Lord. I have not had the time to make any precise plans, but I should like to speak about the Empty Tomb, the appearances to individuals and the place of the Resurrection in the life of the Apostolic Church and its meaning for today. ... I am rather sorry that double Summer Time comes into operation that day - congregations are usually adversely affected with the Spring changing of the clocks. But if any of you for one reason or

another find 11 o'clock impossible, I hope you will be able to attend the Communion Service that follows or the evening worship at 6pm. Now that there will be an abundance of light, I hope Sunday evenings will be more popular than they have been through the winter. It is something to have maintained an evening service all through the dark wintry weather. Attendances have been small, but for some reason I cannot explain, the poorly attended services often seem the most helpful.

As usual, I have received both good and bad news about members of the congregation. I have heard today that Mrs Morris is very anxious about her son who was wounded in Singapore two days before the capitulation. Mrs Morris has had severe blows in recent years and all her friends will sympathise with her in her new trouble. Let us hope that better news will come through before long. The good news includes the safe arrival in this country of Eddie Binks. After past experiences this is an immense relief to the family and to his many friends. Another piece of good news is that Olive Croucher (née James) is a mother. The proud grandfather, who seems to be leading an active life in rural Somerset, wrote to tell me that the baby was born and is to be known as Martin Francis. Unfortunately, the father went abroad six or seven weeks ago. From the same letter I learn that Frank James is much better in health and has a Staff job in the West Country. Norman McLeod is now a member of HM Forces. Donald Heather has been promoted leading aircraftman. Walter Westbrook has enjoyed a holiday in Palestine and bathed in the Red Sea. Albert Hardiman, after sweltering somewhere in the East is now shivering somewhere in Scotland. Just as we go to Press we hear that Mr and Mrs Naylor have received news that their son, who was reported last month seriously wounded in Singapore, is now in hospital in India. Gordon Down is in North Africa and is kept busy as an assistant adjutant. In another walk of life the Roses from Denman Drive, with the help of some costumes from the Suburb, have given entertainments in villages near Ipswich and have thus raised £20 for the Red Cross. We wish our friends everywhere a happy Easter.

The Sunday evening musical services will be resumed on Palm Sunday. There will be combined meetings of both the Working Parties on the first Monday of each month. It will include a "Monthly Market" and it is hoped that this will become an outstanding social event amongst the ladies of the congregation.

On March 29th I begin my tenth year as your minister. Frank Ballard

Anne Lowe

THE FATHER (2020; directed by Florian Zeller and based on his play *Le Père* (2012)). *Co-written by Florian Zeller and Christopher Hampton; starring Anthony Hopkins and Olivia Colman.*



Anthony Hopkins was first brought to my attention by my then teenage daughter, Francesca. We will not at this stage ask why she - at around 16 years of age and in term-time - was watching daytime TV. Nor for that matter will we ask why I was returning home from work quite so early. What matters is that she beckoned me into our living room to see Anthony Hopkins on the TV. At this stage (early '80s?) Hopkins was not yet well-known and what Francesca was watching was a BBC series in which this amazing Welsh actor took the part of a barrister. We sat and admired or, if you prefer, ogled this actor, at the time both handsome and charismatic, with the latter quality possibly reaching its zenith with his performance in **The Father**. Watching Anthony Hopkins then established a particular bond between Francesca and myself and it prompted me to take her, a few years later, to see him give a magisterial performance at the National in *Pravda* by David Hare. In this play, Hopkins showed his brilliance in portraying people who are loathsome, insane or teetering on the brink of some collapse. The part in question is of a media tycoon, on the lines of Rupert Murdoch, but who is South African. Somehow, but how? Anthony Hopkins managed to endow his character with a reptilian, retractile neck; only the flicking tongue was missing. It was a masterly and unforgettable performance.

Cutting now to the present, Francesca, who has made her life in Brazil, was upset in a recent Zoom chat because she had just seen **The Father** and it had made her worry about me and what plans I had made in case I too fell prey to dementia. I told her that, rather like her, I had considered plans for my old age when I was in my mid-fifties but for one reason or another they had come to nothing. So, like many other seniors, I find myself in my 80s living alone with no plans for the future and a deep-seated aversion to "homes" for the elderly as being extraordinarily expensive and with doubts about the quality of care they provide.

Focusing now on the film in question, it is hard to write about because it is based on a play which very largely takes place in one location. This is the protagonist's well-appointed flat in an expensive residential district not far

from the city centre. My own guess would be Bayswater because there is a brief glimpse of what looks like the Russian Orthodox Church in that part of London. In addition, there is only a fistful of actors in the film and apart from Hopkins, who dominates it, only Olivia Colman as Anthony's daughter is allowed to give him the able support we have learned to expect from her. Zeller and Hampton have thus kept the intensity and claustrophobic atmosphere of the original play, rather than broadening it out with external scenes as tends to happen when a film is made from an original stage-play. The work is also hard to summarize because it has no linear plot; indeed it can't have one since it concerns the process of an individual's mental breakdown and is seen from his viewpoint. It is the equivalent of a Cubist painting showing us fragments of life that cannot add up to a coherent whole.

What we witness in the course of the film is the collapse of the protagonist's inner world. It is as though the divisions or compartments we establish in our lives, rather like a chest of drawers or a filing cabinet, from which we can retrieve separate items and then return them at will, begin to lose their divisions. In this way, the victim of this disease is plunged into a state of insecurity, suspicion, growing bewilderment and primal fear. Both time and place lose the boundaries we must have to make sense of our world. Anthony's mind drifts between past and present and sometimes the past is misremembered because the protagonist finds reality too painful, as when he cannot acknowledge the death of his other daughter.

The end of **The Father** is very powerful. Anthony's daughter is moving to Paris and since he can no longer manage on his own, she has to put him into a home. The last scene evokes the mad scene in **King Lear**, Hopkins's favourite play by Shakespeare. Here he returns to an infantile state, cries out for his mother and weeps in the arms of a nurse. And this scene could only have been carried off by a superlative actor because in less gifted hands it would have turned into painfully embarrassing bathos or melodrama.

You might think that this is not exactly the right film for the elderly(!) but Hopkins's performance is so riveting that at any age you lose yourself – your sense of self – in it. For his performance in this film Hopkins received an Oscar, the oldest actor to date to receive this award. He took ownership of the role not only through the protagonist's name being his own but, in addition, because character and actor have the same date of birth.

Verity Smith

Film Review: The Alpinist

Netflix, Amazon Prime, DVD

This is the true story of Marc-André Leclerc, a young Canadian mountain climber - or 'Alpinist' in preferred terms. When I began to watch it, I was immediately amazed by the comments which other experienced climbers were making that Marc-André was doing "crazy alpine soloing", "crazy stuff" with "pure style".



My own previous knowledge of Alpinism dated from Hilary and Tensing conquering Everest in 1953, which involved masses of equipment and large teams of Sherpas and climbers. But the philosophy of Alpinism has greatly evolved since those days. The fashion now is to climb simply and quickly with minimum equipment and the purest form of this is to do it alone - solo climbing. The obverse or downside is that half of these climbers have died on their climbs.

The film maker was drawn to Marc-André because he was, at 23 years old, the "boldest of the climbers of his generation, but completely unknown". Many of the film clips show Marc-André, a tiny figure on a sheer rock face in ice and snow, often without a rope, just ice-picks and crampons. Close-ups show vertiginous drops to the base of mountains. It is difficult stuff to watch even through clenched fingers.

The viewer (and the film-maker) is intrigued by Marc-André's psychology and motivation as he attempts more and more dangerous climbs. Despite his protestations that he wants his climbs to be a "journey" in the mountains and "casual fun adventures," he appears to be driven by more than that - he admits that he has experiences (possibly 'spiritual') which previously he has tried to achieve through drugs.

As the film progresses he pushes into more and more ambitious climbs - ice-climbing in winter when the terrain and the weather can change very quickly, climbing on rock, different kinds of ice and snow, glaciers, frozen waterfalls, sometimes in storms and high winds. These climbs are even more hair-raising to watch - half way up a sheer rock face he may have to change to ice-boots and back again. Gloves are often impossible and his hands become red and raw from extreme cold.

At this point in the film, the narrator states that Marc-André "went off the radar." It seems that making a film of his climbs was no longer of interest to him as climbing in the presence of a camera became something different and less enjoyable. He was a "free spirit" and a proper climb was always "pure", always alone. Eventually, news emerges that Marc-André has solo-climbed the Emperor



Face of Mount Robson in the Canadian Rockies - never done before. But then Marc-André agrees to the team filming another winter ascent of Mount Robson - this time by a different route, with no commentary, no planning and no prior knowledge of the route. Other climbers and his girl-friend (also a solo climber) question the wisdom of this plan. Against all odds Marc-André succeeds. In his blog he writes that he “was intimidated by (the Emperor’s) strong aura, but in the end, we became friends, and the King generously shared his wealth, leaving me a much richer person.”

Marc-André then proposes to climb Torre Egger in Patagonia, never before attempted in winter. He sets out with one climbing friend with a camera to cover the lower climb. He will film himself at the summit.

However, he has to turn back when a blizzard gets up. Good sense prevails. But the narrator states “Marc-André couldn’t let it go”. He decides to make another attempt - this time at speed, starting in the dark in early morning with no tent and few provisions, seeing the way at first with a light on his head. Again he seems to have a charmed life as he makes a “selfie” video of the push to the summit. He feels he has achieved “a higher state of life” doing the climb. It is an astonishing achievement.

The film maker and his team are editing the film they have when, ominously, news comes in that Marc-André and his climbing partner are missing. They had been climbing in Alaska but had not arrived back at base camp. The search has to be interrupted for a few days due to weather conditions. When the storm finally passes after four days we, the viewers, are with the helicopter when we see a rope at the bottom of the climbers’ descent route. In all probability, the climbers had been struck by an avalanche or falling rock. Their bodies were never recovered.

The film-maker says it is difficult to reconcile the ‘idealism’ of Marc-André’s ascents with the tragic consequences. Certainly, the viewer is left wondering.

In his personal blog, Marc-André states: “As a young climber it is undeniable that I have been manipulated by the media and popular culture and that some of my own climbs have been subconsciously shaped through what the world perceives to be important in terms of sport. Through time spent in the mountains, away from the crowds, away from the stopwatch and the grades and all the lists of records I’ve been slowly able to pick apart what is important to me and discard things that are not.”

This is a stunning film, beautifully shot, about a fascinating and original young man. I urge you to watch it.

Marion Ditchfield

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE LEVELLING-UP AGENDA

Introduction

Just recently, we have been hearing a lot about Levelling Up. In fact the Levelling Up agenda - and its close relatives 'Build Back Better' and 'Build Back Green' - seem to have become a bit of a policy fad - perhaps promoted to divert some of our attention from all those parties in Downing Street, certainly a warmer alternative than having to go to the Ukraine or Moscow!

The title of this piece - Climate Change and the Levelling Up Agenda - reflects the strange similarities between the two, not in their aims of course but in the attitudes of how to tackle them as problems. Just as Climate Change requires us to be everything we are not - be it pursuing genuine global cooperation, putting an end to consumerism, minimising inequality (domestically and internationally), prizing collective values over individualism, valuing the long term over the short term, rebuilding powerful state mechanisms capable of undertaking such action and so on - so the Levelling Up agenda would seemingly have us undo those same values and attitudes that have been carefully nurtured over the last 40 years.

Levelling Up

Like Climate Change, everyone agrees that Levelling Up is a good and necessary thing, that it is vital if the UK is to have any sort of future as a serious country. The gaps between north and south, between rich and poor cannot be allowed to continue. If nothing else, it diminishes our standing among the G14 nations.

But what to do about it? The White Paper sets out 12 'Missions' to level up the UK economy and society. They include better productivity, better education, better infrastructure, better transport, better quality of life, town centre and high street regeneration, cultural investment, more apprenticeships, better healthcare, tackling crime etc. Few could fault the worthiness of these aims. As a wish list it is near faultless. But as a serious analysis of how these problems have come about, how to tackle them and the kind of costs and time scales involved (2030 seems to be the favoured date for completing most of them!) it is more or less non-existent. A total of £4.8 billion has so far been made available by the government for the programme. Under the programme, local authorities and organisations have to bid for funding on a case by case basis and so far, a total of just under £1.7bn has been shared between 105 towns, cities and areas. A comparison of the successful and unsuccessful bids yields few clues -

except that not unexpectedly, unsuccessful bids are very much more numerous than successful ones. No overall themes or strategies emerge and there is no information about the criteria used for evaluating bids (or the costs of the bidding and evaluation programme itself).

Clearly the list is ambitious and immediately questions arise as to how realistic the programme is, particularly in respect of the funding set aside and the timescale involved.

The German Experience

The only useful source of information is probably the German experience following the reunification of West and East Germany in 1990.

The situations of the two Germanys were very different of course; a capitalist economy, the Federal Republic, was trying to integrate with a socialist economy, the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The systems were very different, politically and economically. The UK is a unitary state and obviously does not have these particular problems. It is also a much smaller country. There are similarities however. For example, compared with West Germany, East Germany had inefficient industries, poor productivity, neglected and poorly maintained infrastructure - problems that the UK will have to deal with in any levelling up agenda. At the same time West Germany had some advantages compared with the UK in dealing with the levelling up problem - for example, the East had relatively high levels of expenditure on education, culture, housing and social welfare, something the disadvantaged areas of the UK areas did not and do not have.

The main lesson of the German experience is that Levelling Up - in any serious sense - does not come cheap. In total, it is estimated that some €2 trillion was spent on the reunification project between 1990 and 2014. That is the equivalent of around €71 billion every year for 24 years. Moreover, almost all former East German federal states are still large recipients of payments from the Federal financial equalization programme. Whatever the limitations of these comparisons, it is clear that any serious programme of levelling up the UK would require huge transfer payments and investment over long periods of time. But, as with the Climate Change agenda, both requirements pose great problems in the present ideological climate. In this respect, we are still many light years away from even the right ball park (provided we even know what the right ball park looks like). Moreover the 24 plus years compares with the eight or so years envisaged by the UK programme which, as with Climate Change, requires commitment to long term horizons and which also does not fit with present ideology.

Other lessons emerge from the German experience. For example, the Government has made it clear that it expects any Levelling Up agenda to be led by the private sector. In its very earliest stages the German government had the same hope but quickly realized that it was not going to happen. Foreign and West German firms were simply not going to take the risks involved in directly investing in East Germany. The Federal Government thus took over nearly all of the cost burden involved in the reunification programme. The same would happen with any (serious) UK programme. After all, after 40 years of preaching the supremacy of free marketism and the profit motive, why would any firm want to undertake any unnecessary risks and burdens? Which means that any serious programme would have to be run as a state initiative similar to the UK's post-war reconstruction programme. But, once again, as with Climate Change, this would run counter to dearly held beliefs about reducing the size of the state.

Conclusion

In addition to all the foregoing difficulties, there looms another serious problem - the reappearance of the austerity agenda. There is no way that any serious Levelling Up or Building Back Better programme could be reconciled with an old-fashioned austerity agenda. After all, it has been the austerity policies of the last ten years or so that have greatly worsened all the economic and social inequalities that Levelling Up is now trying to address! Renouncing any intention to relapse into the old austerity mindset must be the key test of how seriously the Government takes the Levelling Up programme.

John Ditchfield



JOHN BIRCH'S COMPETITION

Competition No. 42: Places and their associations.

Can you put the place and association together?

PLACES

York Wroxeter Woolwich Woodstock Woburn Windsor
Wimbledon Wigan Whitstable Whitby Whipsnade
Weston-super-Mare

ASSOCIATIONS

Blenheim Palace Ferry Roman town Minster Abbey Castle Zoo
Tennis "Pier" Oysters Captain Cook Resort



Answers to Competition No 41: Places and their Associations

Nottingham /Forest
Sheffield/Steel
Somerset/Cider
Devon/Pastries
Pembroke/Potatoes
Cheddar/Cheese
Lambeth/Walk
Aberdeen/Oil
Bath/Buns
Canterbury/Cathedral
Stockton-on-Tees/Railways



*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: THE HYMN - HERE I AM

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

ALONE CALLING DARK DARKNESS-BRIGHT FEAST
 FINEST-BREAD HEARD HEARTS-FOR-LOVE HEARTS-OF-
 STONE I-HAVE-HEARD-YOU IN-THE-NIGHT I-WILL-GIVE
 MY-HAND MY-LIFE MY-LIGHT-TO-THEM MY-PEOPLE
 POOR-AND-LAME RAIN SATISFIED SAVE SEA-AND-SKY
 SIN SNOW STARS-OF-NIGHT THE-LORD WEPT WIND-AND-
 FLAME

A question is asked - Whom shall I send? Put the remaining 18 letters together to find the answer.

Answer: I will go - if you love me

JUNIOR WORDSEARCH - RUGBY

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

RUGBY UNION
RUGBY LEAGUE
PITCH
H GOALPOSTS
OVAL BALL

FORWARDS
BACKS
TACKLE
SCRUM
RUCK

LINE OUT
TRY
CONVERSION
PENALTY KICK
DROP GOAL



Compiled by Liz Alsford

DIARY

The church is open. The services will also continue to be live streamed on FACEBOOK and made available later via YOUTUBE and TWITTER.

We are choosing to maintain some social distancing. Face masks are optional.

All services taken by Revd Dr Ian Tutton unless indicated.

Monday 10.30am to 11.30am Studying together in Church

Wednesdays 10am to 12 noon Toddler and Parent/Carer group in Church

Saturday 10.30am to 12.30pm West End Café open

Thursday 8.00pm Mar 3rd, 17th & 31st, April 14th, 28th Choir Practice in Church

Christian Meditation - Meditators meet here. For further information, contact: Georgia at gmrutton@aol.com



MARCH

5 10-Midday Church Cleaning, any help welcome!

6 11.00am Family Communion Service

13 11.00am Family Service followed by lunch for Ian's Tutton's Retirement

15 7.30pm Joint Elders & Deacons Court

20 11.00am Family Service led by Revd Winston Bygrave
Baptist Regional Minister

25 1.00pm Violin Recital by Litsa Tunnah refreshments at 12.30pm
in support of Christian Aid

27 11.00am Family Service led by Mr Andrew Mills

APRIL

3 11.00 am Family Communion Service, Revd John Steele

10 11.00 am Palm Sunday Family Service led by Revd Jon Dean

12 7.30pm Elders Court

- | | | |
|----|----------|---|
| 14 | 7.30 pm | Maundy Thursday Service led by Revd Derek Lindfield |
| 15 | 11.00am | Good Friday Preaching Service led by Revd Derek Lindfield |
| 17 | 11.00 am | Easter Sunday Family Service led by Revd Derek Linfield |
| 24 | 11.00am | Family Service led by Revd Julian Templeton |
| 24 | 4.00pm | Annual General Church Meeting followed by communion |



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 next edition of News and Views will be a double issue for April and May and will be published on Sunday 10th April 2022. Articles should therefore be delivered to the editor, Joan Holton or the typesetter, John Ditchfield, (john_ditchfield@hotmail.com) by Sunday March 20th

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 where you will find past issues of News and Views.

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