



 Pond Square
Chapel

outlook

Newsletter of **Pond Square Chapel** | Highgate United Reformed Church | **April 2025 - June 2025**



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• Minister's Reflection

It was the third day. That dreaded day when hope would either be lost or found. Jesus would either be raised – as he promised – or it would all be a sham. An amazing encounter with a great person, but a delusion all the same. It's like the day you know the doctor will be calling to tell you news that will either cause you to breathe a sigh of relief or be stunned breathless with fear. The third day is nearly over.

The disciples' human tendency toward pessimism and doubt leads them to assume the worst, even if some women said the tomb was empty. They walk the road to Emmaus, each step a heavy defeated struggle, each breath catching in their throats with grief. How desperately they wanted Jesus to be who he said he was. They feel foolish for having trusted what was beyond their understanding, they feel angry at being misled, but mostly, they're just sad. Sad to have lost the person – who prophet or Son of God, Saviour or fraud – was their friend and was brutally executed.

Lost in this ocean of grief, it takes them a moment to realize that they're not alone. A wayfaring stranger has joined them on the road. The text says that their eyes were kept from recognising him. Of course they were. Who can see clearly when your eyes are full of tears, when your heart is full of defeat? Jesus asks them a common question, "What are you talking about as you walk?"

Unable to express their heartbreak and keep walking at the same time, they stop, looking this stranger in the face but not really seeing him. Their pain comes out defensively, "We're talking about what everyone else is talking about – the "things" that have taken place in Jerusalem lately." They use the word "things" because it saves them from the emotional landmine of having to utter the name of the one they've lost: "Jesus." Jesus, gently urging them to express their grief, says, "What things?" Gulping back tears, they blurt out quickly, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in word and deed before God and all the people, how he was crucified, how we had hoped he was the one to redeem Israel. It's the third day, and some women told us we might have reason to hope, but the day's nearly over, and we've seen no proof that he's alive."

Resurrection is easy to miss. All it takes is ignoring the witness of others because they happen to be women, or poor, or uneducated. All it takes is giving in to the undercurrent of pessimism that permeates our culture, urging us to live only for ourselves, because life is only what we make of it and then we die. All it takes is expecting God to come with grand gestures and trumpet sounds instead of through a child, a subtle breeze or a stranger. All it takes is the assumption that we are powerless against those forces that seek to crucify and defeat any who question them.

This Easter, may we open our eyes to see the wonder of resurrection around us!

• Writing Group

Joan Didion once famously wrote, 'We tell ourselves stories in order to live.' As a church community, we have many individuals who enjoy the creative arts, and this includes some who have taken that love a little further and put pen to paper or finger to keypad, finding community in the process.

One Friday afternoon a month a small group gathers to share material they have been working on. This ranges from a novel to a musical-inspired autobiography, poetry and short stories. Each person takes it in turn to have their work discussed and to receive feedback from the others and as a result discussion unfolds.

In the stories we have shared thus far it would be fair to say that we have journeyed with each other, encountered the stranger in writing and found solace and embrace over a cup of tea in Bridget's house. In John 10:10 Jesus tells his followers that he has come so that they may know life in all its fullness. In this group it would be fair to say that we have found that to be true and equally resonated with Joan Didion in that what we have written and read has helped us to live.



• Church Organ Addendum

May I add an addendum to the excellent piece about the Chapel's chamber organ in the March-June 2024 Outlook?

My husband Christopher was told about the organ by the well known Bassoonist William Waterhouse who collected chamber organs in his house opposite the once Presbyterian Church in Cromwell Avenue.

Bill, as we knew, him coveted this organ but unfortunately it was 5 inches too tall to fit in his living room. Knowing through Christopher that the Chapel in Pond Square needed an organ he got in touch with him and so the story continues in Outlook.

Margaret Driver

• Dates for the diary

APRIL 2025

Thur 10th 11.00 am
Informal Bible Study
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 11th 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

Sun 13th 10.30 am
Palm Sunday Morning Worship
This service will include communion

Thur 17th 11.00 am
Informal Bible Study (in the Lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 18th
Join Churches Together in Highgate at All Saints, Talbot Road at 9.30 am, leaving at approx. 9.40 am after prayers. We stop for short readings and prayers along the way, ending in the forecourt of St Joseph's from where we walk up Highgate Hill to Pond Square Chapel. The United Reformed Church welcomes us to a short act of Good Friday worship at 10.30 am, followed by tea/coffee and Hot Cross Buns! If your feet aren't up to it, please feel free to join the procession at any point, or just come to the Service at 10:30.

Meditation via Zoom 12.30 pm

Sun 20th 10.30 am
Easter Sunday Morning Worship

Thur 24th 11.00 am
Informal Bible Study (in the Lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 25th 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

Sun 27th 10.30 am
Palm Sunday Morning Worship

MAY 2025

Thur 1st
10-1.00pm Little Village Donation Drive
11.00 am Informal Bible Study (in the lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 2nd 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

Sun 4th 10.30 am
Morning Worship

Thur 8th 11.00 am
Informal Bible Study (in the Lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 9th 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

Sun 11th 10.30 am
Morning Worship
This service will include communion

Thur 15th 11.00 am
Informal Bible Study (in the Lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 16th 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

Sun 18th 10.30 am
Morning Worship

Thur 22nd 11.00 am
Informal Bible Study (in the Lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 23rd 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

Sun 25th 10.30 am
Morning Worship

Thur 29th 11.00 am
Informal Bible Study (in the Lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 30th 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

JUNE 2025

Sun 1st 10.30 am
Morning Worship

Thur 5th
10-1.00pm Little Village Donation Drive
11.00 am Informal Bible Study (in the lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 6th 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

Sat 7th 12-5:30pm
Fair in the Square Tea and cakes in the chapel Christian Aid cakes and baked goods in front of the church. Book stall either on the church patio or inside if wet.

Sun 8th 10.30 am
Morning Worship

Thur 12th 11.00 am
Informal Bible Study (in the Lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 13th 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

Sun 15th 10.30 am
Morning Worship
This service will include communion

Thur 19th 11.00 am
Informal Bible Study (in the Lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 20th 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

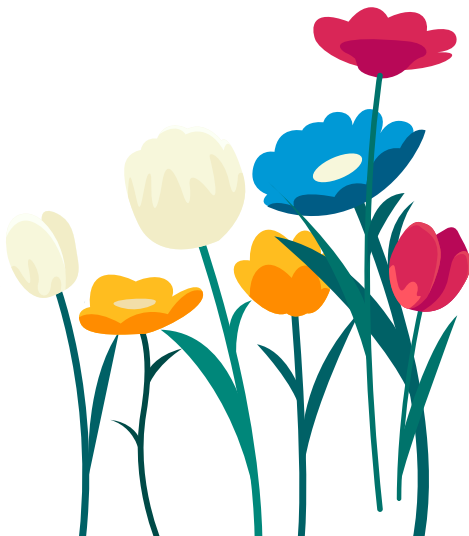
Sat 21st 12-5:30pm
Church Summer Garden party at the manse, 42 Onslow Gardens N10 3JX

Sun 22nd 10.30 am
Morning Worship

Thur 26th 11.00 am
Informal Bible Study (in the Lounge)
12-1:30pm Community Lunch

Fri 27th 12.30 pm
Meditation via Zoom

Sun 29th 10.30 am
Morning Worship



• Winter Shelter for Homeless People



Our congregation decided many years ago to look outwards and support this important local initiative. We volunteer with our friends from local churches and the wider community and open our church doors to the homeless every Sunday evening between November and March.

Spending time with the guests each night is a real privilege - having a chat, sharing a funny story, and enjoying the delicious suppers together.

There have been many contributions of money, food, clothing and people's time and energy. Financial contributions have been used for regular purchases of breakfast items such as milk, bread and butter and for the weekly laundry service. As well as individual donations funds were raised through the bucket collection at Carols in the Square, after the performance of "The Nutcracker" by Highgate Ballet School and from those attending our Christmas Eve service. £2000 will be passed on to C4WS to continue their mission.

Jonathan and Patricia are so grateful to everyone who contributed. As a mark of our appreciation please join us for a drink and a chat at a **Thank you Reception on Sunday 18 May at noon.**

• Poems

Home

I live in a modern cottage:
two up,
and two down.

I have a garden
that gives me work,
a lot of interest,
and occasionally; enormous pleasure.

One of my neighbours is a recluse.
I got on well with her late mother.
A cheerful woman who laughed a lot.

Other neighbours like to talk.

We're a mixed bunch.
Postmen, a bouncer, a jazz singer, butcher...
But no candlestick maker!

• World Day of Prayer

7th March 2025

Our church was hosting this year's World Day of Prayer for the Highgate Churches. We are 4-5 churches Highgate churches which host this annual ecumenical service, taking turns from year to year. This year the service was prepared by Christian women of The Cook Islands. The day of prayer is celebrated in over 120 countries. It begins in Samoa with prayer in native languages and travels throughout the world – Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before finishing in American Samoa some 38 hours later. A worldwide day of prayer. It remind me of the song "All over the world the Spirit is moving as the prophets said it would be".

The Muswell Hill and Highgate churches have a representative for each church on the committee which prepares the service. It is always held on the first Friday in March. Next year the service will come from Nigeria. Their theme is "I will give you rest, come". This year the theme from The Cook Islands was "I made you wonderful", inspired by Psalm 139 vs 1-6.

As the representative for Pond Square Chapel I was in charge of organising the event. There are always helpful suggestions by the country which composed the service on how to create an atmosphere reflecting the country. The Cook Islands burst with flowers and ocean waves. Songs on a CD were available. A table was covered with a blue cloth to represent the sea, then shells, exotic fruit and a model Polynesian canoe gave a flavour of The Cook Islands. We also mounted an exhibition of photos. Everyone on the committee contributed. I was also grateful to Ray, Hai, Jonathan and Patricia for their support.

At the service I could feel God's presence. He loves it when His people of many nations come together to worship Him all over the world.

If you are interested in participating in this ecumenical movement please let me know.

Come and join us!

Christa Keeler



• Tribute to Josephine Music

We remember Josephine

Josephine Eva Music,
20 February 1931 – 16 February 2025

Josephine was more than just an elder at our church. She was a friend to us all. She participated in so many events and enjoyed hosting meetings and outings.

My daughter Helen is still the happy owner of an umbrella which Josephine painted beautifully when we were on one such outing where we were all given umbrellas to decorate. Josephine suggested we should donate two benches for the front garden of our church for the congregation and passers-by to enjoy a rest in beautiful surrounds. When we look at the benches we also remember Josephine.

Josephine bravely took turns in leading as an elder, including with prayers of intercession, and participated in the church group that visited care-homes on a regular basis.

For many years she hosted the Home Group in her lovely flat. How can we ever forget Josephine? We thank and praise God for her life with us as an elder and friend.

Christa Keeler



• A Midday Musical Feast:

Robert Manning at Glenorchy Church

There are few finer ways to spend a lunchtime than in the company of a master musician, an elegant organ, and a well-chosen biscuit. And so it was that, on a blustery Wednesday afternoon, I found myself in the welcoming embrace of Glenorchy Church, Exmouth, ready to be swept away on an auditory adventure courtesy of organist Robert Manning.

What a programme he had in store! Opening with Choral Song by S.S. Wesley, Robert immediately set the tone for the afternoon. The piece, full of stately grandeur and lyrical warmth, resonated beautifully within the church's acoustics. The organ's rich voice, under Robert's expert fingers, rang out with clarity and conviction, filling the space with a sense of serene joy.

Next came J.S. Bach's Pastorale (BWV 590), a work of four contrasting movements that transported us from the leafy tranquillity of Bach's pastoral landscapes to the lively dance of rustic merriment. Each movement unfurled like a story, from the gentle, meandering phrases of the opening to the bubbling energy of the concluding section. Watching Robert navigate Bach's intricate passages, I was struck by the sheer physicality of organ playing; hand darting across manuals, feet nimbly dancing over pedals. It is, I realised, nothing short of a full-body workout.

With Cantabile in B major by Cesar Franck, the atmosphere shifted to one of deep lyricism. This is music that sings, its long, flowing lines unfolding like golden ribbons of melody.

Robert's interpretation was both sensitive and assured, allowing the piece's innate warmth and emotional depth to shine through. One could almost imagine Franck himself nodding in approval.

The final piece was a special treat. Partita on Appalachian Folk-Hymn Melody, composed by Robert himself. There is always a certain thrill in hearing a piece performed by its own composer, and this one did not disappoint. The work took us on a delightful journey through variations both tender and exuberant, evoking rolling hills, open skies, and perhaps even the faint scent of woodsmoke on the air. It was a performance that felt personal, full of character and charm, and it provided a fittingly uplifting conclusion to the concert.

And then, just like that, it was over. A perfectly timed 45 minutes of musical magic, executed with clockwork precision. As I left, I reflected on what a splendid way this had been to spend a lunchtime; great music, played with both skill and enthusiasm, in a beautiful setting. Robert's post-concert meal in a local cafe was, without a doubt, thoroughly well-earned.

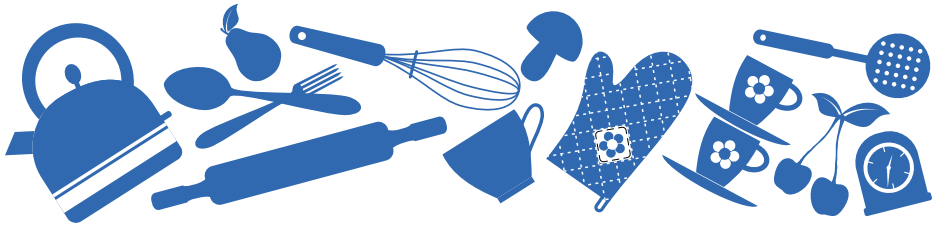


Tony Fleming

Sunday's COOL

at Pond Square Chapel

As well as analysing Bible stories with Jessica, our children get down to the serious business of baking once a month with Iveta!



- # Welcome to Baby Raya



Congratulations to Ste and Janine on the arrival of Baby Raya.

Ste says that Raya already loves her family, music and Liverpool Football Club.

She is looking forward to meeting us all soon.





SAVE THE DATE

You are invited to join us!

Where?

at 42 Onslow Gardens, N10 3JX
or the church's annual garden party

When?

Saturday 21st June

What time?

The event will run from 12noon to 4pm

Feel free to drop by & stay for as long as you can!
Refreshments will be waiting for you