

Mar-Apr 2024

Somerset & Mowbray Roads, New Barnet, Herts., EN5 1RH

'Being With'

The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, generous inside and out, true from start to finish. John 1 v 14 (The Message)

I was very inspired by the Autumn lecture series at St Martin in the Fields, four of which I managed to either attend or hear online. One of these was given by Rev'd Sam Wells, the vicar of St Martin in the Fields, which had the title *Here I stand with God*, and in which he explained the important factors for his own Christian belief.

Rev'd Sam Wells



He explained that in our search for finding significance in life, he stressed the importance of decentring ourselves, the importance of relationships, finding meaning and truth in the story of Jesus and the notion of belonging. He said that this could be achieved by acknowledging: firstly, that all that has been bestowed on us is a gift i.e. the notion of GRACE; secondly, acknowledging the importance of relationships i.e. LOVE; thirdly, that relationship is characterised by story i.e. from which we derive HOPE; and finally, by decentring, acting selflessly and with humility, we can discover a truth that lies beyond i.e. we discover and deepen our FAITH. In his lecture, he went on to describe seven steps to help our understanding of this, very much centred on the importance of the Trinity. 🙏

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Trusting God by:

Walking the way of Jesus

Putting faith into practice

Valuing all people equally

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Sam Wells is well known for his 'Being With' Christian philosophy. If you encountered a homeless person on the streets, he suggests that you could perhaps respond in the following different ways:

1. You could form an organisation to deal with the issues (Working For)
2. You could start engaging with local authorities, churches and charities and get involved (Working With)
3. You could buy a cup of coffee and talk to the individual to hear their story (Being With)
4. You could go away and understand the issue better by reading blogs; you have a strong sense that something ought to be done about the issue (Being For).

In the case of Working For and Being For, there is no direct contact; you try to fix the issue from afar. But Being With puts the individual in need at the centre. He suggests that we could learn something by looking at Jesus' Life, in a similar way:

- He spent 1 week in Jerusalem working for our salvation i.e. 1% of his life
- He spent 3 years building a social movement of change i.e. 9% of his life
- Before that, he spent 30 years in Nazareth 'Being With' i.e. 90% of his life

He concluded his lecture by talking about the importance of church; he suggested that church is a community in which we are enfolded in to the story; where we learn about our relationship with God.

- It is a place to be with God – in worship and prayer
- It is where we learn to love one another in relationship
- By being with one another, we become a community of hope
- It is where we learn to be with creation and treat it as a gift.



'Jesus heals the sick' - Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de los
Ángeles, Las Condes, Chile. Creative Commons

Some interesting comments were made in the Question & Answer session at the end of his lecture: Sam Wells acknowledged that 'Working For' is perhaps often easier than 'Being With'.

He suggested that you cannot fix problems from afar; you need to walk alongside – in other words, With not For. He suggested that building relationships can dismantle enmity. And finally, he suggested that the Cross was the ultimate Being With, whatever happens...

So reflecting on this, these are my hopes for St John's in 2024: That through our worship and studies, we should continue to strengthen our faith as whole life disciples, so that we can engage and 'Be With' people in this church, community and beyond: at the Night Shelter, at Mainly Music, in the Community Garden, for those in their time of pastoral need, by getting alongside people to know them better and sharing God's Love in all we do. ❖

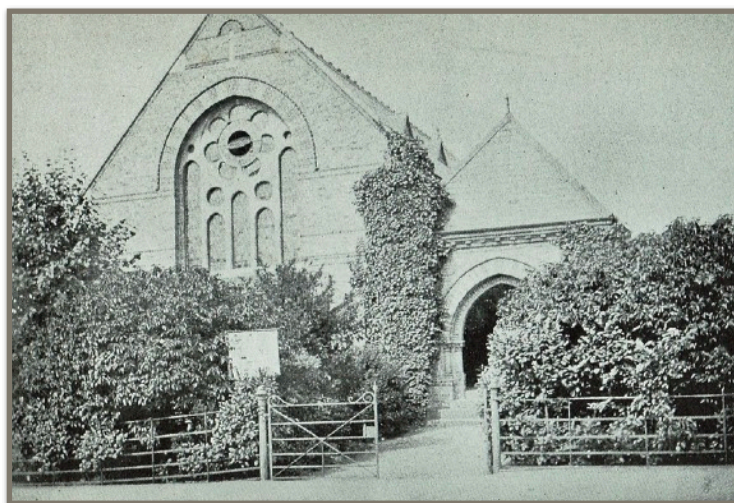
Loving & Caring God,

Help us to be alongside and be with all those in need of your grace and healing touch. As Lord of all the messengers of grace on earth and in heaven, enlist us, we pray, amongst the ranks of your caring angels. Through Jesus Christ our Lord and our Saviour, Amen.

Alison Bond

St Augustine's Presbyterian Church: 150 years on

It is now one hundred and fifty years since St Augustine's Church was built on the site where St. John's Church now stands so, on this anniversary, it seems a good opportunity to look back and tell the story.



St Augustine's Presbyterian Church

The Presbyterian church in New Barnet was formed in 1870 with a membership of thirty-seven; in December of that year the Rev'd George Drysdale was chosen by the congregation then appointed by the Presbytery in 1871. At that time the services were held in an iron room in Plantagenet Road, (later re-named Mowbray Road) opposite the site of our present church; this site was purchased, the foundation stone was laid on the 24th March 1874 and building commenced. The total cost of the land and the building was about £2,700. The first service was held in January 1875. Although the membership was small, the average attendance at services numbered one hundred.

The Rev'd Drysdale died of influenza in 1877. The second minister was Rev'd William Dale who served the church for twenty-seven years; he was greatly interested in foreign missions, and this interest involved the congregation. St Augustine's Church not only gave great support to missions at home and abroad, but many members went forth as missionaries to give devoted and inspired service in the mission field. In the early days of the church, music was led by a harmonium. In 1881 an organ was installed. Mr Cross was the first organist; he was succeeded in 1885 by Miss Richards, who worked devotedly as organist until 1922.



The church interior at Christmas

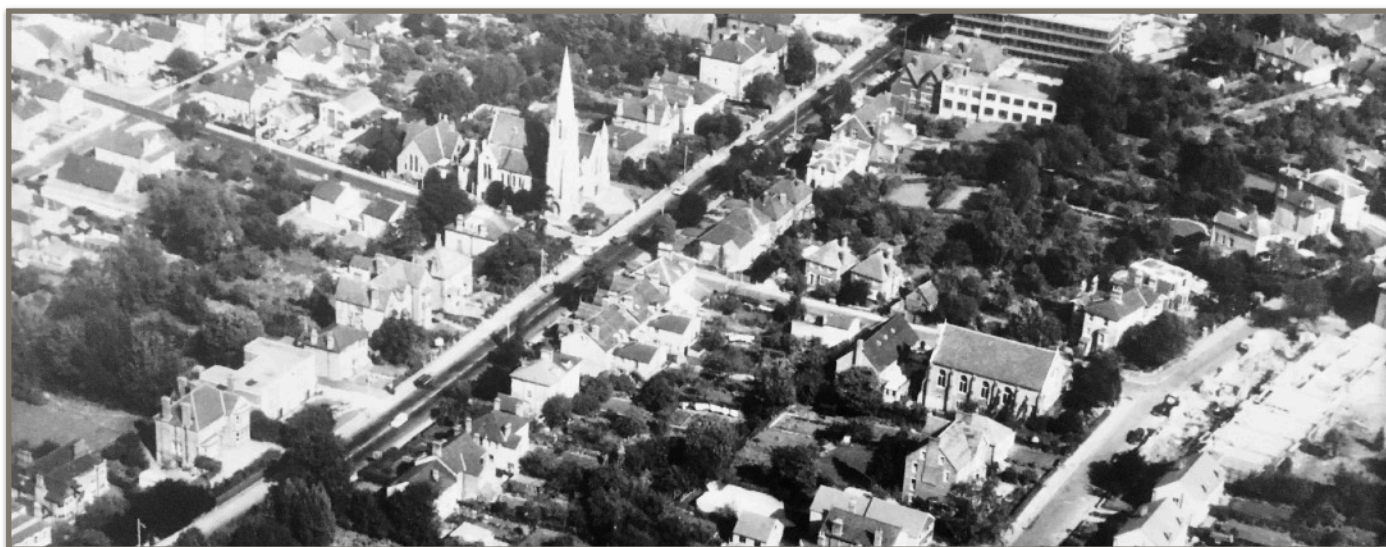
It is interesting to note in the church records that, on two Sundays in August 1894, joint services between St Augustine's and New Barnet Congregational Church took place; this is believed to be the first occasion of joint services between the two. The following year a Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour was started; this was the first Society of young people connected with the church.



In 1904 Rev'd Dale resigned the pastorate and Rev'd Halliday became the minister. His preaching and personality attracted so many people who had never been connected with Presbyterianism, and brought a new element into the church. The numbers rapidly increased and it was found necessary to renovate the building; a new organ was installed and a gallery erected. Mr Halliday appealed specially to the young people, and his weekly Bible classes and meetings for discussion of religious and social problems were well attended. The membership increased to over three hundred, and the congregations, especially in the evenings, were very large.

The halcyon days of the Edwardian era soon ended with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. In both that war and in the Second World War church life was greatly disrupted with many young people in the congregation either volunteering or being conscripted to military service and, sadly, some making the supreme sacrifice for their country. From early on in the church's life until the 1920s some members of the congregation paid 'Pew Rents', and a ledger was kept noting which pew people sat in with small cards being attached to the pew showing the names of those who rented them: "don't sit in my seat please"! In the interwar years there was a Junior Fellowship for those under thirty and a Senior Fellowship for those over thirty who studied very erudite matters, often under ex-ministers or senior members of the congregation. The Junior Fellowship later developed into the Fellowship of Youth.

Equality of the sexes was starting to be evident in the records, with the first woman manager, Mrs Bird, elected in the late 1920s and the first woman to be ordained as an elder in 1937; this was Mrs Vincent, Meg Hardie's grandmother.



New Barnet Congregational Church (top left); St Augustine's Presbyterian Church (lower right)

The Sunday School and other events took place in the hall under the church, so in the mid 1920s it was decided to build a new hall. Many plays and concerts were staged 'in aid of the new hall', but a lot of the money was raised through covenanted giving spread over a number of years, and the Large Hall was opened in 1928. Around this time the minister and others became alarmed about the state of the north wall of the church which was showing signs of subsidence; it had to be shored up with massive beams of timber which remained in place until St John's was built.

Between 1931 and 1944 the Rev'd L.J. Macpherson was minister; he wrote that when he arrived in New Barnet the Religion and Life Movement, with its aim of getting Christian principles and values woven more definitely into the life of the community, had begun to create an atmosphere of



fellowship and co-operation among the churches. A Council of Christian Churches was formed which included all local churches, as well as the Friends and the Salvation Army; the most intimate link of all was with the Congregational Church.

After the Second World War the church was led by Rev'd Arthur MacArthur; he was followed by Rev'd W.T. Hinsley who came from a church in Southampton where he had made a considerable impact as a pastor and a broadcaster. When St Augustine's Church was chosen for an I.T.V. television broadcast he delivered a sermon which interpreted the teachings of Christ so lucidly and so simply that the spiritual life of the Church was raised to new heights.

It had been the practice for many years during the month of August that both St Augustine's and New Barnet Congregational Churches shared worship together and had firm links. When St Augustine's last minister, Rev'd Peter Chesney, arrived in 1959 a significant change was about to take place: the next year the two congregations met to hear the Congregational minister Rev'd W.A. Houghton and Rev'd Chesney present a discussion between the two churches on the implications of a Covenant Relationship between the two denominations. When Rev'd Houghton left the ministry in 1961 the Rev'd Ronald Bocking was invited to look after the Congregational Church in its vacancy; he helped to move events forward. Many long meetings by representatives from both congregations took place to finally reach a constitution both sides could agree on. When this was successful, it was agreed that a Service of Union would be held on 26th April 1963, the day St. Augustine's story ended and the story of our church began. ❖

David Paul

Repair Café

Saturdays:

20th Jan, 17th Feb, 16th March

10.00-12.00 at Wesley Hall

9 Stapylton Road, opp. Spires car park

Our volunteers are happy to help with repairs to all the things shown on the right.

The Repair Café is held on the third Saturday of each month, so 20th April and 18th May in addition to the dates displayed above. Do go along if you have an item in need of repair. We're so fortunate to have this initiative in our local area!



Bicycles
electrical goods



jewellery



clothing



small furniture items
and
tackle software problems



Green Christian Barnet

Saturday 16th March 10.30 onwards

David Farbey, Barnet Green Party - in the Sanctuary - also available via Zoom.

Saturday 20th April 10.30 onwards

Garden tools sharpening service plus display by Rachel Johnston, St Albans Diocese, Environmental Officer - in the Large Hall. All welcome, with or without tools to sharpen.

Refreshments available at all GCB sessions.

Tony and Sonal

Ronald Stanley Mobbs

8th August 1945 - 15th December 2023

Reflections and tributes from family and friends

Ron's early childhood was spent living in the Muswell Hill area. When he was around the age of six or seven, the family moved to a larger house in Chingford; he enjoyed school life and made many friends there. He worked hard and joined in many activities, especially swimming and cycling. He was a popular student and had a great group of friends; he enjoyed holidays and social events with this group for the rest of his life.

On one of these holidays, when the boys had just finished their final term, a group of about eight stayed in a small holiday camp in Devon, where Ron met Sue. Holidays over, Ron began a pre-apprentice course in electrical engineering. Some of his work involved installing two-way radios in the underground tube system; this also led to an opportunity to travel, live, and work in Canada for a year. On his return to England, he resumed his friendships and social life. Sue in the meantime had decided to visit Australia for the low fare of £10. The deal was that you had to agree to stay, live and work in Australia for two years but keeping in touch was not so easy then, mainly aerograms.



Ron lived and worked in Sidcup before moving to Barnet. Further relationships and marriage resulted in Ron being the proud and devoted father of five children. A good career with Accenture followed, with plenty of travel, also family holidays in his holiday house in Spain and a holiday with his son Andrew in the USA. He lived and worked in Sweden for a time, travelling home most weekends to stay with his children.

Ron liked to keep busy and to keep fit; the highlight of his week was golf at the Essendon Country club. He usually played twice weekly and especially enjoyed playing when his son Oliver was able to come along. Ron played badminton and kept in touch with friends on the annual golf holiday in Devon. The highlight of his week was a beer with his best mate Andrew at the Mitre and Zoom sessions with him and friend Sarah.

He became an active member of St John's, helping to run Fellowship meetings, organising outings, hosting summer garden parties (with the help of Sue). His main claim to fame was to introduce and install the AV system, training others to run and manage it.

Ed Bentall, General Manager at the audio-visual company we work with at St John's, said on hearing of Ron's death: "This is sad news indeed. We had a great rapport with Ron over the many years of working with St John's and he was very amenable and a pleasure to work with."

Ron was also a long standing volunteer at the community garden, and Wendy, from Incredible Edible Barnet sent this message:

"Right from our very first session on the St John's church plot in March 2017, Ron was always keen to get stuck in and he remained a key and valued volunteer until we wrapped up for the season in November. Always happy when he had a tool in his hand, Ron was one of those people who loved to make and fix things so he could often be found making raised beds, fixing the shed, and building ponds and bug hotels. As another volunteer says, "The back of his car was a mobile workshop ready for any task that was required!" He will be sadly missed by everyone at Incredible Edible Barnet. As we start to plan our session for the year ahead, it won't be the same without him but if he's looking down on us, we hope to do him proud."

Rev'd Julian Templeton contributed the following tribute:

Ron was a practical Christian. He showed his faith through his works. His attention to detail meant that when he did a job, it was done to the best of his ability. He was a planner, organiser, and collaborator who could effectively mobilise and motivate a team. St John's Church benefitted immeasurably from his leadership of the Fellowship and Audio-Visual Team. The fact that St John's Church is able to offer high quality remote access via Zoom to worship and events is mainly due to Ron's encouragement that the Church ought to invest in better facilities. The other ability the Church will miss Ron for is his problem-solving. When I was leading worship, I was astonished how frequently a new technical problem would arise; and frequently Ron would patiently solve it using what he called a 'work-around'. Ron also had a commitment to ecology as an expression of his Christian commitment to be a good steward of God's Earth, as was seen in his active involvement in Green Christian Barnet meetings and the Community Garden. I suspect his DIY skills will be missed when the next Church working party is convened. Yet in all of this he did not draw attention to himself but quietly got on with the job, and in so doing was a model of practical Christianity. ♦

COME TO OUR annual seed swapping event if you would like to save money on seeds, try new plants and get to meet some lovely local food growers and gardeners from your community.
There will also be cake!



All you need to do is:

- 1) Bring along spare seeds or small plants - whether veg, herbs, fruit or flowers that you've saved or sown, a packet you no longer want or cuttings from your garden. Don't worry if you don't have any to bring, there are plenty to share! We also welcome any gardening bits and bobs you've got lying around looking for a new home - all swaps welcome.
- 2) Swap them with someone else.
- 3) Take home new seeds, plants and stuff for free.

Please package up and label your seeds or plants in advance if you can, but there will be some pens and envelopes on hand to make small seed packets on the day.

We hope to see you there!
Wendy Alcock

As announced previously by our Safeguarding Coordinators, Andrew Summers and David Paul, there are nationwide training sessions, some subjects of which you may want to know more about. They can all be accessed via Zoom by emailing Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk

UK Wide Safeguarding Training 2024

Make your booking by emailing: Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk

All training listed below will take place via Zoom

First date	Event	Second date
17 January, 2024 1:30pm	Domestic abuse	4 June, 2024 6:30pm
25 January 1:30pm	Safeguarding for Pastoral Workers and Elders supporting survivors	18 June 6:30pm
30 January 6:30pm	Modern slavery	8 October 1:30pm
31 January 1:30pm	Elders as Trustees	14 May 7:00pm
8 February 1:30pm	DDC Verifiers training and safer recruitment	30 May 6:30pm
27 February 6:30pm	Substance abuse	3 October 1:30pm
6 March 1:30pm	Refugees and asylum seekers	17 September 6:30pm
18 March 6:30pm	Safeguarding for Ministers supporting survivors	25 September 1:30pm
18 April 6:30pm	Adult safeguarding	15 October 1:30pm
8 May 1:30pm	Spiritual abuse	11 November 7:00pm
28 October 6:30pm	DDC Verifiers training and safer recruitment	4 December 10:00am
19 November 1:30pm	Online safety	

Foundation Training can be accessed on the Learning Hub
bit.ly/3Txldm4



Fellowship:

Adventures of an Estate Agent

The speaker for the Fellowship meeting on 17th January was James Higgs, who gave a very interesting and humorous talk about his many years of working as an estate agent in North London. He began his talk by first re-arranging items on the platform to enable him to have some prompt boards and to display his work name plate - he was then ready, as he put it, "to rock and roll".

James began his career as a rookie Trainee Negotiator at Martyn Gerrard Estate Agency where he was well instructed and quickly learnt to be on his toes in valuing different properties. He was advised to be active and to know his area. Sometimes other staff would play tricks on him by sending him to value a house on a road where there were no houses. Over his forty-nine years as an Estate Agent, eighteen years were with Martyn Gerrard.

He recounted the names of several stars of stage and screen who he had helped find their homes, including Joy Beverley and her husband Billy Wright, Winifred Atwell, Bernie Winters, Peter Sellers – some of these houses were nearby in Lyonsdown Road.

Over his long career he encountered various amusing incidents when taking clients around properties. He described that whilst looking up to the roof of one house he fell backwards into a fish pond; he then recalled finding two rabbits living in a hutch constructed of Martyn Gerrard 'For Sale' boards. He also worked for a period for Sturt & Tivendale in Totteridge Lane and during this time he negotiated a property for Toyah Willcox in Chandos Avenue and for Julie Rogers in Park Road, New Barnet.

James spoke amusingly for well over his allotted time and received a well-earned round of applause at the end of his presentation.

Jean Davies



Letter from:

The Good Samaritan School for the Deaf

Dear Friends,

The new academic year 2024 here began on the 5th of February. At our school, we are thrilled to extend a warm welcome to both new and returning students. We are excited for the year ahead and look forward to fostering a productive and enriching learning environment for all our students.



Sharifu

We have so far registered two new children – Immaculate and Sharifu both ten years old, in the nursery and primary one classes respectively. These two have increased the total school's roll to seventy-one children with twenty-nine boys and forty-two girls.

We thank God for the bountiful harvest of 571kg of corn/maize that is currently being sun-dried and later will be turned into flour at the village mill. The children worked very hard alongside external labourers in the garden almost every Saturday. They cleared the weeds, sowed the seeds, weeded, and then helped with the final harvest. They are pleased that their efforts and energy have yielded such a big harvest that will feed them for at most a month. After that, we hope that donations will help to fund the purchase of food for the children and staff here.



Immaculate

Our six children who entered the 2023 National Primary exams, have performed comparably better than their hearing counterparts in the Kitengeesa community. Pius, who wants to pursue a career in photography and graphic design, and Penina, who aims to be a fashion designer, were our best performers, scoring 30 and 31 marks respectively. Maria, Ismael, Peace, and Sharifah also did their best. I am so proud to be part of the GSS community.

We are looking forward to enrolling them back in the vocational section to study practical skills. Their parents cannot afford secondary school fees in any of the four deaf secondary schools in Uganda. These other schools are up to 200km away from our community. Sadly, there are few scholarships available in this country.



We thank all our donors who continue to support the school through your generous gifts. We raised £6,000 sterling in donations last year. This year, we embark on a campaign to raise funds for a chain link fence around the school premises (£3,880) since we have no boundary wall. Also: we need a children's outdoor play area (£2,300), and lightning-protection systems on our buildings, plus firefighting equipment (£5,820). The outbreak of fires in schools across the country have become rampant, hence the need to strengthen our security. We are not able to do this without donations since we get no government grants!

We send our heartfelt thanks to you for keeping Good Samaritan School in your minds and prayers – it means so much and makes an immense difference in the lives of our deaf children.



Help us continue thriving while serving the less privileged.

More information from Tony via: 0208 440 6040

or visit our website <https://goodsamaritanschoolforthe deaf.com/how-you-can-help> to make a gift.

Please subscribe to our newsletter, via the website.

Thank you and God Bless,
Rosemary Nakasiita (Director of GSS) and Tony Shepherd.

Calendar of Events

MARCH

Sunday 3	11:00am 2:00pm	Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Valerie and Andrew Mills Seed Swap
Wednesday 6	2:30pm	Lent Group
Thursday 7	9:30am	Mainly Music
Sunday 10	11:00am	Mothing Sunday: Worship led by Helen Snider and Jean Davies
Tuesday 12	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting
Wednesday 13	2:30pm	Lent Group
Thursday 14	9:30am	Mainly Music
Saturday 16	10:00am 10:30am	Community Garden Green Christian Barnet: David Farbey, Barnet Green Party - in Sanctuary/on Zoom
Sunday 17	11:00am	Worship led by David Paul & Richard Harvey followed by a Church Meeting
Monday 18	from 8:30pm	Men's Group at <i>Olde Monken Holt</i>
Wednesday 20	2:30pm 8:00pm	Lent Group Fellowship: 'Queen Elizabeth: A Life in Flowers'. Speaker: Nick Dobson
Thursday 21	9:30am	Mainly Music
Sunday 24	11:00am	Palm Sunday: Worship led by Alison Bond
Wednesday 27	11:00am 2:30pm	Women's Group: <i>Vibe Café</i> , 6 Greenhill Parade, EN5 1ES Lent Group
Thursday 28	9:30am 8:00pm	Mainly Music Maundy Thursday: United Service at St Andrew's Chesterfield Road URC
Friday 29	2:00pm	Good Friday: A Service of Reflection
Saturday 30	10:00am	Community Garden
Sunday 31	11:00am	Easter Day: Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Tony Alderman

APRIL

Sunday 7	11:00am	Worship led by Roz Douglas
Tuesday 9	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting
Saturday 13	10:00am	Community Garden
Sunday 14	11:00am	Worship led by Helen Snider and Andrew Summers
Wednesday 17	8:00pm	Fellowship: 'An Active Response to Climate Change'. Speaker: Terry Over

APRIL contd.

Saturday 20	10:30am	Green Christian Barnet: Garden tools sharpening service plus display by Rachel Johnston, St Albans Diocese, Environmental Officer - in the Large Hall
Sunday 21	11:00am	Worship led by Rev'd Roger Orme
Tuesday 23	11:00am	Women's Group: <i>Rise & Shine Café</i> , 2 Exchange Buildings, High Street, EN5 5SY <u>Men also invited</u>
Wednesday 24	from 8:00pm	Men's Group: Supper Evening at <i>The Railway Bell</i>
Thursday 25	9:30am	Mainly Music
Saturday 27	10:00am	Community Garden
Sunday 28	11:00am	Church Anniversary: Worship led by the Elders with URC sermon video

MAY

Thursday 2	9:30am	Mainly Music
Sunday 5	11:00am	Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Sarah Beaumont

Copy for the May/June edition of Church Record to be with the editors
by Friday 26th April.

churchrecord2023@gmail.com

*Thanks for Sunday flower arrangements:
January 12th – flowers for the funeral of Ron Mobbs
February 25th – Dorothy Peryer*



NEWS FROM SVITAVY

IT IS ALWAYS GOOD to be able to share news from our 'twin' church in Svitavy, and we have exciting news from Kveta regarding their project to build a home for the elderly in their area. Kveta writes:

"Today we handed over the land, where the home for the elderly will be located, to a construction company that will start construction. What a strange feeling! After so many years of waiting and sitting over the plans I cannot believe we are really at the point where dreams slowly become reality, where the never ending talking and presentations of our plans are replaced by building materials and technology."

We rejoice with Filip and Kveta at this exciting time, when plans and ideas become reality, and we wish them every blessing as construction begins ...



Walking and praying with Christians of the Middle East



Photo: Chris De Bruyn

THIS LENT STUDY focuses on Christians in the lands in which Christianity has its roots – Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Israel, Palestine and Jerusalem – using material prepared by Churches Together in Britain & Ireland, in conjunction with the charity Embrace the Middle East.

The remaining dates for these Lent Groups, which take place in the Sanctuary at St John's Church from 2:30-4:00pm on Wednesdays, are:

6 March	Egypt: The Law Revives us
13 March	Iraq: Questioning, Rebellion, Redemption
20 March	Lebanon: Jesus
27 March	Palestine: Jerusalem

We are also warmly invited to join our friends from St Mary's and Brookside churches in East Barnet for their Lent course.

HOLY WEEK

East Barnet Anglican-Methodist Partnership
LEARNING IN PARTNERSHIP

An East Barnet Lent course

On Prayer
In our worship
In our churches
In our lives

Brookside Methodist Church

Thursday 7, 14, 21 March

1:30pm Light Lunch
2pm Lent course



Palm Sunday

24 March: 11am Worship led by Alison Bond

Maundy Thursday

28 March: 8pm United Service at St Andrew's
Chesterfield Road URC

Good Friday

29 March: 2pm A Service of Reflection

Easter Day

31 March: 11am Worship with the Lord's Supper
led by Tony Alderman

Contact
administrator@stmaryseastbarnet.org
for more details