

NEWS & VIEWS

The Free Church Hampstead Garden Suburb



OCTOBER 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) Holy Communion is celebrated at Morning Worship on the first Sunday of every month. The Junior Church meets at 11am every Sunday</i>
Minister:	Vacancy Minister@hgsfreechurch.org.uk (which will be re-directed to the secretariat)
Pastoral Emergencies Contact	Derek Lindfield 07803 953483 or Penny Trafford 030 8959 3405
Correspondence Secretary	Penny Trafford 020 8959 3405 Secretary@hgsfreechurch.org.uk
Pulpit Secretary	Carole Lindfield derekandcarole.lindfield@earlblue.com
Treasurer	Joe Fryer 07814 532049 Treasurer@hgsfreechurch.org.uk
Lettings Officer	Eddie Hayden lettings@hgsfreechurch.org.uk
Finance Officer	Fola Awosika finance@hgsfreechurch.org.uk
Director of Music	Mark Underwood mark.underwood119@gmail.com

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 781

OCTOBER 2022

Dear Friends

GIVING IN HARD TIMES

I have been noticing how age and its accompanying loss of energy affects my casual giving. I am less likely, for example, to stop, chat and buy a copy of the *Big Issue* in Muswell Hill from a seller who has been at the same pitch for years. I do not wish to read the magazine any more because fading eyesight means I read much less, or I may not want to stop because of the weather or any other feeble excuse I devise to pass her by with a mere nod of recognition. Recently, my uncharitable behaviour got to me and I put two £10 notes in an envelope with a covering note to say that although I did not stop any more, I haven't forgotten her. Now that I have finally decided to act, the seller is, of course, absent from her pitch.

The above illustration is only a small reminder of the constant and growing need to remember and to care for those in much greater need than our own. If you consider the many Ukrainian refugees that have been taken in by families for an initial period of six months, "only" 75% of the hosts are prepared to continue having refugees in their home. One host admitted that he found it hard to cope with a loud, stropky teenager some twenty years after having coped with one of his own. This host has done his bit and cannot be reproached for withdrawing at the end of the statutory period. Charity, in a case like this, begins and ends in the home. This said, have the better off in our society, including ourselves, grown so comfortable in a consumer society, that we have forgotten the notion of sacrifice for the greater good?

Our continuing support for Ukraine is going to involve sacrifices over the winter months since the economic crisis provoked by the spiralling cost of energy will be aggravated as a consequence of drought and extreme heat both here and in continental Europe. Presently, the Russian government is laughing, because as soon as life becomes uncomfortable, both here and in

Western Europe there will be voices raised that will echo those in our European past: Why should we suffer for the sake of a faraway country whose people we don't know?

The agonies of the Christian conscience over the questions "Am I giving enough?" or "To be a real Christian should I give up everything and trust only in God to look after me?" have haunted us, probably from the time when the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles were written. However, there have been times when this problematic has occupied a central space in European thought. One such period was towards the end of the 19C, when Tolstoy's radical view of how a Christian should live in a capitalist system had a considerable impact on European philosophy and literature.

In Spain, the author Pérez Galdós, the Spanish equivalent of Dickens or Balzac, wrote two novels, later turned into films by Luis Buñuel, which tackle the subject of how the true Christian should live and how social and state institutions respond to their challenge. The first of these is *Nazarín* (1895) and it concerns a priest of this name who chooses to be an imitator of Christ. His unorthodox behaviour as a priest drives him out of Madrid and, like Don Quijote, he takes to the road accompanied not by Sancho Panza but by two prostitutes. Needless to say, Nazarín is misunderstood, mocked and abused and in the end he is returned to Madrid under guard for his heretical and supposedly immoral behaviour. The sequel to this novel is *Halma*, published later in 1895. The Countess of Halma (*alma* is the Spanish for soul) seeks to establish an agricultural community for the homeless. However her plans are destroyed not only by social opposition but also because the poor are neither grateful nor good and respond to her charity by trashing her home and stealing her belongings. In the Bunuel version, Halma also experiences the outrage of being raped by one of the beggars she has sheltered.

A problem for us now, as for Nazarín and Halma in the late 19C, is that our society is much more complex than that in which the Evangelists lived on the fringes of the Roman empire. The complexities existed in Rome itself, no doubt, as it was a city that reached a population of one million. But Jesus and his followers had very few material goods and property. Unlike Nazarín they could take to the road and live the simple life without being viewed as mad, bad outcasts. It is only when Jesus enters Jerusalem that the religious and civil authorities take fright and act against him. Does this mean that the New Testament message needs to be watered down in light of the consumer society in which we live or, alternatively, do we need to return to a simpler life with clear-cut values?

Within our own community, the case of the homeless man, Eric, who used our church porch for shelter, illustrates the moral problems Christians encounter here and now.

Verity Smith

News of the Church Family

Gwen Buchan has had major surgery and is now recovering. We wish her well in her convalescence.

We say goodbye to Eric and Karen Alton who are moving to Perth this month. They are long time church members, a Deacon and an Elder. We will miss Eric, Karen, Becky and William. We wish them well as they settle into their new home.

Recruitment of New Minister

During September we advertised widely for a new minister in *Reform*, *Church of Scotland magazine*, *Greenbelt Festival newspaper*, *The Church Times*, *BU and Congregational Federation* websites.

So far there have been eight expressions of interest, and the closing date for applications is 9th October.

In early November the Elders & Deacons will be interviewing the short-listed candidates.

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

Elders and Deacons Election

The three yearly election of Elders and Deacons is due this autumn. This means all the Elders and Deacons will stand down and they, along with any other church member, may stand for election. We are in a ministerial vacancy and therefore the sharing of the responsibilities of the spiritual direction and the practical tasks of the church is a rewarding use of our time. It is very necessary to have a balanced team to lead the church whilst we are without a minister.

Nominations will be accepted by me from Sunday October 23rd to Sunday November 6th. Nominations must be submitted in writing (on the forms which will be made 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 20th

Please consider prayerfully those who you might seek to nominate for these positions, and if you are approached whether this is something that you are able to do.

If anyone has any questions, I will be happy to discuss the election process.

Penny Trafford, Church Secretary

Bible Study: The Glory of the Lord

‘Glory’ (Greek *doxa*) in the New Testament is an eschatological (end time) idea connected with God’s kingdom and power. The word itself is taken over from the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) where it is used to translate the Hebrew word *Kabod*, which originally meant ‘weight’ and came to mean ‘substance’, ‘wealth’, ‘honour’, and ‘reputation’. Its important use, as far as we are concerned, is in the sense of the visible brightness of the divine presence. This is reflected in one of the traditions incorporated in the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) concerning the Law-giving and the Tabernacle (the elaborate tent which housed the ark and took the place of the Temple during the unsettled period in Hebrew history when the Israelites lived as nomads in the desert). This visible ‘glory’ is also seen in prophetic visions:

‘And one (seraphim) called to another, and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”’ (Isaiah 6:3)

“And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision that I saw in the plain.”

After Old Testament times the Jewish rabbis spoke of glory or ‘the visible brightness of the presence of God’ as the *shekinah* (Hebrew – ‘that which dwells,’ ‘dwelling’); this word does not appear in the Old Testament but is frequent in the Targums as a roundabout way of speaking of God (a periphrasis for God). This later Jewish conception of the *shekinah* as God’s visible, glorious presence dwelling in Israel influences New Testament writers like John, and he makes striking use of it. He regards the whole of Christ’s incarnate life as the embodiment of the glory of God, though that glory is revealed only to believing disciples and not to ‘the world’:

“This is the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.” (John 2:11)

The Christ of the Fourth Gospel is the place where God’s presence is tabernacled and ‘we beheld his glory’. During his earthly life this glory was always present, but eschatologically. To people without faith, it could not be apprehended. The incarnate Christ must enter into his glory through suffering and death. John stresses the hour of Christ’s crucifixion as the ‘hour’ of his glorification.

“So they sought to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him for his hour had not yet come.” (John 7:30)

“His disciples did not understand this at first: but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him.” (John 12:16)

‘And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.”’ (John 12:23)

“Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour.” (John 12:27).

‘When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come to glorify your Son, that the Son may glorify you.”’ (John 17:1)

“Father, glorify ... me in your own presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made.” (John 17:5)

John portrays Christ going to his cross like a king to his coronation! He is not the victim but is in control as befits one who manifests the glory of God – seated on his throne, the cross on Calvary.

At the cross, and since the cross, Christ’s followers participate now in the glory of Christ and in anticipation of the glory that shall be after death.

“All are yours, and you are mine, and I am glorified in them.” (John 17:10)

“I in them and them in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you have sent and have loved them even as you have loved me.” (John 17:23)

John starts his gospel with an assertion that those who have faith will see the glory of God made known in Jesus:

“Truly, truly I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man. (John 1:51)

This is a clear allusion to the story of Jacob’s ladder in Genesis 28:11-17. Jesus is the second Jacob, that is the true Israel in his own person. Jesus preferred to be known as the Son of Man, and it is used here to emphasize that in his ministry the glory of God will be seen. Jesus, the man from heaven, would manifest God’s glory not in some unknown future apocalyptic event but in his ministry and pre-eminently on the cross.

Derek Lindfield

ROSEMARY'S RETURNING JEWEL

When I re-read last month's News and Views, I realized I had left several of you in suspense about our missing cat. Well, after 11 days of walk-about, during which we tried not to give up hope for her return (although inwardly becoming convinced that ill had befallen her), I opened the backdoor early one morning and there she was, having lost a lot of weight, dehydrated, with her collar around one front leg causing a nasty red sore; she couldn't stop telling us her story all day and the next few days. It was absolutely wonderful. All animal lovers will understand our feelings of intense joy - those not so animal-inclined, can imagine finding a precious gem or jewel or something of immense value! So often it's not until we lose something, or someone, that we realize just how strong our love is for that person or thing. Yes, we're now back to a complete menagerie of animals! The tortoises have been content within the confines of their large cage and it's the season for emerging baby stick insects, all 23 of them - perfect little creatures, although I realize not many of you would agree!

John mentions we've been here for nearly a year and there's been lot of adjusting to do, not just to our surroundings but within our own life-styles. We were spoilt within the Free Church with its friendliness and constancy of minister and congregation. All of us need others around us, we can't do it alone. I think back to my childhood, and although I had a brother and sister, I always wanted to do it alone. Three children is not an easy situation (although I was told when I had an emergency appendix operation my brother just sat on the stairs day by day crying for me!) I thought I could do it all and all on my own; I acted that way until I moved to a new school, where a lady teacher believed in me - could see potential - and turned my thinking around. (She later became my Sunday School teacher for which I am so indebted).

I was reminded of this negativity of believing that one can do it alone at a BBC Daily Morning Service (26th August) by Lyndall Bywater, who said: "We learn most from people who live out their faith in practical ways." She asked herself the question: "As a blind person myself, can I lead another blind person?" The answer to that question became apparent as she navigated with another, by working together as a pair, communicating, looking after each other and not trying to go it alone. For them it was the only way one blind person could help another blind person, communicating physically and vocally, constantly in touch with each other and not losing track of each other. In other words "faith into practice and

we do it better when we don't do it alone".

As I thought on this idea I began to realize that was what we were missing - fellowship. Fellowship with others not just the two of us, sharing our example of living faith with others. The two churches we attended were very friendly in spite of the small numbers in the congregation. But some spark was missing and then something amazing happened. Whilst we were waiting at the church gates (the service having been unknowingly cancelled) we started talking to another couple who were also there. Talking about fellowship the gentleman suddenly said, "If you want fellowship, we'll show you what real fellowship is" - and invited us to a meeting later that afternoon. Yes, we now know what real fellowship is - a very vibrant, faith-led meeting with a group of about 50.

We have now been to three meetings and feel really inspired with this feeling of 'togetherness.' But there are times during the rest of the week when feelings of not achieving anything positive - just existing, feeling rather inadequate - come to the surface. In my Daily Readings Notes (United Christian Broadcasting notes 25.7.22), a clergyman Edward Everett Hale writes: "I am only one; but still I am one; I can't do everything; but I can still do something and because I can't do everything I will not refuse to do something I can do." He cites the following examples. How many people did it take to rescue the dying man on the Jericho Road? One good Samaritan. How many people did it take to confront Pharaoh and lead the Exodus out of Egypt? One man Moses."

I have always taken great heart from this example of God's understanding of a person's inadequacies. I know how Moses must have felt with his reserve, his feelings of panic, of not saying the right words, of not being able to get the message across while speaking to a person of such importance. But God was already there, two steps ahead of him with the answer: 'Aaron your brother will speak for you.'

I am beginning to realize that, in life, with all its uncertainties, all its changing circumstances, there are going to be times when we will go through all those stages of contact. Sometimes we will realise we cannot do it alone, when we need the support of another to guide us along; sometimes we need more of a push and need the togetherness of a congregation or a fellowship to encourage us along. But there are going to be equally important times when the dice falls to us alone - this is my job, no one else's, the buck stops with me. Perhaps all my life I've been waiting for this moment and there will not be another moment - I must not let it pass by - I must make that phone call; do that caring job. Many times

we will never see the effect of that action, the ramifications of that act; never see the ripples vibrating out from that decision. We may not always succeed but at least we know we've tried. But of one thing I'm convinced - God is always going to be one step ahead of us - I don't know how but He seems to know all my weaknesses, all my excuses, before I even make them.

I'll finish with words taken from Bernadette Farrell's moving chorus based on the 139th Psalm:

O God, You search me and You know me
All my thoughts are open to your gaze,
When I walk or lie down you are beside me
Ever the maker and keeper of my days.

Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,
You have known its meaning through and through,
You are with me beyond my understanding,
God of my present, my past and future too.

Rosemary Birch



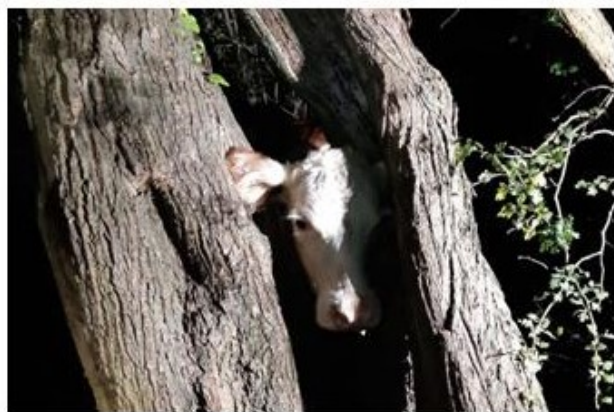
JOHN BIRCH'S DIARY FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

By the time this is published it will be nearly a year since we left London, and perhaps more importantly, the Church which had been our Spiritual home for nearly 50 years - not just that but also a time during which our children (most of them) were born/grew up / became adults with their own families - spending their early years in the Free Church and going on to have their own Christian lives and commitments. We have much for which to be grateful. It's a fact that for each of them their time in the Church has led to their own faith, emerging in different ways and being carried forward through them (six children and sixteen grand-children.) In essence this is what Christianity is about - not only the love of Jesus for each one of us, but also to the continuation of our faith through all generations. Faith is timeless, indefinable, different in many ways for each of us but united in our belief in the life and love of our Saviour.

Worship can happen in many ways and in very different circumstances. Rosemary and I have had connections in and around Borth with two different Church communities; Borth Parish Church, the Church in Wales, is a good fifteen minutes walk along a narrow lane from our home in the High Street. The second – the 345 (basically Baptist) Church is held in a village hall a few miles away, closer to Aberystwyth. (345 is the service time: no excuse for forgetting the start time!) A very vibrant fellowship!

Life in all its variety. Fire fighters in Hampshire tweeted that they had successfully “remooved” a cow whose head had been stuck “in a tree.” It took over an hour to free the cow from a fork in a willow tree!

- *Penny and Sandy*, dogs aged seven and 10, constant companions, have been rehomed together. Penny is blind and Sandy acts almost like a guide dog helping her get around.



- *Eddie, an elderly tortoise*, had his front legs badly damaged when chewed by a rat. He now skates along on a set of toy wheels. Another tortoise caused Network Rail to cancel services for an hour and a half, after a “giant tortoise”, weighing over 50 kg. and too heavy to be lifted by a single person, escaped from a wild life centre and became stuck on a railway-track.



On your bike Ukrainian refugees are getting back a taste of their old life with cycles supplied by charities in Birmingham and London.

Chopper water: water levels in the Rhine river are causing concern and will probably reach a critical low as weeks of dry weather turn several rivers into trickles. Swiss army

helicopters have been drafted in to bring water to thirsty cows, pigs and goats in the Alpine meadows.

Tree-Meadows: entries in The Woodlands Trust “Tree of the Year” competition include the ancient Kilbroney Oak in County Down and a sessile oak considered to be the inspiration for CS Lewis’ *The Chronicles of Narnia*.



Dig in Ancient Jerusalem:

excavations to improve access to the Western Wall have led to the uncovering of an ornate first century villa, the revealing of a 2000 year-old aqueduct and, of the same age, bricks hall-marked with the name of the Roman 10th Legion.

Bison are back in the wild in England, being released in woods near Canterbury after 1000 years absence. It is part of 450 “re-wilding” schemes taking place across the UK. Bison are called “eco-systems engineers” and it is hoped that they will “create climate-resistant landscapes, which can adapt to the challenges presented by the climate and nature emergency”.

Cheetah: eight of these big cats, well established in Namibia, are to be re-located to the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh which has abundant prey.

Packaging where would we be without it? It’s so essential that it goes back to ancient history. Paper packaging has been around for at least 2200 years when the Chinese wrapped food in treated mulberry bark. The leaf has unique healing powers, working against the effect of high blood sugar, high cholesterol and hypertension. First used as a food for silk worms but now all parts of the plant can be used for medical and commercial purposes (berries, leaves, twigs and root bark.)



- *The first cardboard box* was produced in 1817 but these were individually made, until in the 1870's, a Scotsman discovered how to prefabricate them. Nabisco, an American biscuit company, was the first to use them.

- *Tin cans* The first can was made in the early 19th century in France of glass: but by 1813 it had been

adopted by Peter Durand in England who was producing tin canned goods for the Royal Navy.

- *Plastic* as we know it was a late starter (in 1946) but is now a staple for packaging foods, pharmaceuticals and goods in general - and Tupperware!

- *QR codes/RFID smart chips/Antimicrobial packaging and Bioplastics* are making thousands of goods safer to store, and to enjoy - and it all started with mulberry bark!

John Birch



From the Archive

OCTOBER 1922

Here is an account, by a young person, of a Free Church Sunday School outing to the 'twinning' country church of Gold Hill in Buckinghamshire.



From Work and Worship October 1922

We look forward to the day when the Sunday School Outing will be appreciated as one of the most important gatherings of the year.

Saturday, September 16th, was the great day and Providence was good to us, the weather proved fine the whole time. Gold Hill in the beautiful Beaconsfield country, and well known to Free Church friends, though visited last year, was decided by the officers could not be bettered this year for the Sunday School outing.

The friends at Gold Hill Baptist Church entertained us by a good tea and good game of cricket – and we won by 48 runs.

Miss Robinson and Miss Wilson provided a fine programme of original races causing considerable amusement. The Tunnel Race, Addem-icken Race, Blind Scrambled Apples, Hobble and Poodle Race.

The teachers and scholars will be pleased to enlighten friends on these curious contests, at the same time give full information on the Sunday School and its work.

Mr Silcox (Superintendent) thanked the Gold Hill friends for their hospitality and our thanks are due to him, the Secretary, Mr Binks, and the teachers for entertaining us so splendidly. We know each other better after these outings.

OCTOBER 1942

The second extract is just 20 years on – the young people from the Free Church were largely evacuated or serving in the Forces across the world making Frank Ballard's monthly News Letter a valuable record of happenings at home and abroad, despite being subject to strict censorship. In this extract, he mentions that Douglas Robinson is serving in the RAF – a young man whose life was lost just a few months later over Holland and has no known grave. His story is briefly told in a tribute on the church display board.

From Work and Worship October 1942

It is over three years ago that I started writing these pastoral letters. There have been months when all sorts of exciting things have clamoured for inclusion, and other months when writing has like making bricks without straw. But whether the news has been ample or sparse, whether my own mood has been confident or anxious, the letters have been written and sent out. At first they went to almost every county in England, and some to Scotland and Wales. Recently they have gone in increasing numbers overseas. Our young men are now to be found wherever British troops are stationed, and sometimes as I write I think of the readers in Iceland or India, in Irak or Iran – not to mention other places not beginning with “I”; I can’t think of everybody, but I have kept the letters as personal as possible, and I have been cheered by a great many replies. Men in camps, and especially men on foreign service, are not very fond of writing unnecessary letters, but many of them think of us at the Free Church and send their messages through me. I do not always know where they come from for the censorship is strict, but I get a good deal of interesting information. There is a little pile in front of me now, and home readers will be glad if I let them look over my shoulder. Ralph Challoner has seen more of the world than most of us and is oppressed by heat which beggars description, Leslie Turton writes aboard ship outward bound to an unknown destination: “I am thankful to say that I have not suffered the evils of sea-sickness, though others have been less fortunate.” Raymond Gorbing is still in this country, but has been moved to Canterbury, and finds it rather difficult meeting strange faces and making new friends. Douglas Robinson has not only written but called and told me about his experiences in the air. He is a sergeant now, by the way. To put it in full, he is a sergeant wireless operator and air gunner. Rix Martin also has three stripes on his sleeve and tells me he is undergoing special training. John Docherty sends his photo, which makes a welcome addition to my collection. If I may say so, naval uniform suits him. Neil Taylor may be excused if he feels himself to be the proudest of the lot for almost at the same moment he became a father and a second lieutenant. The young people are still leaving for national service of one kind or another Fortunately, most of the veterans remain and the Sunday School is growing! Let us try to keep the unity of the Spirit wherever duty may call us! Frank Ballard

Ship of Fools: 16th September

The 'Ship of Fools' website carries a feature 'Time-travel News' written by Steve Tomkins and Simon Jenkins which looks at what happened on a certain day of the year that might be of interest to Christian readers. The following is the entry for 16 September:

The Dominican friar and first Grand Inquisitor of the Spanish Inquisition **Tomás de Torquemada** died peacefully in bed today in 1498. The same could not be said for the estimated 2,000 people who were hanged, strangled, beheaded and burned to death for heresy by the Inquisition during his 15 year reign of surreal fanaticism and terror (above). Torquemada dramatically expanded and refined



the work of the Inquisition, whose mission was to root out heresy, and which also pursued blasphemers, sorcerers, Devil worshippers, excommunicates, Jews, Muslims, and apostates. His manual for inquisitors, published in 1576, gave precise instructions on interrogation, torture and punishment, which were all done in a warped spirit of Christian charity. In his own time, Torquemada was hailed as 'the hammer of heretics, the light of Spain, the saviour of his country, the honour of his order,' but he was probably the worst monster ever produced by Christianity.

'If any, upon being denounced and convicted of the sin of heresy, shall deny and persist in his denial until sentence is passed, and the said crime shall have been proved against him, although the accused should confess the Catholic Faith and assert that he has always been and is a Christian, the inquisitors must declare him a heretic and so sentence him.' *Tomás de Torquemada, Copilacion de las Instruciones del Officio de la Sancta Inquisicion.*

Enrique Irazoqui, best known for his role as Jesus Christ in the 1964 film *The Gospel According to St. Matthew*, directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini, died today in 2020. He was a 19-year-old economics student and a communist activist against Spanish fascism when he played Jesus.

‘When I came back to Spain, the police took my passport away for having worked in a Marxist film. It was funny, the film was “The Gospel According to St. Mathew”, which had won two international Catholic prizes and had been shown at the Vatican Council. He was also a Spanish professor of literature, computer chess expert and actor. Irazoqui was born in Barcelona, the son of a Spanish father and an Italian Jewish mother. In 2002 he was the arbiter during the *Brains in Bahrain* chess match between world champion Vladimir Kramnik and the computer program Deep Fritz, which ended in a tie.



Anne Bradstreet, the Puritan poet who lived in New England, died today in 1672. Born in Northampton, England, she emigrated with her family in 1630 to escape the persecution of Puritans under King Charles I, and was one of the founders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Bradstreet became the first published poet of America when a collection of her poems, *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America*, was printed in London in 1650.

I heard the merry grasshopper then sing,
The black clad Cricket bear a second part.
They kept one tune and played on the same string,
Seeming to glory in their little Art.
Shall creatures abject thus their voices raise?
And in their kind resound their maker's praise:
Whilst I, as mute, can warble forth no higher layes.
Anne Bradstreet, 'Contemplations'

Michael de Bay, a Belgian Catholic theologian who mirrored Protestant ideas – such as prioritising the Bible and the Church Fathers rather than Thomas Aquinas and the medieval Scholastic theologians – died today in 1589. Despite his suspect views, which were condemned by the Pope, he was never formally condemned himself, and was even able to keep his theological professorship in Leuven.

It is the feast of **St Euphemia**, a young woman who died in the persecution of the Emperor Diocletian in 303 CE. She refused to make a sacrifice to Ares, the god of war, and died in the arena of Chalcedon after being mauled by a bear.
Steve Tomkins and Simon Jenkins

OLIGARCHS AND UNKNOWN UNKNOWNS!

The historian, Arnold Toynbee is reputed to have said that the trouble with history is that it is 'just one damn thing after another', which is a pretty good summary of trying to give any sort of meaning to the passage of events, whether in our own lives or in those of nations. Thus the neoliberal shock therapy visited upon Russia in the 1990s resulted in an era of socio-economic dislocation and lawlessness which saw the rise of the Oligarchs and – inevitably – the emergence of a 'strong man' who could bring about order and stability, in this case Vladimir Putin. Unfortunately, Putin belonged to those nationalist circles that felt Russia had been humiliated and deliberately undermined by the West and were determined to re-establish some of the old Soviet Empire – Chechnya, Crimea, Eastern Ukraine, and then Ukraine proper. Inevitably, the West responded – firstly with sanctions and then with military aid. In turn, Russia responded by limiting supplies of Russian gas to Europe resulting in massive price hikes and speculation in the global wholesale gas market and hence to prices charged to domestic and business consumers. Thus, in a very real sense, those now enduring the sky high energy price caps owe their predicament to the ideologues behind the shock therapy of the 1990s. But it is doubtful if anybody sees it that way.

It might be objected that this sort of 'event following event' analysis is all too easy and that anyway it doesn't justify – can never justify – one sovereign country invading another. No more than the injustices of the Versailles Treaty of 1919 could justify the annexation of Austria in 1938 and the invasion of Poland in 1939. Which is true enough. On the other hand, there was sufficient awareness of those injustices to ensure that after the Second World War there was enough aid – the Marshall Plan – to help rebuild Germany and Europe and counter the possible attractions of communism. There was no such help forthcoming for the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and 1990s. The lessons of Versailles had either been forgotten or were considered irrelevant in the Russian situation. The notion of constructive generosity had long since given way to the sacred duty of pushing home temporary (supposed) political advantage.

However, by the turn of the millennium, Putin was in control of Russia and the neoliberal shock therapists began to turn their attention to Iraq. Ironically it was in 2002, in the run up to the invasion that Donald Rumsfeld, the US Secretary of Defense, made his observation about the role of 'known and

unknown knowns' in history: "... as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns - the ones we don't know we don't know. And if one looks throughout the history of our country and other free countries, it is the latter category that tends to be the difficult one."

The Oligarchs and Israel

If Vladimir Putin was, in some sense, a predictable outcome of the Russian experience in the 1990s – a 'known unknown' – then there were also some of Rumsfeld's 'unknown unknown' consequences; none more so than the impact of the events of the 1990s on Israel and the Middle East. Naomi Klein points out that at the beginning of the 1990s there was a reasonable prospect of peace breaking out in the Middle East. In particular, there was a feeling in Israel that the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank and the boycott of Israel by the Arab states, was putting the economic future of the country in doubt. The collapse of communism and the growth of global 'emerging markets' presented the country with historic opportunities: 'Israel could become just another state ... or, it could become the strategic, logistic and marketing centre of the whole region like a Middle Eastern Singapore or Hong Kong.' (President of the Israeli Chambers of Commerce, 1993). Thus in September that year, the prime minister Yitzak Rabin and the chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, Yasser Arafat inaugurated the Oslo Accords – the start of a painfully negotiated process of trying to implement some sort of long-term political accord between the two sides.

A huge amount of ink has been expended (by both sides) in trying to explain or justify why, despite the Nobel peace prizes and the optimistic hype, the process subsequently failed. Even though it was not a settlement but an agreement to begin a process of negotiation, both sides felt that they might have given away too much and the process quickly foundered. The Israelis tended to blame suicide bombings and the assassination of Rabin, the Palestinians pointed to the frenetic expansion of illegal settlements and what they felt were the colonialist implications of the deal.

But in the background more fundamental changes were taking place. One of these was the huge expansion of Russian immigration into Israel in the 1990s. The chaotic state of the post Soviet economy and society in early and mid 1990s led many Russian Jews to make the decision to emigrate to Israel. The scale of the exodus was huge. Over the course of that decade, roughly one million Jews left the former Soviet Union and moved to Israel – eventually making up something like a fifth of the total Jewish population. (In

proportionate terms it was the equivalent of to all of Greece moving to France). Many were choosing to live in a Jewish state after a lifetime of religious persecution. But the bulk were not idealistic Zionists (many had quite tenuous claims to being Jewish) but were economic refugees. Many had seen their life savings disappear in the shock doctrine and were quite happy to take advantage of the cheap mortgages and other inducements to settle in the West Bank - and were uninterested in the politics of the region. A spokesperson for the Soviet Zionist Forum said: "they are not drawn to Israel, they feel expelled from the USSR by the political instability and economic deterioration there." By far the largest wave came in the wake of Yeltsin's coup in 1993 - just as the peace process was beginning. After that an additional 600,000 people moved from former Soviet states to Israel.

The Population Balance Changes

The impulse behind the Oslo agreement had been driven by a fear about the economic future for Israel without Palestinian cooperation and by the growing ratio of Arab to Jewish citizens in the country. The mass immigration of Russians in the 1990s changed all that: it markedly increased the ratio of Jews to Arabs while simultaneously providing a new source of relatively cheap labour. Post Oslo, Israeli governments felt increasingly able to ignore the demands of Palestinians and pursue increasingly hard line policies.

The Change to a Hi-Tech Economy

There was another consequence. Following the failure of the peace process, Israel increasingly saw its economic future in hi-tech terms rather than in terms of the "peace of markets" originally envisaged by the Oslo accords (which relied heavily on Palestinian cooperation). And in this endeavour it was stupendously successful. Israel rapidly became a world leader in telecommunications and web technology - particularly in areas relating to security - where it has remained ever since. It now exports its advice and its surveillance and security systems world wide. Nine eleven was of course a turning point in all this. As Naomi Klein puts it: "Israel's pitch to North America and Europe was straightforward - the War on Terror you are just embarking on is one we have been fighting since our birth. Let our hi-tech firms and privatized spy companies show how it's done."

The failure of the Oslo accords and the influx of Russian emigrants may have been an example of fortuitous timing, but among the hundreds of thousands of Soviets who came to Israel in the nineties were "more highly trained scientists than Israel's top tech institute had graduated in the eighty years of its existence." As one Israeli economist put it, they became "the rocket fuel for Israel's tech industry."

Book Review

Small Pleasures by Clare Chambers

Jean Swinney is a writer for a local newspaper. She spends her days writing household tips and her evenings looking after her housebound mother, who she rarely pleases. Her life, as she sees it, will go on until one or both of them die. And then she's given a story to investigate. Swiss woman Gretchen Tilbury has written to the paper claiming that her daughter, Margaret, was the result of a virgin birth. So Jean begins to investigate and as she does she discovers something missing from her own life –

friendship. She becomes friends with Gretchen and her husband Howard, a surrogate aunt of Margaret. But then she falls for Howard and Jean is torn between her chance of happiness and her new found friendship.

The mystery behind Margaret's conception is only one of the threads of narrative but it is the one which is the catalyst for so many of the changes to Jean's life. With it comes a heavy burden. Jean has befriended the Tilburys, has become protective of them and doesn't want to see their lives splashed about on the front page. Yet she has a job to do and so she investigates, looking back to the time of Margaret's conception, uncovering the truth, about Gretchen, and herself, in the process.

A further plot line is that Gretchen herself turns out to have had a previous love in her life that surprises all the protagonists along with the reader.



None of these developments required Palestinian cooperation. Israel's success in the hi-tech sector did not require it to have friendly relationships with its Arab neighbours or to end its occupation of Palestinian territories. Quite the contrary; on-going conflicts with its neighbour and associated 'terrorist groups' provided a testing ground for much of its hi-tech surveillance and security equipment and its web infiltration technology. Thus 'tested in real life situations' became a strong selling point for its exports and the impetus on the Israeli side for any sort of dialogue and settlement with the Palestinians more or less completely disappeared.

Much of the above is based on Naomi Klein's book 'The Shock Doctrine' (2007). It is based on meticulous research and interviews with many of the key players during this period.

John Ditchfield

The 'Virgin Birth' plot line seems very far fetched but it is based on an actual investigation carried out in the 1950s. The Sunday Pictorial invited women to write in if "they felt they were a virgin mother"; all the nineteen women who replied were scientifically investigated and without modern DNA testing, no definite conclusion was drawn.

The characters in the book are very well delineated. The reader will inevitably be drawn to the main character Jean, who is tied to her unreasonably demanding mother and unable to explore pleasures of her own. She feels she has nothing outside her humdrum job and her home duties. The other characters are the too-perfect wife and mother Gretchen, her affectionate unspoiled 10 year-old daughter Margaret and the quiet practical, witty husband Howard.

So what are the 'small pleasures' of the title? For Jean, they are listed as: "the first cigarette of the day; a glass of sherry before Sunday lunch; a bar of chocolate parcelled out to last a week; a newly published library book, still pristine and untouched by other hands ..." The list continues in this vein for some time, going on to include spring hyacinths, fresh snow, the purchase of new stationery and the satisfaction of a neatly folded ironing pile. In fact, there are small pleasures that run through nearly every page: the pleasure of discovering new food, as Jean tries Gretchen's baking or eating cakes with Margaret in a London café. Of course, one needs to be a certain age to appreciate these examples from the 1950's, when the book is set.

There is a warmth that suffuses the novel. It is there in the new dress Gretchen makes for Jean, in the food Jean prepares for her mother, in the gift (a baby rabbit) that Margaret receives from Jean and in the gentle way Howard and Jean fall in love. The warmth is there despite the reader anticipating things aren't going to go to plan, that someone is going to be hurt.

The ending of the book involves the real life train crash at Lewisham on December 4th 1957, when, due to fog, 90 people lost their lives and 173 were injured. The ending explains our puzzlement at the beginning of the book where there is a made-up report of a train crash in a local paper. It is left to us to wonder what happened. Was Howard, who had boarded the train, one of the survivors? Did he and Jean live 'happily ever after'? Was he killed so that their brief love affair was brutally ended? These unanswered questions may leave some readers unsatisfied. What is certain is that the book is an excellent read for the 'pleasures' of the title are many and various.

Marion Ditchfield

JOHN BIRCH'S COMPETITION

Competition No. 47: Rivers and Places No 2

(Rivers which have important towns or cities near them)

Rivers

Tweed	Foyle	Fowey	Dovey	Wye	Severn
Parrett	Avon	Deben	Tyne	Clyde	Thames

Places

Maidenhead	Newcastle	Stratford	Ironbridge	
Machynleth	Londonderry	Glasgow	Woodbridge	Langport
	Hereford	Lostwithiel	Berwick	



Answers to Competition No 46: English county towns and their county.

Exeter/Devon
Taunton/ Somerset
Winchester/Hampshire
Aylesbury/Buckinghamshire
Oakham/Rutland
Newcastle-upon-Tyne/Northumberland
Chelmsford/Essex
Ipswich/Suffolk
Preston/Lancashire
Carlisle/Cumberland
Matlock/Derbyshire
Maidstone/Kent
Trowbridge/Wiltshire



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 BEACH

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

BEACH-HOPPERS BLADDER-WRACK COCKLES COMMON-PERIWINKLE COMMON-WHELK COMMON-TERN DOG-FISH-CASES DRIFT-WOOD DUNLINS EUROPEAN-COWIE HERMIT-CRAB HERRING-GULL LUG-WORM MARRAM-GRASS RAZORS SEA-LETTUCE SEA-SLATER SHORE-CRAB SHRIMP SEA-POTATO TURRET-SHELLS

Put the remaining 22 letters together to find the two names given to the edible beach plant that can be cooked and also burnt to produce soda for glass-making.

Compiled by Rosemary Birch

Answer: Marsh Samphire/Glasswort

JUNIOR WORDSEARCH: FIELD HOCKEY

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

**GRASS FIELD
SYNTHETIC PITCH
HOCKEY STICK
HARD BALL
SCORE GOALS**

**GOAL KEEPER
DEFENDERS
FORWARDS
PENALTY
CORNER**

**DRIBBLE
FLICK
PASS
TACKLE
FREE HIT**



Compiled by Liz Alsford

DIARY

The church is open. The services will also continue to be live streamed on FACEBOOK.

Monday 10.30am to 11.30am,

'Studying Together'

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 Choir Practice in Church Oct 13th and 27th

Christian Meditation - Meditators meet online. For further information, contact: Georgia Tutton at gmrtutton@aol.com



OCTOBER

- 2 11.00 am Harvest & Family Communion Service** led by Revd Derek Lindfield followed by lunch in church
- 9 11.00 am Family Service** led by Revd Maggie Hindley, Retired URC Minister
- 16 11.00 am Family Service led by** Revd Jon Dean, Retired URC Minister
- 18 7.30 pm Elders & Deacons Court**
- 23 11.00 am Family Service** led by Revd Ewan King, Interim Moderator
- 28 1.00pm Piano concert by Cristiana Achim. Light lunch from 12.15pm**
- 30 11.00 am Family Service** led by Revd Chris Damp, Congregational Minister, Bunyan Meeting, Bedford

NOVEMBER

- 6 11.00 am Family Communion Service** led by Revd Maggie Hindley
- 3.00 pm Annual Bereavement Service**
- 12 11.00 am – 2.00pm Bazaar in Church**
- 13 10.30 Remembrance Sunday, United Service in St Jude's**



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 November edition of News and Views will be published on Sunday 6th November 2022. Articles should therefore be delivered to the editor, Joan Holton or the typesetter, John Ditchfield, (john_ditchfield@hotmail.com) by Sunday October 23rd.

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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