

FROM THE MANSE

Dear friends,

Resurrection - Questions

I share with you some of the questions that were asked at a worship in Chingford:

- Why is the world so twisted? Why does God allow bad things to happen?
- How did the Jewish authorities not recognise the significance of what had happened?
- Was Judas forgiven?
- Was Jesus in his previous body when he was resurrected (Thomas)? Why did the disciples not recognise him?
- How did Jesus get into the locked room?
- What were the angels doing in the tomb?
- How would I have reacted to Jesus when he appeared after the crucifixion?
- Why is it so difficult for us to share our faith?
- When is Jesus coming back? How will we recognise him?
- Did God plan Jesus' death?
- Who rolled away the stone from the tomb?
- What else did Jesus do after his resurrection?
- Why other than the fact to prove Jesus was Son of God, was it necessary for the resurrection to take place?
- Why can't we see God? Why can't he show himself clearly? Why so many religions?
- Jesus was a Jew. Why does Christianity not follow Jewish traditions more? (e.g. kosher foods)

I am sharing this because many of us will have these or similar questions. In the services of worship that I am going to lead up till summer I will give us the opportunity to work with these questions and find some answers. This is resurrection: breaking up our habits of silence and daring to wonder together: "How do you see this?", "Do you have an answer for that?", "I really struggle with this...", "I draw strength from that...". Should any of your questions be more urgent and need talking through, just let me know.



And this is resurrection, too: with the last act of worship at Highams Park URC we put to rest a church which had a rich and vibrant life, which made a great difference to many people's journeys, friendships and faith formations. All these significant and happy memories will remain, and will be incorporated into "the dance that still goes on" (Hymn: Lord of the Dance). This holy "dance" of life continues as we re-form ourselves not only at Woodford Green as an amalgamated church with Highams Park, but also in the Forest Group now we are a group of 4 churches.

May our risen Lord, the giver and sustainer of life, be with us all – and grant us new life!

Yours, in Christ

Ulrike

SERVICES FOR MAY

(All services commence at 10.30 am unless otherwise stated)

Chingford

- 7th **Morning Worship with Holy Communion**
led by Terry Silvey
- 14th **All Age Service** led by Revd Ulrike Bell (no flags)
- 21st **FOREST GROUP SERVICE AT WOODFORD GREEN**
Led by Alan Yates, Co-Moderator of General Assembly
- 28th **9.45 Holy Communion Service**
Morning Worship led by Revd Jane Mortimer
- 4th *Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Revd Ulrike Bell*

Ray Lodge

- 7th **Morning Worship** led by the Elders
- 14th **Morning Worship with Holy Communion** led by Revd Kevin Swaine
- 21st **FOREST GROUP SERVICE AT WOODFORD GREEN**
Led by Alan Yates, Co-Moderator of General Assembly
- 28th **Morning Worship** led by Revd Richard Mortimer
- 4th *Morning Worship led by the Elders*

St. James'

- 7th **Morning Worship with Holy Communion** led by Revd Kevin Swaine (Sacramental Offertory for Samaritan's Purse)
- 14th **Christian Aid Service** led by The Worship Group

- 21st **FOREST GROUP SERVICE AT WOODFORD GREEN**
Led by Alan Yates, Co-Moderator of General Assembly
- 28th **Morning Worship** led by Steven Neville (Church meeting follows the service)
- 4th *Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Revd Richard Mortimer (Sacramental Offertory for Loughton Food Bank)*

Woodford Green

- 7th **Morning Worship with Holy Communion** led by Revd Ulrike Bell
- 14th **Morning Worship** led by Revd Richard Mortimer
4.00pm Messy Church
- 21st **Forest Group Service** led by Alan Yates, Co-Moderator of General Assembly (to be followed by a shared lunch)
- 28th **Morning Worship** led by Revd June Colley (followed by Church Meeting)
- 4th *Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Revd Kevin Swaine*

CALENDAR FOR MAY

- Tuesday 2nd **Forest Group Coffee & Discussion**
10.30am at the Woodford manse
Woodford Green 8.00pm Elders Meeting
At the manse
- Thurs 4th **St. James** 7.30pm Elders' Meeting in
Church Room
- Friday 5th **Chingford** 11.00am Worship Group
Ray Lodge 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
- Saturday 6th **Woodford Green** 7.00pm Quiz Night
(further details in newsletter)
- Sunday 7th **Forest Group Council** 2.00pm at Woodford
Green
- Monday 8th **St. James'** 2.00-3.30pm Craft/Prayer
Group in Church Room
- Friday 12th **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Neighbours' Club –
Linda Bowley speaking on 150 years of
Barnardo's
- Saturday 13th **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Trefoil Guild
- Monday 15th **Woodford Green** 2.30pm Jubilee Club:
June Colley – '65 years of supporting Spurs'
- Tuesday 16th **Forest Group Youth Committee** 7.30pm

at Woodford manse

- Thurs 18th **Chingford** 8pm Elders meeting
- Friday 19th **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
- Friday 26th **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Neighbours' Club –
Bingo

June

- Thursday 1st **St. James'** 7.30pm Elders' Meeting
- Friday 2nd **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Knit & Natter Group
- Monday 5th **St. James'** 2.00-3.30pm Craft/Prayer
Group in Church Room
- Tuesday 6th **Forest Group Coffee & Discussion**
10.30am at the Woodford manse
Woodford Green 8.00pm Elders Meeting
At the manse
- Friday 9th **Ray Lodge** 2.00pm Neighbours' Club –
Brian Scully from the Open Doors charity,
Supporting persecuted Christians
- Sunday 11th **Forest Group garden afternoon** 3.30pm
at the home of Louise and Simon Woodcock,
11 Knighton Drive, Woodford Green

**QUIZ EVENING
AT WOODFORD GREEN**

Saturday 6th May starting at 7.00pm

This event is to help fund James Corney's
British Exploring Society's expedition
to the Yukon in Canada.

James is a young member of
Woodford Green United Free Church.

Tickets cost £8 and include a jacket potato meal.

They can be obtained from Suzanne Corney
(Tel: 07751 157463)

Please bring your own drinks and snacks



**FOREST GROUP
GARDEN
AFTERNOONS**

We will again be having these enjoyable events during the summer months. Do try to come along and bring some friends as well. They all begin at 3.30pm. £3 Entrance donations will be given to Loughton Food Bank.

11th June at the home of Louise and Simon Woodcock,
11 Knighton Drive, Woodford Green

30th July at the home of June Colley,
6 Brook Gardens, South Chingford.

20th August at the home of Eileen and Geoff Packe,
29 Fairlands Avenue, Buckhurst Hill

Please bring garden chairs if possible (and sun hats!)

THAMES NORTH SYNOD Saturday 18th March 2017

The Synod was held at Vine Church in Ilford, and after being welcomed by the Moderator, Revd Dr Andrew Prasad, we took part in the Opening Worship. Then Revd Francis Ackroyd gave us a glimpse of the mission of Vine Church, which is based in a multi-faith area. He told us about the successful Interfaith Holiday Club which was started there in 2009 and how the Vine Pilots which is also interfaith, grew from that. We were introduced to the Youth Leader who works at the church and the six young people who help with Pilots at their monthly meetings on a Saturday afternoon. Two Congolese churches and a Romanian church meet regularly on the premises and counselling sessions and empowerment groups for Asian women also take place there, so the building is well used.

We then moved on to the business part of the meeting. The Minutes of the previous Synod were scrutinised and after some amendments were accepted. Next we had news of ministerial moves and staff changes. Revd Maggie Hindley is retiring at the end of March as Synod Interfaith Advisor and Marie Trubic is leaving Christ Church, Newham and moving to a new CRCW post in Glasgow next month. Revd Chris Powell will leave Seven Kings Baptist / URC soon, to join the Community at the Scargill Movement in the Yorkshire Dales and Rev Dr Jennifer Smith will leave Ealing Green and Acton Hill UR/ Methodist Church at the end of August to become Superintendent Minister at Wesley's Chapel. **Jean Wyber** will retire from her post as Synod Treasurer in June after twenty-one years of faithful service. There will be a farewell celebration for her probably on 9th June. Her successor has

not yet been appointed. Ms. Colleen Fraser has been appointed PA to the Moderator and Synod Clerk. Synod agreed that Mr Michael Gould should be appointed Assistant Treasurer to the Synod for a further year and that he and Mr. Brian Moore should be re-appointed as Directors of the URC Thames North Trust. Synod is seeking to fill several other roles, including Ecumenical Officer, Children & Youth Work Advocates and Coordinator for Church Life Reviews.

Revd. Jane Weedon, Convenor of the Discipleship Committee then gave us an update on *Walking the Way*, a pathway put forward in 2013 for following Jesus and making new steps as disciples. There are ten *Holy Habits* to explore with resources available to churches. We were asked in our groups to discuss how we maintain our spiritual life, with Bible reading, personal prayer and meditation coming to the fore. Revd Jim Dalgleish then told us about a day at Welwyn Garden City URC entitled ***Re-imagine the Church which will take place on Saturday 24th June from 10.00am-3.00pm***, which should be interesting.

Next, we welcomed two ecumenical visitors from the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren who told us something about their church in the Czech Republic which currently has 80,000 members and 250 churches, in a mainly secular society. They spoke about strengthening the bonds between us in these times of *Brexit* and how we could co-operate, possibly having ministerial exchanges and theology students attending courses at the University of Prague, which are conducted in English. Czech pastors have been invited to the URC Ministers' Spring School. Participation in the URC Youth Assembly and the CEB Assembly could also be arranged.

Michael Gould, the Assistant Synod Treasurer, then gave the Finance Report, presenting the Draft Accounts for 2016 which showed an overall surplus for the year. These were accepted by Synod.

Revd Dr John Parry next told us about his recent visit to North India along with two colleagues, which had been funded by the Synod. They had visited Amritsar and a Sikh University in the Punjab. Only 3% of the population there are Christians but the different faith groups respected each other. John Parry stressed that interfaith dialogue is essential in this country too, and the church should be involved in the community. Our relationship with the World Church is important and we can learn from churches in other countries.

The amalgamation of Highams Park URC with Woodford Green UFC was then put forward by Revd Richard Mortimer. The church had started in 1896 and the foundation stone of the present Highams Park church building had been laid in 1927 but in recent years membership had declined and those in leadership roles in the church had moved away or died, so the closure of the church on 23rd April this year had been agreed by Church meeting. This was accepted by Synod.

David Skipp then brought to our notice the *Gutter Maintenance Programme* available to churches within the Synod. Grants of £500 can be obtained for this. Property Guidance Notes are now available on the website as are Health and Safety Policies and Risk Assessment templates. A URC Buildings Forum has now been set up.

Simon Rudiger reminded us about the *Feast and Festivals Year* which we are now enjoying. There will be a *Big Day Out* at Warwick Castle on 20th May and two coaches will be going from our Synod. Tickets and seat bookings must be obtained by 31st March from the Synod Office.

Only one third of churches have responded regarding safeguarding being in place in their churches. **A training day for Safeguarding Officers will take place at Lumen URC on Saturday 10th June from 10.30am -1.30pm.**

Sandra Ackroyd brought to our notice the next Church *and Society Network Event* which will take place on Saturday 14th October at Palmers Green URC. Terry Hinks wants any churches interested in becoming Eco Congregations to contact him and Jane Weedon urged us to purchase a copy of *Appreciating Church*, which explains how Appreciative Inquiry can be used in church life. Adrian West informed us that LPAG guidelines are now available on the URC website. This is to do with devolving responsibilities to the local church, regarding lettings.

The afternoon session began with a Gathering Song led by Anne Sardeson and then we had a report about Youth Assembly from the Synod Youth Executive. They had met at the end of January at Whitemoor Lakes in Staffordshire. Over 20% of the delegates were from Thames North Synod and worship and workshops were based on the theme of *Feasts and Festivals*.

Revd Francis Ackroyd then gave us an update on TLS. Thirty-three people are undertaking TLS studies in the Synod and TLS Lite has eighteen students. Anyone wishing to begin TLS studies in September this year must apply by 31st May.

LOOKING AFTER OUR PLANET THINK GLOBALLY AND ACT LOCALLY

St. James' Church is hoping to regain its status as an Eco-Church and one of our tasks is to make people in our community aware of how each of us has a part to play in looking after the environment to help make our planet a safe and beautiful place in the future.

Here are some ideas about the use of transport to begin with:

We all know that petrol and diesel engines burn irreplaceable fossil fuels and that short journeys have high fuel consumptions.

High altitude flying dumps greenhouse gases directly into the upper atmosphere.

We expect to buy all kinds of fruit and vegetables at any time of year.

Our attitude to transport is costing the earth.

Actions

Choose two or three of these:

- Walk or cycle everywhere if you can
- Cut your car journeys where possible
- No car journeys less than one mile

Replace your car with a model which has a lower carbon dioxide output
Use public transport whenever practical
Car-share for school runs, work, shopping trips etc.
Commit not to travel by air this year

Research and Campaigning

Choose one of these:

Look at the country of origin of the food you buy and choose items that have travelled less
Campaign for the wider use of bio-diesel (fuel made from vegetable oils)

Prayer: At Jet Speed or Walking Pace

*Holy God, you see all our needs
and know the desires of our hearts.
In our journeys, whether at jet speed or walking pace,
May we know you beside us and follow your direction.*

Chris Polhill

UPDATE ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED PALISTINIAN TERRITORIES



The Middle East is experiencing protracted and violent conflict; poverty, vulnerability and uncertain futures now define millions of lives. Much of the region is affected by the huge numbers of people fleeing war, deprivation and discrimination. In Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory bitterness and violence have become more entrenched between Israelis and Palestinians and there is currently no peace process with which to encourage hope.

Since 2007, Gaza has experienced three military offensives putting ever greater strain on a crumbling infrastructure. Israeli policies continue to control nearly all aspects of Palestinian lives and abuse their most basic rights throughout OPT. Israel's ongoing occupation continues to be characterised by its expanding settlement programme with approximately 600,000 Israelis now living in illegal settlements on appropriated Palestinian land.

Furthermore, civil society is seriously under threat in IOPT.

In Israel on 11 July 2016 the Israeli Knesset voted to approve a controversial NGOs Bill which will require Non-Governmental Organisations to publicly declare in the name

of transparency if they receive more than 50 percent of their annual budget from foreign governments. The law will mainly apply to human rights organisations and to anti-occupation organizations, which are critical of Israeli Government policies in the OPT. The Law requires organisations to publicly declare that they are reliant on foreign funding in any dealings with officials, in the media, on billboard advertising and online. Without such funding many organisations would struggle to exist and human rights protection work would be critically threatened.

In Egypt, all projects receiving foreign funding must be approved by the Ministry of Social Solidarity in order to be implemented. This process results in long delays in work, and is rendering human rights work almost impossible with organisations and activists under threat. A proposed new NGO law is expected to improve the process but not remove the need for permissions, severely restricting the ability of civil society to operate effectively and freely.

YMCA

Commitment for Life through Christian Aid, has continued to support the YMCA Women's Training Programme (WTP) over the last six months. The WTP focuses on strengthening the role of women in Palestinian society while building more economically resilient societies, thereby creating the opportunity for vulnerable women to seek and achieve new levels of independence through financial and food security. This happens through career counselling, youth engagement and leadership programmes and through working with the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education to ensure career advice sessions are included in the regular curriculum. The

WTP's work also includes supporting and establishing women's cooperatives and holding modular trainings in agricultural work, food processing, animal husbandry, family health and the management of small projects with seed/seedling distribution before brokering access to markets.

Demolition in Khashm a-Daraj- Khashm al-Karem

On Thursday 23 February 2017, the Civil Administration brought a bulldozer to an area by the community of Khashm a-Daraj-Khashm al-Karem in the South Hebron Hills, about two kilometers north of the Separation Barrier. The community, located in Area C, consists of several clusters of tents which are home to some 450 people.

In 2009 Israeli authorities approved a master plan for the existing dwellings. The community's clusters are hooked up to the water grid, but the water pressure is low, and in the summer water supply is erratic. In addition, Israel does not allow the expanses of pastureland surrounding the community to be hooked up to the water grid. The Civil Administration demolished a cistern dug about five years ago and served local shepherds. In testimony given to B'Tselem field researcher Nasser Nawaja'a on 28 February 2017, Mustafa al-Fakir, a 46-year-old married father of ten, talked about the demolition and its effect on the life of his family:

My wife and I live with our ten children in one of the tent clusters. I'm a farmer and shepherd and I have a flock of more than 50 sheep that graze in the uncultivated areas around the encampment. About five years ago my brothers and I dug cistern on our pastureland to collect rainwater. The cistern was about three kilometers from where we live. It was a large

cistern that could hold more than 200 cubic meters of water and served me and my six brothers for watering our flocks. Together we have more than 280 sheep. Our neighbours also used this cistern to water their sheep.

For daily use at home we have water from the [Israeli national water company] Mekorot grid. The water pressure is low and in summer there's often no water at all. When that's been the case, we've had to use the cistern water for household needs. Because this area is arid and there's not much rain, the water in the cistern was not enough for the whole summer and we had to buy water in mobile water tanks. Usually we bought ten water tanks a year, at about 500 shekels [approx. USD 135] a tank.

On the morning of 23 February 2017, the Israeli authorities arrived and began destroying the cistern. The soldiers and policemen there didn't let us get near and we could only watch from afar. The cistern had been completely full. The bulldozer completely demolished it, and from where I stood I could see the water gushing out. I felt sad, angry and frustrated. I was helpless. I couldn't even express my anger and protest what was happening. A few days before the demolition I found a pre-demolition warning notice near the cistern. The notice gave us three days to appeal the decision to demolish the cistern, but found the notice on the last day on which the appeal could be filed.

As of now, we are giving water to the sheep from what's left of the rainwater in a nearby stream, but soon it will run dry and we'll have to buy water tanks to water the sheep. Without the cistern, it will be a great expense for us. In recent years, the

cistern saved us a great deal of money and effort. Shepherding is our only source of income; we are simple people. On top of the water resource we lost, we also lost all the work we invested in digging the cistern, and all the money we spent on buying concrete and iron bars for its construction.

World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel

Advance dates: 17th- 24th September, 2017.

Resources available from June

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Saturday, 10th June

9.30am to 1.30pm Lumen URC, (in CS1),
88 Tavistock Place, London, WC1H 9RS

This training is important for those working with children, young people and adults at risk, and includes a module for Safeguarding Co-ordinators. It will be delivered by Dawn Watson of the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) www.ccpas.co.uk

This training is offered free of charge, but your travel costs will need to be covered by yourselves or your church.

Hot drinks will be provided during the morning. You are welcome to bring a packed lunch if you like.

Please book in advance with Sandhya at synodadmin@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

If you need further information, please contact:

Derek Lindfield: safeguarding@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

or Simon Rudiger: cydo@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

BELIEVING IN BUTTERFLIES: a journey of transformation Led by Margaret Silf Saturday, 1st July 2017, 10.00am to 4.00pm at the Cockfosters Centre for Spirituality

The human journey is potentially a journey of transformation, and the caterpillar can help us see how this might be happening. The caterpillar can have no idea of the butterfly it is becoming, or of the hazards that lie along the way. What about us and where are we now? Are we complacent caterpillars, thoughtlessly consuming the world around us? Or are we struggling in the dark and messy meltdown of the chrysalis? Are we drifting through life in the belief that nothing much will ever change? During this day of reflection we will explore the great metamorphosis of spiritual evolution in which we are actually engaged, and how we can help to birth our inner butterfly and become co-creators of a different kind of future for humanity.

Margaret is the author of a number of books for 21st century spiritual pilgrims and describes herself as a spiritual explorer. She works ecumenically, across and beyond traditional denominational divisions, and is passionate about making Christian spirituality accessible through the events and experiences of everyday life.

To book your place please leave a voicemail message on 020 8449 6648 or email cockfosterscs@rcdow.org.uk
We are staffed by part-time volunteers, so leave a voicemail message if no-one is available to take your call. Please see our website www.cockfosterscs.org.uk for more information

and to find a map. We are located at the Church of Christ the King (Vita et Pax), which is a short walk from Oakwood station on the Piccadilly line.

We invite a contribution of £25 for day events to cover the cost of bringing speakers to Cockfosters and to support the Centre's upkeep. We do not wish cost to be a barrier to anyone attending, so please feel free to offer whatever you can afford. Tea, coffee and soup is provided, but bring more food if you're hungry!

I have booked my place, and hope that a little group of us might go from the Forest Group. Please let me know if you are thinking of going. June Colley

This also looks an interesting day, if you are free:

GOD AND THE COSMOS

Saturday 10th June

11.00am – 3.00pm (coffee from 10.30am)

at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest, Gidea Park, RM2 6DH.

Brother Guy Consolmagno SJ, Director of the Vatican Observatory, will explore how awareness of the immensity of the creation can lead us to become more familiar with who God is and how God loves us. Admission is free, tea and coffee will be provided, but please bring a packed lunch. Ample free parking is available at the church, which is three minutes' walk from Gidea Park Station. It is essential to book your place (early booking is advised) and this should be done by email to GPstudydays@gmail.com

MONITORING BATS An Exciting Opportunity

Spring has fully arrived and I'm sure you are enjoying those warmer temperatures! It's not only us though who get more active when the conditions change. You may recall in previous issues we discovered how seasonality can affect bat behaviour, with churches providing a safe haven at those most vulnerable times. In winter bats hibernate; but as night temperatures rise above 10°C, they will wake up and take advantage of increased insect activity. They start emerging from April to May, and when they do, it offers an exciting opportunity to get involved in recording any you see flying over any space.

Bats have unfortunately become an endangered species over past decades, with major population declines. If you see a bat, it's great news and hopefully a positive sign that they are recovering. It can be hard to know this for certain, but that is where submitting any sightings can help.

At the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT), there is a National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP). NBMP has been calculating population trends for over 20 years, with all records submitted by volunteers. In fact, it's all done on a voluntary basis and there are over a 1,000 people throughout the UK who help each year in carrying out bat surveys. Some can be challenging, but the 'Sunset/Sunrise' survey is ideal for anyone. It simply involves heading out at dusk or dawn, (or both) and spending an hour looking for bats flying overhead. This can be done anytime from April to September; record the

time, temperature and number of bats seen, and then send through the results.

I've now left BCT, having taken up a Sustainability Project Coordinator post at Broomfield Hospital in Chelmsford. The hospital do have a bat roost, and I am certainly still passionate about the bat world. If you'd like to get involved with the NBMP, please do email BCT's dedicated team nbmp@bats.org.uk or look at their website www.bats.org.uk/pages/nbmp.html

Happy monitoring!

David Jackson

ST. JAMES' CHURCH MEETING NOTES MARCH 2017

Our March Meeting followed on from our Mothering Sunday Parade Service and was chaired by Rev Ulrike Bell. It was attended by twelve people. We began by exchanging news of the church family before moving on to other matters.

Our Fair Trade Coffee Morning on 14th March had been a successful event and £127 had been raised for Traidcraft. We were grateful to Lena Wright who had come from Chingford to set up her FairTrade stall on that day.

Our Treasurer reported that our income for 2016 was down, but our expenses were also less, so we are not in the red, which is good to hear. He recommended that members should set up standing orders for their Freewill Offerings as this would save time and effort opening envelopes and counting money after Sunday services. It does make sense but some of us wondered how we would feel letting the offertory plate pass and not actually offering anything tangible for the dedication afterwards. I suppose we can still offer ourselves and our time at this point in the service!

We then voted to accept the Forest Group Draft Constitution as an interim document, with the recommendation that it be revised within the next twenty-four months.

We heard that quotes are being considered for replacing the flooring in the corridor leading to the small hall and the work will be done this summer. It was not thought to be necessary to provide a rail for disabled people in the ladies' toilet as

there is already a toilet for disabled persons on the premises. Another sign indicating where this is located will be erected.

We did start to talk about what model of church we would like to be within the Forest Group, but as this is such a far-ranging topic, it was decided we should discuss it further at a special Church Meeting which will follow a shared lunch after our morning service on Sunday 30th April. We will also consider then which Discipleship Course we should follow after the *Faith Pictures* course last Autumn. Revd Ulrike Bell gave us details of four possible courses and even suggested some of us might like to start a Book Club studying books such as Marcus Borg's *Convictions*, or *Naked Spirituality* by Brian McLaren.

Churches Together will be doing a pre-Easter Outreach at Buckhurst Hill Station from Monday 10th April –Thursday 13th April and volunteers from each of the local churches will be needed to help with this.

Members were reminded about the Quiet Day on Maundy Thursday and the Forest Group Prayer Walk on 27th April which will begin at the gate of Linder's Fields, walking on to Roding Valley Recreation Ground, going round the Lake and finishing at the Arboretum with a picnic, after several stops on the way for prayers, readings and songs. Hopefully the sun will shine on us!

Isabel Bala

ST JAMES' PRAYER PARTNERS

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

Goodness, mercy and abundant life

You , God, promise abundant life.

Let goodness and mercy surround all for whom we pray.

For the weary, let there be rest;

For the anxious, calm waters;

For those in deep shadow, glimmers of light.

Let goodness and mercy prevail.

For the poor , let their be plenty;

For the hungry, nourishing food;

For the thirsty, clean water.

Let goodness and mercy prevail.

For the persecuted, let their be protection;

For the displaced, a new home;

For the victimised, safe shelter.

That all may dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Lynne Frith

NOTES OF CHINGFORD CHURCH MEETING

19th March 2017

The meeting was attended by 15 members, 4 apologies, with Revd Richard Mortimer in the chair.

The Church had a report on the matters considered by the Elders on 16th February (details included in the last Forest Group News) and the following additional matters were considered:

- Church minutes of 12th February were agreed
- We heard news of the following members of the church family – Betty Clayton, Marion Coram-Ware, lowerth & Phyllis Pritchard, Amy Bennet, Janet Lewis, Nicola Lines
- The budget for 2017 was agreed
- North Thames Synod had agreed the amalgamation of Woodford Green and Highams Park churches at their meeting on the 18th March
- Following the discussion at Elders on the way forward for the Forest Group and its churches, Richard gave further clarification on the position of each of the other churches and assurances that Chingford's wish to continue with its own outreach programme particularly with the young people is respected.
- Having noted the items being reviewed by the Board of Management, the meeting agreed in principle that two new notice boards and a new hoover can be bought. The Board of Management is asked to define what spring cleaning works are still to be done and have a regard to carrying out risk assessments and observing health and safety requirements in carrying out any works.