

# FOREST GROUP NEWSLETTER

## APRIL 2017

### FROM THE MANSE

Dear All,

A few weeks ago, driving around the patch, I was suddenly aware that several warning lights had come up on the dashboard. So I took my car in, and the end of the story was that the stability control and traction control had failed, that it would cost considerably more than the car was worth to fix it, and that my best option was to part exchange for another car.

So – note to those concerned with car parks – EO62VHT has become LT17OMF. There is a long-established family tradition of giving our cars a name. When EOetc arrived we took one look and chorused “EH-OH”, and EO etc became ‘the teletubby’. Hence the toy teletubby that sat by the gearstick. With the new one Jane has started calling it ‘Letty’, but I have been drawn to the OMF.

Having spent my teenage years in Portsmouth surrounded by sailors I had better confess that I can think of one or two renderings of OMF which are perhaps not entirely suitable for ecclesiastical circles! But the other link which came quickly to mind was *Our Mutual Friend*, the last completed novel of Charles Dickens. It is set in London, around the River Thames, which is itself a significant protagonist in the plot. There are themes in the novel of rebirth and renewal, of water as new life, and of characters ending up in the river only to emerge as new people.

And so this Easter I commend to you Our Mutual Friend, God known as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I invite you ponder all that is now and will be ours, the new life made possible because of what God did for us over that first Easter.

Every blessing,

Richard

## SERVICES FOR APRIL

### Chingford

- 2<sup>nd</sup> **Morning Worship with Holy Communion**  
led by Dr Paul Ashitey
- 9<sup>th</sup> **Palm Sunday Service** led by Revd Roger Hoath  
Preceded by Blessing of Palm Crosses on  
Chingford Green at 10.10am
- 13<sup>th</sup> **Maundy Thursday Service** at North Chingford  
Methodist Church at 7pm (joint service)
- 14<sup>th</sup> **Good Friday Meditation Service** at 10am led by  
Revd Ulrike Bell  
Followed by North Chingford **Walk of Witness** at  
11am from Chingford Green
- 16<sup>th</sup> 8.30am **Easter Breakfast**  
9.30am **Service of Holy Communion**  
**Easter Celebration** led by Revd Richard Mortimer
- 23<sup>rd</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Revd Ulrike Bell  
Preceded by Holy Communion Service at 9.45am
- 30<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Revd Richard Mortimer

7<sup>th</sup> Followed by Church Meeting  
*Morning Worship with Holy Communion*  
*led by Terry Silvey*

### Highams Park

2<sup>nd</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Revd Richard Mortimer  
(Baptism of Nehanda Straughn during Service)  
9<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship with Holy Communion** led by  
Trevor Cottrell  
16<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship for Easter Day at Woodford**  
**Green UFC** led by Revd Ulrike Bell  
23<sup>rd</sup> **4.00pm Final Service at Highams Park URC**  
led by the Revd Richard Mortimer (no morning Service)  
Refreshments to follow. **All Welcome**

### Ray Lodge

2<sup>nd</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Trevor Cottrell  
9<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship with Holy Communion** led by  
Revd Richard Mortimer  
16<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship for Easter Day at Woodford**  
**Green UFC** led by Revd Ulrike Bell  
23<sup>rd</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Revd June Colley  
30<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship** led by the Elders  
7<sup>th</sup> *Morning Worship led by the Elders*

### St. James'

2<sup>nd</sup> **Morning Worship with Holy Communion**  
led by Rev Kevin Swaine (*Sacramental Offertory*  
*for Camden Counselling Service*)  
9<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Revd Peter Wortley  
16<sup>th</sup> **Easter Day Services at Chingford URC** led by  
Revd Richard Mortimer (no service at St. James')  
23<sup>rd</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Revd Jane Mortimer  
30<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Keith Brame  
(*Church Meeting follows this service*)  
7<sup>th</sup> *Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by*  
*Revd Kevin Swaine (Sacramental Offertory for*  
*Samaritan's Purse)*

### Woodford Green

2<sup>nd</sup> **Morning Worship with Holy Communion**  
led by Revd June Colley  
9<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Revd Ann Woodhurst  
4.00pm **Messy Church**  
16<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship for Easter Day** led by  
Revd Ulrike Bell  
23<sup>rd</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Revd Richard Mortimer  
30<sup>th</sup> **Morning Worship** led by Revd Ulrike Bell  
7<sup>th</sup> *Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Revd*  
*Ulrike Bell*

## FOREST GROUP CALENDAR FOR APRIL

Monday	3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Forest Group Lent Study at St. James'</b> 10.30am repeated at 8.00pm
Tuesday	4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Forest Group Coffee &amp; Discussion</b> 10.30am at the Woodford manse <b>Woodford Green</b> 8.00pm Elders' meeting at the manse
Wednesday	5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ray Lodge</b> 12noon-1.30pm Lent Lunch
Thursday	6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Chingford</b> 7.30pm Youth Council <b>St. James'</b> 7.30pm Elders' Meeting
Friday	7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ray Lodge</b> 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
Monday	10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ray Lodge</b> 1.00pm Trefoil Guild
Wednesday	12 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ray Lodge</b> 12noon-1.30pm Lent Lunch
Thursday	13 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Forest Group Quiet Day at St. James'</b> 10.30am – 2.30pm
Friday	14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>St. James'</b> 11.00am <b>Good Friday Meditation</b> in the Church Room
Thursday	20 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Chingford</b> 8.00pm Elders
Friday	21 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Ray Lodge</b> 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
Thursday	27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Forest Group Prayer Walk</b> 11.00am Meet at gate to Linder's Field, Buckhurst Hill
Friday	28 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ray Lodge</b> 2.00pm Neighbours' Club: Richard Wyber: Royal Maundy

### May

Monday	2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Forest Group Coffee &amp; Discussion</b> 10.30am at the Woodford manse <b>Woodford Green</b> 8.00pm Elders' meeting at the manse
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Thursday	4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>St. James'</b> 7.30pm Elders' Meeting
Friday	5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ray Lodge</b> 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
Sunday	7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Forest Group Council Meeting</b> 2.00pm At Woodford Green
Monday	8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>St. James'</b> 2.00 – 3.30pm Craft/Prayer Group in Church Room
Friday	12 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ray Lodge</b> 2.00pm Neighbours' Club: Linda Bowley: Barnardo's 150 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary



## PRAYER WALK THURSDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

We will be meeting at the gates of Linder's Fields in Russell Road, Buckhurst Hill at 11.00am for the second of our Forest Group Prayer Walks this year.

We will be walking through Linder's Fields, hopefully catching sight of some bluebells and wood anemones on the way, then crossing over the railway line to Roding Valley Recreation Ground, walking round the lake and ending up at the Arboretum, where the walk will end with a picnic. There will be several prayer stops and times for singing on the way,

led by people from the various churches in the Forest Group. It should be a great experience, so do come along if you are able and hopefully the weather will be kind to us!

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### **The London Interfaith Centre Programme:**

**Christian Zen**      Thursdays 6.30pm- 8.00pm and  
                            Wednesdays 10.00am-11.00am

**The Book Group**    Tuesdays 12.30pm – 2.00pm

### **Exploring Religion's Influence on UK Society**

A ten week course on Monday evenings 7.30pm -9.30pm

### **Sarum College, Salisbury :**

#### ***Through the Eye of the Cross : Vision Renewed***

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April –Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> April

Email: [courses@sarum.ac.uk](mailto:courses@sarum.ac.uk)

Tel: 01722424800

### **Westminster College, Cambridge**

#### **Embracing Eldership**

*Suitable for new and experience Elders*

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> - Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April,

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> – Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July **or**

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July

### **Quiet Day: Soul Food – a day of nourishment for church leaders** Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 10.00am – 4.00pm

*Suitable for ordained and lay people who are normally engaged in church leadership, offering time and space to stop for a while and enjoy the hospitality Westminster College has to offer.*

Details of these and other courses offered by Westminster College can be found on their website:

[www.westminster.cam.ac.uk](http://www.westminster.cam.ac.uk)

### **Synod Training:**

Training for Lay Leaders and Elders who might be called upon to conduct these services in the absence of an ordained minister:

1. Sunday 11 June 2017 2.30 to 5.30 pm Synod Office, Basement Meeting Room  
**Presidency at Communion** led by Revd Anne Sardeson
2. Sunday 10 September 2017 2.30 to 5.30 pm Synod Office, Basement Meeting Room  
**Leading Rites for Births, Marriages and Deaths** led by Revd Anne Sardeson
3. Sunday 5 November 2017 2.30 to 5.30 pm Synod Office, Basement Meeting Room  
**Presidency at Communion** led by Revd Anne Sardeson

Please contact the Synod office if you wish to attend:

[synodadmin@urcthamesnorth.org.uk](mailto:synodadmin@urcthamesnorth.org.uk)

## THE RESURRECTION

“He is risen”

Rang the chorus

He is risen as he said

Many doubted, as expected

Shook their heads in disbelief.

Women saw the empty tomb first

With an angel on the stone

Ran excited to tell others

Certain they would share the joy.

Disciples were assembled

Perplexed, confused, bereaved.

Only Peter really ‘got it’

Quickly raced out to the tomb

Looked around, no sign of Jesus

Only grave clothes. Nothing more.

Later when they all assembled

Jesus suddenly appeared

Greeted them with “Peace be with you”

Then began to break the bread

This was when their eyes were opened

And they recognized their Lord.

It was true, true indeed

JESUS HAD COME BACK

Hallelujah!

Vera Thomas

## REFUGEES

They have no need of our help

So do not tell me

These haggard faces could belong to you or me

Should life have dealt a different hand

We need to see them for who they really are

Chancers and scroungers

Layabouts and loungers

With bombs up their sleeves

Cut-throats and thieves

They are not

Welcome here

We should make them

Go back to where they came from

They cannot

Share our food

Share our homes

Share our countries

Instead let us

Build a wall to keep them out

It is not okay to say

These are people just like us

A place should only belong to those

who are born there

Do not be so stupid to think that

The world can be looked at another way

*(now read from bottom to top)* By Brian Bilston

## **PALESTINIAN AGRICULTURAL RELIEF COMMITTEE (PARC)**

One of the projects supported by the United Reformed Church's Commitment for Life programme is the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee and this is an update of their work.

PARC's current work aims to help sustain the Palestinian agricultural sector through protecting, reproducing and promoting local seeds among farmers and other target groups in Palestinian society. These seeds have developed characteristics and mechanisms to thrive in their environment (eg. tolerant to drought or a particular type of soil and climate). This form of farming has increasingly come under threat from a combination of factors, including manmade climate change, the incursion onto Palestinian land by Israeli settlements, and agricultural companies' marketing of hybrid varieties to farmers, in addition to competition from Israeli-branded produce.

Working with farmers, PARC focus on:

- Reproduction of and distribution of local seeds to local farmers, redistributing what is cultivated to expand the circle of experience, which grows year on year
- Holding training sessions for farmers (male and female) on local seeds production and providing farmers with extension services
- Facilitating exchange visits among farmers, seed companies and governmental representatives
- Holding annual farmer seminars for local seeds protection and reproduction – last year 150 farmers, researchers, UNIS, local seeds companies, government and non-government representatives discussed best practices in the field of local seeds protection, development and implementation
- Research with institutions (Bethlehem University) to help identify most appropriate environmental location and best cultivation practices
- Looking to institutionalize/formalise the local seed protection and development program at a national level
- Working with the Minister of the Environment and the Palestinian Environment Protection Authority to produce an educational film about climate change in Palestine and how to mitigate some of the impacts of this, distributing that at schools.
- Developing market access work together with PARC and Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) - training women's agricultural cooperatives on managing their cooperative, food production and quality control. Also linking well-known suppliers with these producers both locally and internationally. Communities now provide produce such as sesame seeds, vine leaves, pickles and thyme.

## STORIES FOR CHANGE BANGLADESH

The lives of thousands of children who drown in Bangladesh every year could be saved by encouraging people to put aside superstitions that view the deaths as “God’s will”, a study has found. Drownings have become the leading cause of death in children under the age of 18, numbering around 18,000 a year since 2005, yet such deaths are preventable, according to researchers from the Centre for Injury Prevention and Research Bangladesh(CIPRB). A project, launched by The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) and the George Institute for Global Health, in Sydney, is seeking to challenge these traditional ideas and inform the country’s first nationwide drowning-prevention strategy.

The first part of the four-year project has been a household survey aimed at providing a detailed picture of drowning deaths, to identify where the worst problems are and where the most effort is needed.

Despite drowning being flagged as the leading killer of children between the ages of one and eighteen as far back as 2005, little has been done nationwide to tackle it. In 2015, the education ministry issued a circular calling for swimming to be taught in all educational institutions, but this is yet to make a

dent in the number of deaths, due to a lack of training facilities.

Bangladesh is made up of 80% floodplain: water is everywhere, swelling rivers, filling ponds, ditches and deep wells. At least one deep pond sits next to each house which are used for bathing, fishing and swimming. They are rarely fenced off. Forty-three per cent of drownings in children under five in Bangladesh happen in ponds, and 80% occur within 20m of the home.

It was a pond that three years ago took the life of eight-year-old Limon. His parents, rice farmers from Khanpura village, urged him to learn to swim but he was reluctant and fearful. It was harvest time when he died, a busy time for the family. His mother, Shahanas Ackter, 28, had asked him to bathe at the standpipe, but, instead he went to the pond behind the house, one of three deep ponds around their property, to play. When she went to look for him, she found only his slippers on the steps next to the water.

Ackter and her husband, Habibur Rahman, 43, are afraid of losing their second son, Yasin, four, who has nearly drowned three times in his short life. They feel helpless, they said, but are thinking about putting a fence around their house and, when he is old enough, teaching him to swim.

The survey has found that in 97% of drownings in Barisal, no one in the area had cardiopulmonary resuscitation training. Many locals believe that if anyone tries CPR and fails to save

the life of a person, they are to blame for the death. A number of drowning prevention projects, already piloted by the CIPRB, have seen good results.

For example, a community creche to supervise young children while their mothers do the household chores has reduced the drowning risk of those participating by 82%. Another project, to teach older children to swim, has reduced the chance of drowning by 90%.

The CIPRB and the RNLI, which will spend the next few months analysing the data from the Bhasa survey, are keen to develop a strategy based on a bottom-up response to the epidemic. They hope to be in a position to begin implementing prevention measures in June.

Courtesy of Guardian News & Media Ltd. Can be reprinted in Church magazines

## CHINGFORD NEWS

### Elders meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February

- News of the Church Family – John Griffiths enjoyed his 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday party; we also heard news of Amy Bennet, Janet Lewis, Sue Squire and Daphne Stothard
- Lent Bible studies will be taking place at St James URC on Mondays 10.30am and 8pm for 5 weeks from 6<sup>th</sup> March with a course based on the film, The King's Speech, "Finding a Voice", and a CTINC bible study will be held on Thursday

afternoons at Our Lady of Grace church and there will also be groups at the Anglican Churches

- Thanks to Linda, Jane and Pam for the Art Exhibition which went well
- Dates for the following six months circulated
- Jane is leading the World Day of Prayer at Chingford at 2pm on Friday March 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Fair Trade coffee mornings will be held at Chingford on 10<sup>th</sup> March and at Buckhurst Hill on 14<sup>th</sup> March
- Easter arrangements
  - Maundy Thursday at North Chingford Methodist Church at 7pm,
  - Forest Group Quiet Day at Buckhurst Hill on Maundy Thursday,
  - Good Friday meditation led by Ulrike at 10am and followed by Walk of Witness
  - Easter Day 8.30 am Breakfast, 9.30am Communion, 10.30 am Easter Service
- Last service at Highams Park at 4pm on April 23<sup>rd</sup>
- A financial statement showing the actual spend to the end of the year and a budget for 2017 was circulated; comments on budget invited
- We were reminded that we are all invited to the rearranged Forest Group day from 10am to 3pm on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February
- Ulrike reported back on the WF Citizens Assembly on 24<sup>th</sup> January at St Marys Church Walthamstow at 8pm. There was a good spirit at the meeting.
- Malcolm A reported that he was awaiting a second quote for roof repairs



- A Ladies Keep Fit Group displaced by works at the Parish Church Vestry Hall is going to meet at our premises on a Wednesday morning
- Ulrike explained that the first part of the Forest Group Day would involve a meeting with the Moderator Andrew Prasad and the Synod Pastoral Committee Convenor James Fields who are looking for our views on the future vision of the Forest Group in connection with Richard's retirement as a minister. We would look at FG Mission and plans for the Woodford building in the afternoon

## HIGHAMS PARK NEWS

### Prayer Partners

<i>Pam</i>	<i>Kay</i>	<i>Helen</i>	<i>Richard</i>
<i>Francis</i>	<i>Ken</i>	<i>Lorraine</i>	<i>Bernice</i>
<i>Valerie Margaret</i>			

Please speak to your prayer partner and see if there are any specific things they would like to pray for. Or if possible, why not arrange a time to pray together during the month. Please also pray for past members and friends.

## REFLECTION

There's an old story of six young men applying for one job at the telegraph office. They all knew Morse code so they filled out the application the secretary gave them with confidence. Then they all sat and waited to be called into the office for an interview.

A few minutes later one young man got up and walked into the office. The others were amazed at his nerve. But the secretary explained, "While you have all been sitting there, the telegraph was repeatedly tapping out a message, It said, 'If you can understand this, come in. You've got the job'."

The message was there for all of them. Each of them could have deciphered it. But only one was listening.

It's intriguing to think that the world, and everything in it, might be a message sent to each of us, inviting us to play a part in God's Grand Plan. Are you listening? Do you want the Job?

*Thanks to The Friendship Book of Francis Gay*

## ST. JAMES' CHURCH MEETING NOTES FEBRUARY 2017

Our February Meeting was chaired by Revd. Richard Mortimer, and was attended by eighteen people. We began by exchanging news of the church family before moving on to other matters.

We heard that Frank Atta-Dankwa from High Cross Church in Tottenham will be coming to help with our Communion Service in March, so we are looking forward to his visit. He will also be participating in other services in the Forest Group, as part of his TLS studies.

Property and Finance Committee reported that greater use is being made of our premises, with a Table Tennis Club now being run by one of our Scout leaders on a Wednesday evening. A tree had been blown down into Loyola School playground, which borders on to the church grounds, during a recent storm, but thankfully the school has said it is their responsibility to deal with it.

The Churches Together Meeting held at the Baptist Church at the end of January was interesting when three elders from the *Ark of the Covenant Church*, which now meets in St Stephen's Church, attended. They were happy to tell us about their style of worship, their days of fasting and their evangelistic activities at Buckhurst Hill Station. The next Churches Together

meeting will be in May after the pre-Easter Outreach to Commuters at the station.

We revised our Sacramental Offertories list so now we will be supporting Loughton Food Bank in June. We will continue to support Samaritan's Purse despite recent press criticisms of their *Operation Christmas Child* appeal, claiming that filling up shoe boxes with gifts and sending them to poor children does not get to the roots of poverty.

We will again be supporting WaterAid's *Jars of Change Appeal* during Lent and this year WaterAid will be focussing on Madagascar where even young children have to walk 3km twice daily to obtain clean water. Filled jars should be brought to church by Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April.

Margaret Minoletti's plans for an exciting Harvest Weekend with a Barn Dance and Harvest Supper on 23<sup>rd</sup> September are going ahead with *Let's Dance*, having been booked to play for us at the Barn Dance. Tickets costing £10 will soon be on sale, so don't miss out on getting one!

Members were encouraged to come along to support the Fair Trade Coffee Morning on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March, when Lena Wright will be bringing along her Fair Trade stall and there will be lovely cakes and cookies to enjoy along with a cup of tea or coffee.

With Lent Study Groups beginning on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March, a Quiet Day on Maundy Thursday and a Good Friday Meditation on 14<sup>th</sup> April, we have the opportunity to make this time of Lent really meaningful and a time for reflection and growth.

*Isabel Bala*

### **ST JAMES' PRAYER PARTNERS**

Val - Louise, Margaret M. – Steven, Isabel - Marisa,  
Diane – Graham , Kathleen T. – Eileen

*Come to us , Risen Lord*

*When we turn away because it seems impossible.  
When we do not understand because it sounds so unlikely,  
Come to us.*

*Come to us for we weep over all that is not well,  
And despair for what is precious seems lost.  
In those moments come to us, reach out, call out our name.*

*Renew us, forgive us, restore us.  
Send us out knowing you will come to us again  
And invite us to your table.*

*Anne Sardeson*