

# ***NEWS & VIEWS***

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



***NOVEMBER 2022***

**PLEASE TAKE ONE**

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# 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) Holy Communion is celebrated at Morning Worship on the first Sunday of every month. The Junior Church meets at 11am every Sunday</i>
<b>Minister:</b>	Vacancy <a href="mailto:Minister@hgsfreechurch.org.uk">Minister@hgsfreechurch.org.uk</a> (which will be re-directed to the secretariat)
<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>
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<b>Director of Music</b>	Mark Underwood <a href="mailto:mark.underwood119@gmail.com">mark.underwood119@gmail.com</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 782

NOVEMBER 2022

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## Dear Friends

### Letter for November

As I write, I realise that it is four weeks since the amazing ceremony that was the funeral of our long-lived queen. Sitting in an underground train the next day I heard the comment 'we won't see a display like that again'. Maybe not, I thought to myself. Our lives on this planet are set in a frame of time, and an inevitable part of time is change.

One has only to look back to the beginning of the late Queen's reign to realise what a metamorphosis has taken place. Widespread research has born much fruit. Technological advances, for example, have brought us a variety of new machines and gadgets, with the internet and smartphones in general use.

Change, as I have suggested, is inevitable. We do, however, have a choice of the use we make of it. Advances in technology have allowed us to enjoy Skyping, which has enabled families and friends who are spread across the globe to keep in touch, particularly appreciated during lockdown. The internet contains a huge amount of information at the tip of our finger - provision beyond the imagination of our forefathers.

There is of course the possibility of a downside to any form of change. The examples I have given have shown advantages of particular scientific advances, providing services which could not otherwise have been given. The danger is, however, that the traditional form of interpersonal communication will gradually decline where it is still possible to take place. Already there are instances of such changes. It is becoming more usual, particularly among younger folk, for extensive conversations to be carried out by text rather than in person between individuals who live within a stone's throw from each other. Why not? they will argue. But it



is all too easy to overlook the peculiar value of a conversation taking place between individuals face to face. It is not just the content of what is shared. There may be an undefinable richness in such a relationship which is not present in virtual meetings. Who has not thought to themselves from time to time "I feel better after having a chat with her/him".

Does this argument apply to a loss of some vital ingredient if one takes part in a streamed religious service? What I have found is that when participating at the time the streaming takes place, ie with the congregation that are present in the church, I feel an intrinsic part of that congregation, experiencing as they experience. When the Lord Jesus said: "When two or three are gathered in my name there am I in the midst of them," I feel that the two or three includes me. It is not quite the same – when one sings by oneself it is not the same as when singing in the midst of a congregation. But communal worship has a power of its own which exceeds the sum parts of those taking part in person, and I feel part of that community. However I am not sure what the situation would be if there were no act of communal worship to tune into. There may well be changes in the way that communal worship is conducted in future, but where sincerity and faith prevail the value of the experience will be undiminished to all participants.

If we continue to ignore opportunities for face to face conversation in favour of the ever present text/email at the current rate, do we run the risk of diminishing our humanity? If so, it may be the case that this applies also to communal activity in which people become involved in person, particularly that of taking part in religious services. We deny the spiritual content of our being.

All of which brings me to thank the Elders once more for the work they have undertaken to ensure the continuation of our communal worship at a time when we are between Ministers, and for the regular attenders without whom communal worship would be the poorer. *Sally Abbott*

## **Foodbank**

*Thank you to everyone who brings groceries regularly for the foodbank in Colindale.*

We all know how necessary food banks have become for some people in the present economic climate.

Lorna and Chris Page deliver your foodstuffs on a Thursday morning, and they are always very gratefully received. Thank you so much!

*The Team*



## **NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY**

Our condolences are with John and Marion Ditchfield. John's sister Ann passed away at Magnolia Court Nursing Home where she had been for eight years and where they regularly visited her.

Mark Underwood will be having a break from being our Director of Music over the next few months. His father's continuing ill health has made things difficult for Mark, and Mark's own well-being is affected. We pray for them both and look forward to Mark returning to us when the issues have resolved for him.

Karen, Eric, Becky and William Alton write that they were touched by the send-off we gave them in church on Sunday 16th October: "Thankyou for everyone's kindness and for the wonderful book of photos. We hope to see you in Scotland in the future."

Remember the housebound, those who we are missing seeing at church, who due to frailty or disability are unable to come regularly as they used to.

### **The Future Leadership of HGS Free Church**

In early November the Elders and Deacons will be interviewing the three short-listed candidates for our Ministerial vacancy.

At the November Church Meeting we hope to be able to say that the Elders are recommending someone to Preach with a View.

Nominations for Elders and Deacons will be accepted by Penny until Sunday November 6<sup>th</sup>. Nominations must be submitted in writing (on the forms which are widely available), with the consent of the nominee and two supporting church members' signatures.

Voting will take place at a Special Church Meeting held after the morning service on Sunday November 20<sup>th</sup>.

As we consider the future of our church leadership and discern the way forward guided by the Spirit, we have asked the church family to use the following prayer in their quiet times:

Lord...

You are a God who is alive, present and active in Your world.

All there is You made to be. All we are, You made us to be.

Your life is our life, and our life is Your life.

## CHURCH BAZAAR

**Remember, Remember the Bazaar on 12th  
November, 11am - 2pm -which this year is in the  
The Free Church, Central Square, NW11 7AG**

Come and browse - all the usual stalls \* fairly traded goods \* cards and gifts\* lots of homemade cakes, jams and food\* many beautifully made gifts. And don't forget\* our famously delicious homemade soups and lunches.



In Jesus, you have lived our life.

In living our life You have showed us how to live.

In and through the Holy Spirit You are living our life.

In and through the Holy Spirit our lives become one life.

Each of us is living Your life and Your life is lived in each of us.

We live life together. We share life with each other.

Each of our lives is bound up with the lives of others.

Within the life of the Church, You are binding us, each to the other.

You are binding us to Yourself.

We want to be the people we ought to be: to do what we ought to do.

We want to know what it means to be the people of God.

As a congregation, we want to be Your people in this place, at this time.

***We ask that You will speak clearly to us and give us the gift of hearing,  
So that we know how to move forward in Your name. Amen***

# **Bible Study: Jesus walks on the water**

Some New Testament scholars have problems with John's inclusion of this miracle in his gospel. Discussion centres on why he included it, and what happened. Attempts to "explain away" the miracle, by suggesting that Jesus did not actually walk on the water, but on the seashore, must be rejected. The gospel writers, who included the story, including John, surely believed that Jesus did walk on the water and the tradition surrounding the story reinforces this.

The eminent scholar, C.K. Barrett, argued that, "This short narrative ... was probably derived by John from Mark ... (the) fact that in Mark, as in John, the two events stand side by side increases the probability of literary dependence." This is rejected by another scholar called Fenton. He makes the point that, "It is hardly satisfactory to say that John includes this miracle simply because it was in Mark's source; there are many other miracles in Mark which John has not reproduced; John does not seem to have been a slave to tradition."

Barrett, however, argued that John includes the story not only because it was firmly fixed in the tradition along with the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand but in order to bring Jesus to Capernaum, where the discourse on the Bread of Life was held. But there is more to it than this! Many early Christians saw the miracle as an example of the power of Jesus and of his saving presence with his people in times of trouble. But is this reason enough for John's inclusion of the incident? Does John go beyond this? What is certain is that John was a profound thinker. It is highly unlikely that he would have included this story without investing it with deep theological significance. The fact that it does not have a discourse with it, however, has caused considerable comment from scholars. We could conclude that John believed the story made its own impact!

**Does John use the miracle to underline points made in the feeding of the five thousand and the discourse on the Bread of Life?**

The renowned New Testament scholar, C.H. Dodd, argued that it did. He thought that the miracle must be seen in its context, wedged, as it is, between the feeding of the five thousand, and the discourse on Jesus as the



Bread of Life. He set out his argument as follows:

Bread	6:1-13	6:25-40
Misunderstanding	6:14f	6:41-59
Separation of Jesus from His disciples	6:16-19	6:60-66
Jesus' disclosure of himself to them and their faith	6:20f	6:66-71

Dodd may have a point, but given John's distinctive use of miracle as **sign**, there is possibly even more to it than this.

### **A signpost to the Resurrection!**

The story must, as with the other miracle stories in the Fourth Gospel, be read in the shadow of the Cross and subsequent Resurrection. Indeed, where this miracle is concerned, the experience of those frightened disciples in the boat is parallel to the frightened, despairing men, devastated by the death of Jesus on the cross. Key phrases bring the resurrection of Jesus to mind. Certain phrases are found in each account:

“They were afraid.”

“Jesus came and stood among them.”

“Do not be afraid; it is not a ghost, it is I.”

### **The sea – a symbol of death and resurrection**

This story must be understood in the light of how the sea was viewed by Jewish people. The very first page of the Bible identifies the sea as a hostile and chaotic element which God must overcome in order to create an ordered universe. During the Exodus experience, it is the sea which is used by God as the instrument of death and destruction for the Egyptian army. The Psalmist uses the image of the “depths” to describe the situation in which people find themselves helpless and hopeless. It is God alone who can save in such a situation. The Psalmist speaks of God in control of the sea:

“You rule over the surging sea:

When its waves mount up, you still them.

You crushed Rahab like one of the slain:

With your strong arm you scattered your enemies.”

(Psalm 89:9-10)

In Jewish thought, the sea was regarded as an element that could not be

mastered, the destroyer. The writer of the last book of the New Testament, a Christian Jew, out of this background, described heaven as a place where “there will be no more sea.” (Revelation 21:1). It was the place where monsters lived and was regarded as a force of great destructive power. It was a symbol of death. He who could walk on it must be the One who first controlled it at the very beginning of time!

### Jesus – the Conqueror of Death

There can be little doubt that the first Christians saw this miracle as an example of the power their Lord and of his saving presence with them in times of trouble and tribulation. John, with his distinctive view of miracle, takes over this idea and invests it with even greater theological significance. Not only does it serve as an example of the power of Jesus, but it points to the event which opened the door for Christ’s saving power to be experienced by his people not only in times of trouble and tribulation, but in death, because he triumphed over it. For John the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and its implication for his disciples in every age, is of paramount importance! *Derek Lindfield*



## Rosemary Birch's Treasure Box.

My mind is very much on the thought of treasure, whether physically or metaphorically and you're probably wondering what on earth I'm writing about. It all came about due to that 'cat' again. This year there's been an abundance of dragon flies and of course 'little inquisitive four legs' caught one. I couldn't save it. Instead, I have started keeping a few beautiful, to my eyes, treasures; the double wings of the insect were interspersed with a very delicate patchwork of tiny lines and to smaller prey they must look so fearsome with very large compound eyes and in flight can reach up to speeds of 35 mph! The second object in my box is a very small feather, very ordinarily looking but with a bright streak of yellow along the side. Yes, the cat's antics again; to reassure you all we do feed her, but remember she was a farm cat, one of a litter of three unwanted kittens, a swop by our daughter with a local farmer for some chickens! This time her catch was a very young goldfinch, very scared but still alive, with a red face surrounded by black and white, and bright yellow wings. (Interestingly because of the thistle seeds they eat, the European goldfinch in Christian symbolism is associated with Christ's passion and his Crown of thorns.) After a little while in a safe place, John and I went to release the young bird and were absolutely staggered at the speed it took off to the bottom of the paddock.

I remember at school being absolutely mesmerized at the world under the microscope - even a drop of ordinary pond water became a warzone of tiny moving pulsating creatures of all shapes and sizes! And back to the feather again, under magnification one can see the tiny hooks on each strand linking with a similar one on the next line, with the ability of making the whole wing waterproof and wind-proof. Perhaps a very ordinary object, essential to birds, but what a wonder in its making! Yes, it's included in my treasure box as if I needed a reminder of an incredible Creator!

All these thoughts went through my mind on listening to a recent talk when the speaker told us to give thanks on waking in the morning and listing all the things we needed to be thankful for. The more I thought, the longer the list became - for so many things we take for granted, as if we've earned them - they should automatically be ours, but in fact all are gifts. I remember so many occasions from Christian Aid articles where some needy group of people has been helped and instead of absorbing all the help for themselves they, without thinking, would share whatever they'd been given with some other family less fortunate. Gifts are for sharing.

In a Sunday Morning service on 'Hope and Harvest' Rev. Dr. Rosa Hunt, co-principal of Cardiff Baptist College and minister of Capel Tabernacle, said: "We can't call ourselves Christians if we aren't generous givers." She



continued with a delightful illustration: “Maria is a Ukrainian refugee who fled to Cardiff with her nine year-old daughter Lina and on their long and dangerous journey from Poland to Wales, Lina had acquired a balloon which gave her much pleasure. It wasn’t long before they came across another Ukrainian family with a small boy who was upset. Lina decided to give the boy her precious balloon. The two families parted company, only to meet again a few days later at a train station. This time it was Maria and Lina’s turn to be upset, as they couldn’t work out how to buy tickets for the train. But the Ukrainian family was there too with the small boy, and recognising Lina as the generous balloon giver, they bought tickets for Lina and her mother. The small seed of generosity sown by Lina had grown into a bountiful harvest.” Our speaker’s instruction to list all the things to be thankful for, was followed by a second command of asking God for help to get through the day, and equally important to trust Him who knows all our needs. In fact I’ve only got to draw back the curtains and repeat the opening words of Psalm 121 - ‘I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help’ ... and finishes ‘The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in.....’ So back to my treasure box. There is such beauty around us – we need to look at each gift, whether given by man or by God, and see beyond it, to the care and thought given to it by its Maker. There are treasures all around reminding us that if God, who clothes the flowers of the field which have such a short life span, knows all our needs, why are we worrying ..... we just have to be patient. William Cowper says it all in his hymn:

God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill  
He treasures up his bright designs,  
And works his sovereign will.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,  
And scan his work in vain:  
God is his own interpreter,  
And he will make it plain.

*Rosemary Birch*

## **HGS Free Church Hall Stage restored after 45 years' disuse.**

*In 2019 HGS resident and Free Church congregation member Tony Wilson came up with a plan to restore the church hall stage to full working order so that it could once again become a community resource for the production of shows and performances of all kinds.*

The plan which involved installing new sound and lighting systems, curtains and drapes was put before the church Elders and it was agreed to apply for a grant from the HGS Trust. The timing was bad as Covid had just hit the world, and the application was turned down. However in Spring this year the grant application was re-submitted and this time it was successful. The Trust grant covered 75% of the planned expenditure and the church Elders agreed to fund the remaining 25% so in May the acquisition of the various items for the plan began. Regular lettings in the hall meant that only two half days were available each week for the work to be done and what with summer holidays, pressures of work and Covid attacks it took Tony and his small team four months to complete the work. The plan required the provision of a full theatre curtain set, with black fabric mid stage, side legs and top border. Church member and theatrical costume maker Diana Darrer stepped forward to take on the job of choosing the materials and making the various parts.

The sound system was upgraded by replacing the ancient broken loudspeakers with a pair of 15" Wharfedale Pro Impact loudspeakers, a new Mixmaster 10 channel mixer and 3 radio microphones. The mixer has all the usual facilities including sound effects plus the ability to pair with Bluetooth devices for playing music or sound effects wirelessly.

The lighting system has 10 new LED stage lights and incorporates the 6 original Strand model 833 stage lamps and a halogen floodlight powered by two new dimmer racks and all controlled by a 16 fixture Stairville DMX mixer. The system provides comprehensive lighting capabilities but has the capacity for the addition of more than double the number of lamps and other effects if required.

The restoration plan called for the building of a gantry to support the aluminium curtain track 3 metres above the stage and for the old lighting



bar to be lowered by a metre to improve the angle of lighting provided by the six Strand lamps. New steel pipework and electrical circuits were required to support and power the new lamps and data wiring was installed everywhere to carry the DMX signals to control the lamps. Tony and his two helpers, friend Tim Mynett and church member Richard Orme carried out all this work on the stage while Diana Darrer and her trusty industrial sized sewing machines purred away down below fashioning curtains, pelmets, drapes and borders out of long rolls of fabric.

The final part of the upgrade involved running cabling to the rear of the hall to allow the sound and lights to be optionally controlled from there rather than at the side of the stage.

With the work now complete the stage is restored and ready to host all manner of performances, pantos, plays, recitals, nativity and other children's activities. Bookings can be discussed by contacting Eddie Hayden at [lettings@hgsfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:lettings@hgsfreechurch.org.uk)



*Before - A space without a purpose*



Commenting on the project Tony Wilson said: *"I grew up on the suburb and have many happy memories of shows in the hall in the 1940s & 50s. I thought it was a shame that it had been sitting unused for so long, so I developed a plan to restore it in the hope that when it is done individuals and theatrical groups will come forward to breathe life into it once more."*



*Preparing to fire-proof the curtains*



*Diana directs the hanging of the pelmet*



*After Saturday 8th October - the first show!*



## **Covenanted Churches in Wales**

In September, my husband Brian played the piano and organ for two hymns at the Wednesday morning Welsh Service at 'All Saints' the church we attend in Penarth. The Holy Communion followed the Welsh/English Service for use in the Covenanted Churches in Wales. We enjoyed joining Welsh speakers from other church denominations across Penarth. As I am a beginner in Welsh it was good to follow the English translation but have Welsh speakers on either side of me to join in the Welsh service led by the minister from Capel Bethel.

The Church in Wales was disestablished in 1920 and this has led to a closer working together with the non-conformist chapels and Welsh speaking churches. In 1975 the Church in Wales, the Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church in Wales, the United Reformed Church and some Baptist congregations signed to join the Covenanted Churches in Wales. This greater ecumenical co-operation is rooted in a common Christian commitment to working alongside one another to serve the people of Wales and Penarth Cytun (Churches together in Wales) is an example of this local working together.

Aged three, I left Caerphilly to move to Ipswich, Suffolk when my father became minister of the Congregational Church in Tacket Street. The church was founded in 1686 when a few Christians united, hired a building and formed the nucleus of the church later to become Tacket Street Congregational Church. By opting out of the Church of England to found independent congregations these separatists were asserting their right to worship God according to their Bible-based belief and not as the state told them. Growing up, my parents often reminded me that our ancestors had died for their dissenting beliefs. My mother grew up in Albany Road Baptist Church, Cardiff and my father in Roath Park Congregational Church.

At the age of eleven, I moved to Hampstead Garden Suburb when my father, Peter Barraclough, became minister of the Free Church. This inter-denominational church was founded in 1910 by the covenanting together of Baptists, Congregationalist and Presbyterians with links to the Methodist Church. In October 1972 after many Church meetings and discussions the United Reformed Church was formed by the joining together of Congregational and Presbyterian Churches. This year the URC are celebrating their Jubilee and their magazine, Reform, has many articles looking back and forwards. I have memories of heated Church meetings in





## JOHN BIRCH'S DIARY FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

We are now in our second year in Borth and increasingly being recognized as “part of the village” with the greeting “Hello both” which is personal and warm. We still attend two different churches - am and pm - St David's



Church in the morning and continue at the '345' in the afternoon. At the moment, the pm one is led by members of the congregation as the Minister and his wife are in the Garden Tomb in the Holy Land on voluntary work which - no surprise - takes up many hours each week to guide the thousands of visitors who come there. This week they were able to send a short video showing 'The

Garden' and explaining all the significant factors to prove this was actually the site of the Crucifixion and Resurrection. One relevant factor was that the Romans used to crucify people on a site outside a city but by trade routes and indeed, in the recording, we could hear the noise of a busy thoroughfare and a bus station in the background. We were brought back to the present by the chirping of nearby native birds in the stillness of 'The Garden'.

Family members, all with children, visit us in what my Gran would have called “dribs and drabs”- which is just as well considering the numbers. One of the things we notice most when living here is the weather. In London we were so urban that we often didn't notice that much of it was rain or shine. Here it's very different with most coming in from the West with 80 plus miles of Irish Sea between us and Eire. However it is rare for there to be a continuously wet day – we often have in one day the full range of wind, rain and sun - but the most striking factor being how quickly the weather can change from one extreme to another.

I'm always pleased when something happens which appears, at least initially, to be sensational. Today's paper reports a surge in *marmalade sales* following the late Queen's sketch with Paddington Bear where he joined the Queen for tea and marmalade sandwiches which she produced





from her handbag. It's good to see that the unusual still resonates.

***A wheel advance:*** In Glasgow large numbers of children ride to school and have to cycle across major junctions. They are now encouraged to come in groups with the lead cyclist having a device which will change the lights for everyone to get safely across.

Whatever happened to ***Rosemary and John?*** This year's list of Top Baby Names has no space for either of us (to be honest this hasn't changed over many years.) The top three for each sex are good solid names - Olivia, Amelia and Isla. Noah (who has moved up from 3 to 1) Oliver and George: There are (which to me is both significant and hopeful) considerable variations in various regions - Muhammad was fifth overall but was No.1 in four out of nine English regions.

***Wales is now a land at peace*** - but was not always so. Archaeologists have just unearthed the burial ground of 240 people – half of them children - in Haverford West. This dates back to the early 15<sup>th</sup> century when Owain Glyndwr - now thought of as a pioneer of Welsh independence - was a force in the country and besieged the town in 1405. It is likely that most of the victims were caught in crossfire between the assailants and the defenders, still a common conclusion in a battle situation.

***Progress for prosthetics.*** An artificial leg, made largely from recycled plastic bottles, has now been perfected. This 'socket', the part that joins the stump to the prostheses, is being tested on sixty persons in India and, if successful, would then be produced worldwide including in the UK. Each 'socket' costs about £10; previously to achieve a similar result meant an expenditure of about £5000.

***Kick Start Somerset*** - where more than half the Birch family now live, has had a beaver population, after a gap of hundreds of years, for at least a decade. The latest two baby beavers have been given a "kick start" - they've been named Russo and Toone in honour of the Lioness stars after their 2022 victory. Beavers are particularly attractive animals but they also serve a serious purpose: to quote the Project Manager Ben Eardley; "We'll be able to track how they can show us how to build resilience into landscapes to help mitigate the consequences of extreme weather." Beaver-ing with a purpose!

***The best job in the world?*** Have you ever imagined doing something which could reasonably fit into this description? A great contender is being a mobile book seller (with an adapted tricycle) in the Maldives. A job now taken (by a lady named Georgie Polhill) who has to sell the books barefoot and not be able to read any news as the ethos is "no shoes, no



news!

**The effects of War.** Conflict has always produced situations which are life changing - sometimes fatal - but which also symbolize hope. One such is Chichi, a chimpanzee from an Ecopark in the Ukraine. His keepers thought he was safely housed but he escaped as fighting moved close to his home. He resisted all attempts to return until a new zoo keeper came and spoke to him when he was offered the keeper's yellow jacket as it began to rain. After a brief spell in the anorak he was placed on the seat of a bicycle and wheeled home by his zoo keeper.

**Hot stuff.** The heatwave which affected much of Europe this summer (including us) has had some beneficial effects. In France sea salt farmers have been enjoying an exceptional harvest. The weather "turbo charged"



salt water evaporation in the Guerande region, where one of the finest sea salts in the world is produced, doubling production to 2.5 tons. The producer Francois Durand said this was the best harvest in 20 years, "We were winners but I realize that climate change has caused wild fires and water shortages elsewhere."

**"Pupular"** since 1988, Blakeley Point in North Norfolk has become a "go to place" for breeding grey seals. The first pup to arrive this year was two weeks earlier than last year. This is a very large colony with over 4000 animals in residence.

**Cutting hedge.** A popular place to visit, about one hour's drive from us, is Powis Castle (National Trust). The pre-winter trimming of the 20 foot plus hedge has just started using a cherry picker. The work takes one gardener ten weeks!



**"Mushrooming business."**

Research at Aberystwyth University, as part of their Future Foods programme, has shown that locally grown mushrooms are a particularly active source of Vitamin D – good for bones teeth and muscles. Blending them into flapjacks gives an additional reason for enjoying them. Food for thought - and health!

**John Birch**

## From the Archives

### NOVEMBER 1922

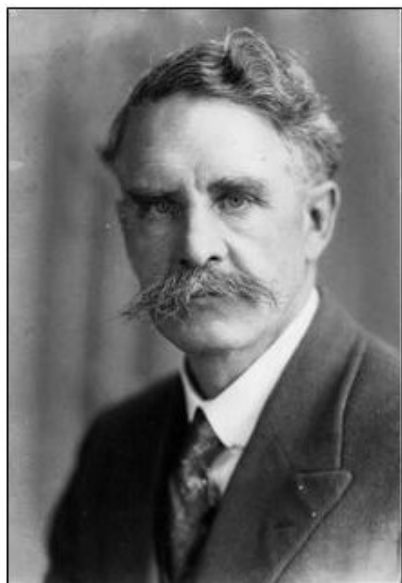
*The first piece from the Archive comes from 'Work and Worship' November 1922 and records the activities of the flourishing Free Church Musical Society including a performance of Mendelssohn's Oratorio "Elijah" conducted by William Webb, the choirmaster.*



### From Work and Worship November 1922

#### *Free Church Musical Society*

This society has made a fresh start for the winter season, and everything promises well for a successful future. A new committee has been elected with Mr Herbert Sowden as Secretary, and of course our Organist as Conductor. The list of engagements includes the North London Musical Festival Competitions in November, when every effort will be made to retain the shields that now adorn our Church Parlour walls. A Choral Concert will be given at the Institute on Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. Further particulars will be announced.



*William Webb*

Mendelssohn's "Elijah" is being rehearsed with a view of being rendered in the Church some time in March, and Mr Webb will give a musically illustrated Lecture on Mendelssohn, with special reference to "Elijah," prior to the performance, which should help us to more keenly enjoy this

fine Oratorio.

New members will be welcomed in all parts, and can apply to the Conductor or Secretary for full particulars, or attend at the Church at 8 o'clock on Tuesdays, the night of the rehearsals.

### NOVEMBER 1942

*The second extract is from Frank Ballard's Newsletter of November 1942*



*detailing a happy occasion followed by the sad news of John Bury 'missing at sea.' He was aged 20 and his details are on the World War Two display in church. Despite the difficult war years, the Church Bazaar, called here 'the Sale of Work,' with lunches and teas and the familiar stalls continues.*

## **From News Letter November 1942**

### ***My Dear People,***

I have been haunted lately by a passage I cannot find. I believe it is a biography of Longfellow, and it tells of how once when he was staying in a little French town he looked out of his hotel window and saw a wedding, and a little later he looked out again and saw a funeral. I wanted to re-read his description of the joyous and the mournful processions and his reflections upon how often hard upon the heels of happiness come sorrow and tears.

There was, of course, nothing unusual in the experience. Ministers of religion often find themselves passing with disconcerting abruptness from scenes of pleasure to places where they must try to speak words of comfort. Fortunately the extremes are rarely brought so close together as on a recent Saturday when a few of us gathered for a coming-of-age party and then the announcement of an engagement. It was a homely, happy party, and the congratulations were given with confidence. But before we went to bed that night we heard that a close relative had just been reported "missing at sea" and the happiness turned to great anxiety. The young lady whose engagement to Alan Bury was announced was Jocelyn Mason. The young man missing was Alan's brother John. All three are well known to many of you, and in some measure you will share the fears of the Bury family. You will feel afresh with me the tragedy of these bloodstained years, and join with me in prayers for those who watch and wait with waning hope. I cannot trust myself to write about John now, but we were all so proud of him and watched his growth to manhood with such confidence. I sometimes wonder if I was too proud of those lads who often served as stewards at evening services.

Now about the congregation at home and forthcoming events. I am to remind you about the Sale of Work on November 28<sup>th</sup>, and invite you to take your share in this annual event. The organisation of it, as you will understand, does not get easier as wartime restrictions increase. Some people would have surrendered altogether, but the ladies who are responsible are still capable of this sort of miracle. They announce that



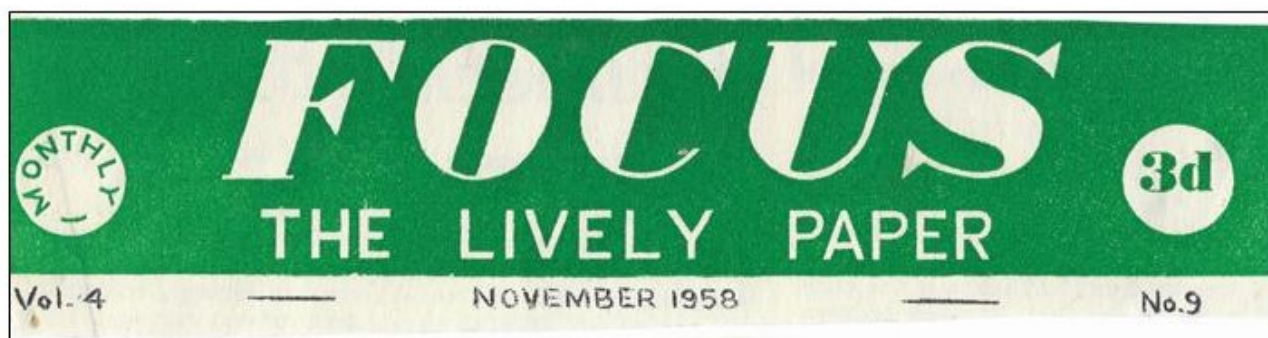
proceedings will begin at 11.30, that lunches and teas will be served, that the stalls will have upon them articles for Christmas presents, including brushes, household and garden goods, and hand-made toys. There will also be a White Elephant Stall with second-hand books and gramophone records. You are asked to come and buy and to make yourselves known to strangers, for the social side of these functions is as useful as the financial. I am asked also to say that the small coloured envelopes sent out in September should be handed in at the Sale or sent to my wife.

This letter is a week late. Unfortunately that in future will be the rule rather than the exception. It is done to help the printer, who finds the burden of work at the end of the month more than he can cope with. I regret the change, but it is nothing to grumble about in wartime.

*Frank H Ballard.*

## NOVEMBER 1942

*The third extract is from 'Focus – the Lively Paper' from November 1958 where again the Church Bazaar is announced in familiar terms .....*



### **Come to the Bazaar**

Rollup! Roll up – for the next event of the year, the Free Church Bazaar on Saturday November 29<sup>th</sup> when once again you will be able to find bargains galore and help church funds as well.

No effort has been spared to make this year's bazaar as good as – even better than – previous years. Father Christmas, the Bran-Tub, the White Elephant Stall – all the old favourites will be there as usual. At 11am the Rev WM Masters, Vicar of St Jude's, will declare the bazaar open, but from 10am you may buy morning coffee and biscuits. Lunches and teas will be served at very reasonable prices, with reductions for children.

And of course Focus will be there to meet you at its stand. Remember the date – November 29<sup>th</sup>

*Anne Lowe*

## **The ‘Fiscal Event’ and Neoliberalism (Yet Again)**

A little while ago I made a resolution never to mention Neoliberalism again! Unfortunately, recent events – in particular the ‘mini-budget’ (aka ‘fiscal event’) and all the consequent shenanigans – have brought it to the forefront of British politics once again. So apologies to anyone who may still be reading these pieces!

Liz Truss and Kwasi Kwarteng have been criticised from all sides for their ‘fiscal event’ but at least it had the merit of vividly highlighting the real nature of the neoliberal ideology. After all, in essence, nothing they proposed doing was essentially different from what has been the (quiet and informal) policy agenda for the last forty or so years. Only in the manner of their presentation and the timetable proposed was it different. It was as if for forty years we have been watching a series of still photographs which somebody has suddenly speeded up and we see an actual film, a film that shows us what those 40 years of pictures have all been about – namely, shrinking the state, transferring wealth from public to private hands, minimising industrial and environmental regulations, limiting the power of unions and ensuring the primacy of profit over productive investment. The PM and Chancellor simply forgot to be discreet and incremental about their intentions; indeed they went to the trouble of drawing attention to their neoliberal credentials and how the ‘free market’ was at the centre of their ideology. (This was a bad mistake as neoliberal ideology, as preached by Thomas Hayek, Milton Friedman and others, requires discretion about true intentions at all times).

In this respect, the history of neoliberalism in Britain has been rather different from some other countries. In Latin America, for example, it was introduced suddenly and violently, often accompanied by coups and the imposition of military rule (Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina, for example): in many African countries it was introduced as a necessary accompaniment to IMF and World Bank loans; in the Russia it took the form of the US backed ‘shock doctrine’ with attendant chaos and corruption (see previous issues of News and Views) and in Iraq it took the form of an invasion which was necessitated apparently by the possession of so-called (and in the event entirely non-existent) ‘weapons of mass destruction.’

In the UK, such action was never possible (despite General Pinochet – a good friend of Margaret Thatcher’s – suggesting that similar action might be helpful in solving the country’s economic woes). Instead, it has been a long incremental journey from the early heady days of privatisation and

financial deregulation (in the 1980s) to the present rather desperate attempts to hurriedly shrink whatever remains of the public sector and the even more pathetic remains of the country's regulatory systems. The implementation of the agenda over such a long period of time was facilitated by several factors: firstly, the more or less permanent rule by the Tory party (for a large number of reasons) and right wing Labour governments that rarely, if ever, questioned – let alone reverse – any of the basic tenets of the ideology; secondly, a print, broadcast and social media which - with very few exceptions - was also owned by and supported by people in favour of this endeavour.

Otherwise there was, as already pointed out, nothing remarkable in what the PM and Chancellor proposed:

**Taxation.** It was proposed to cut taxes as a way of promoting growth. There has long been a firm belief by neoliberals and the right in general that low taxes promote economic growth. It has to be pointed out that there is not one single piece of empirical evidence that supports this belief (and there never has been). Quite the contrary – all available evidence suggests that there is a reasonably close relationship between high levels of taxation, economic growth, equality, and measures of happiness (to the extent the latter can be measured). The reasons for this are complex, but basically boil down to the fact that taxation (if properly applied) is a means of 'forced investment' by a community in its medium and long-term future. High levels of health, education and social welfare are nearly always associated with a more economically productive population. Tax cuts on the other hand, while they may result in (very) short term demand blips to the economy, rarely result in any kind of productive investment.

**Deregulation.** In the same way, the PM and Chancellor proposed deregulation as another way in which they would promote faster growth. Once again, there has always been a firm belief among neoliberals and the right in general that deregulation (whether of environmental or consumer product controls) will somehow lead to faster growth. And once again there is not a single piece of evidence (and never has been) to support this belief. Quite the contrary – stricter regulations are a way of enforcing higher standards, of forcing businesses to produce better products and also ensuring that they are saleable in non-domestic markets abroad.

### **The men in grey suits**

But now the men in grey suits have done their stuff. The PM and Chancellor have been replaced by Rishi Sunak and Jeremy Hunt and the markets – God bless'em – have been pacified. Even Boris Johnson has been warned off trying to make any kind of comeback.



### ***Bad old habits***

The danger facing the UK now is that it will fall back into the old trap of austerity. That austerity policies are somehow able to fix fiscal deficits and thereby lay the ground for growth is another great myth for which there is not, and never has been, a single piece of evidence. Indeed, quite the contrary as the austerity agenda of the Cameron/Osborne era (supported by Labour, let us remember) clearly demonstrated when growth fell to lows not seen since the Napoleonic era. The problem is that cut backs in public expenditure (while they may keep the financial markets happy) simply transfer fiscal deficits to the real economy where their impact is much more severe and long lasting. After all it is much more difficult to make good chronic shortages of teachers, medics, police, welfare and care staff than it is to cut them in the first place. Which is one reason why, after so many years of austerity policies, a walk around any of our major towns and cities now has the air of visiting a third-world country.

Thus the government faces a crucial problem. All its history and instincts require it to cut public expenditure (assuming it can now find anything to cut back). That is its comfort zone and default position. But that will further damage the real economy, the real world in which we all have to live. Even the Bank of England and business leaders are waving red flags at this possibility.

The only real alternative is to raise taxes, including income tax. But that flies in the face of everything the Right and, particularly, the Neoliberals believe in. For forty odd years they have strived to create the 'low tax economy,' the economy which they believe will somehow lead to prosperity for all. Without that central belief, where are they! Who are they?

### ***Conclusion***

Thus we come to the central dilemma of the last forty years – the determined belief that it is somehow possible to combine US levels of taxation with European levels of social provision and protection. But of course it is not possible - circles cannot be squared.

Historically, Margaret Thatcher and her successors dumped the post-war settlement and plumped for the US option, which has now manifestly failed. However, a sizeable section of the Tory party is still wedded to the low tax mythology - as well as to Brexit - so there is obviously no appetite for the European alternative. And given Labour's determined pursuit of fiscal respectability and 'making Brexit work' there seems little appetite for the high tax, high growth European alternative on their side either.

Any ideas?

***John Ditchfield***

# JOHN BIRCH'S COMPETITION

## *Competition No. 48: Places and Their Association*

### Places

Liverpool	Cambridge	Coventry	Southend	Spalding	Aldershot
Sheffield	Luton	Southampton	Canterbury	Chester	Blackpool
York	Colchester	Dover	Grimsby	Cromer	Crewe
					Nottingham

### Associations

Hats	Fish	Sherwood Forest	Railways	Pier	Bulbs
Crabs	Docks	Steel	Roman Wall	Tower	Minster
White Cliffs	Cars	Surfing	University	Armed Services	
		Oysters	Cathedral		



## *Answers to Competition No 47 Rivers and Places No 2*

Tweed/ Berwick  
 Foyle/ Londonderry  
 Fowey/ Lostwithiel  
 Dovey/Machynleth  
 Wye/ Hereford  
 Severn/Ironbridge  
 Parrett/Langport  
 Avon/Stratford  
 Deben/Woodbridge  
 Tyne/Newcastle  
 Clyde/Glasgow  
 Thames/Maidenhead



*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: TREASURES OF THE ESTUARY

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

BLADDER-WRACK DUNLIN CORMORANTS EMPTY-CRAB-  
 CASES FEATHER GREENLAND-GEESE LUG-WORMS  
 MARRAM-GRASS MARSH-SAMPHIRE OYSTER-CATCHERS  
 PEEWIT RAZOR-SHELLS RINGED-PLOVER REEDS SALT-  
 MARCH-GRASSES SEA-BOOT-LACES SEA-THRIFT SEA-  
 SANDWORT SEA-POTATO SEA-WORMWOOD TEAL  
 WHIMBREL WIGEON WORMCASES

(Put the remaining 16 letters together to find the term used to describe the  
 2 types of marine debris associated with vessels and lying on the sea edge)

Flotsam and jetsam. The former describes debris accidentally thrown overboard  
 such as in a shipwreck or accident and can be claimed by the owner. The latter  
 describes articles thrown or jettisoned overboard and can be claimed by the finder.



## JUNIOR WORDSEARCH: ICE HOCKEY

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

ICE HOCKEY RINK  
ICE HOCKEY  
STICK  
ICE SKATES  
PUCK/HARD DISC

TEAMS OF SIX  
SUBSTITUTES  
GOALTENDER  
FORWARDS  
DEFENDERS

FACE OFF  
PASS  
PENALTY BOX  
PENALTY SHOT  
SCORE GOALS



*Compiled by Liz Alsford*

# DIARY

*The church is open. The services will also continue to be live streamed via YOUTUBE*

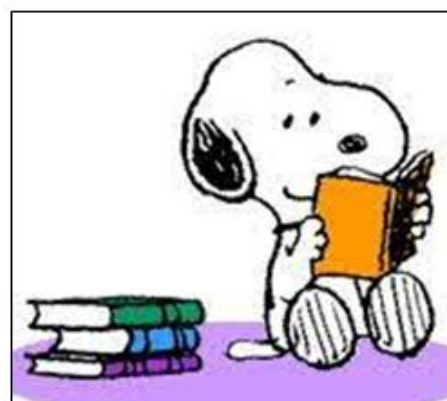
**Monday** 10.30am to 11.30am Study Group

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

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

**Thursday** 8.00pm Choir Practice in Church Nov 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, Dec 8<sup>th</sup>

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



## NOVEMBER

- 6 11.00 am Family Communion Service** led by Revd Maggie Hindley
- 3.00 pm Annual Bereavement Service** led by Revd Derek Lindfield
- 12 11.00 am – 2.00pm Annual Church Bazaar & Traidcraft Sale in Church**
- 13 10.30 Remembrance Sunday, United Service in St Jude's**
- 15 7.30 pm Elders & Deacons Court**
- 20 11.00 am Family Service** led by Revd Dominic Grant, Minister, Barnet URC
- 25 1.00pm Jazz Saxophone Concert** by Lyn Dobson. Light lunch from 12.15pm
- 27 11.00 am Family Advent Morning Service** led by Revd Ian Green, Minister of Amersham Free Church

## DECEMBER

- 4 11.00 am Family Communion Service** led by Revd John Mackerness, Chaplain, Heathrow Airport
- 11 11.00 am Family Service** led by Revd Jon Dean, Retired URC Minister

- 13 7.30 pm Elders & Deacons Court  
 18 **11.00 am** **Nine Lessons & Carols Service** led by Revd  
 Derek Lindfield  
 25 **11.00 am** **Christmas Day Service** led by Revd Derek  
 Lindfield

## JANUARY

- 1 **11.00 am** **Family Communion Service led by The  
 Worship Group**  
 2 3.00pm Piano Concert by Masa Tayama followed by  
 tea and mince pies



## 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 issue will be a double issue for December 2022 and January 2023. It will be published on Sunday 11th December 2022. Articles should therefore be delivered to the editor, Joan Holton or the typesetter, John Ditchfield, (john\_ditchfield@hotmail.com) by Sunday November 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](http://www.hgsfreechurch.org.uk) where you will find past issues of News and Views.***



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