

Nov – Dec
2019

St John's
United Reformed Church

Record

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

Contents

Winners and Losers

There I was, watching the Rugby World Cup Semi-Final, England versus New Zealand, having just been informed that my application for British nationality had been approved, when it occurred to me that as I was virtually a dual New Zealand and British national, I ought to be cheering for both sides! 'Hold on', I hear you say, 'that's not how it works. You only cheer for one side!' But which side was I to choose?

I suspect that for most people this dilemma never arises. You pick your sports team, often based on where you were born or brought up, or for some other reason, and that becomes *your* team; and you become that team's lifelong *supporter*. However, that may mean that you support more than one team: a local one, and a regional one, and national one. But the principal still holds that whenever your team plays you cheer for *your* side and *not* the opposition!

However, what if your team wins the match by unsportsmanlike behaviour? Would you still celebrate

the win? Is winning more important than good sportsmanship? Or is how a team plays the game just as important as the result? And what about being magnanimous in victory or gracious in defeat? Are such attitudes important?

The reason I ask these questions is that they may apply to another contest. I refer to the General Election on 12 December. If you are a political party loyalist of long-standing, more so if you are a party activist, you will probably have already decided for whom you will cast your vote. But if, like me, you are as yet undecided, then you may be open to persuasion.

If so, you might like to consider *how* the political parties and their local candidates conduct their campaigns. Do they appeal to your worst fears or your best hopes? Do they put more energy into attacking their opponents than they do into defending their own policies, and if so, what might that suggest about their fitness to govern? Conduct is often an indicator of character. You

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might like to consider the stated *aims* of the political parties and their candidates (I encourage you to read their election manifestos, and, if you can, attend a local hustings and hear the candidates in person). Do you agree with their aims? Are their policies realistic and achievable? Do they stand up to scrutiny when considered in the light of interdependent trade and the interconnected global climate?

As well as casting my vote on 12 December, I have another important task to do. I will attend a ceremony at the Town Hall in Hendon at which I will be asked to affirm my "true allegiance to her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, her Heirs and Successors" and pledge "my loyalty to the United Kingdom and respect its rights and freedoms...uphold its democratic values...and observe its laws..."

The affirmation of allegiance will make explicit what

is already implicit to a citizen of a Commonwealth nation. The pledge of loyalty will be a useful reminder that 'rights and freedoms and democratic values' need to be exercised and defended from erosion.

All this I will be pleased to affirm and pledge in the knowledge that her Majesty (and, I hope, also her 'Heirs and Successors') recognises a higher authority to which we owe ultimate allegiance and loyalty: Almighty God. Whatever authority and power and influence and choice we exercise are gifts from God; gifts we are called to exercise responsibly and compassionately. To these we might add, 'exercise provisionally', for this God, according to Jesus, may at any point confound our expectations of winners and losers when he brings about a surprising result: "The last shall be first, and the first shall be last."

Julian Templeton

CONGRATULATIONS

65th Wedding Anniversary



On 8th September, we were delighted to help celebrate Dorothy and Michael Peryer's 65th Wedding Anniversary. Half the family were able to come down to celebrate with them but sadly school holidays and business commitments retained the others.

On the actual anniversary date of 4th September, Dorothy and Michael enjoyed a visit to Buckingham Palace to see an Exhibition about the life of Victoria and Albert. They then enjoyed a meal in the evening at another suitably grand setting of West Lodge Park Hotel.

When I asked if there was any secrets to a long and happy marriage, I was not surprised to hear that it's all about give and take. Dorothy said it is a joy to be part of this wonderful church community and I can only add that the feeling is mutual. We thank you both for all you've done and continue to do.

Laura Tempeton



MAINLY MUSIC

– OUR FIRST ANNIVERSARY!

On Thursday 7th November we'll be celebrating the first anniversary of the St John's *Mainly Music* group; the time has gone so quickly but amazingly it's a whole year since we held our first session, and the evidence is in front of us – the babies that sat on their carers' knees a year ago are now walking, waving at us enthusiastically when they arrive and dancing to their favourite songs. For those of us in the *Mainly Music* Team it's been a wonderful year, full of joyful experiences and, well, mainly music. But we realise some of you will wonder what goes on, on Thursday mornings, so this is our opportunity to share the fun with you.

The team set up in the Sanctuary first thing in the morning, before the mums, dads, grannies, childminders and children arrive. The area by the bookshelves quickly becomes a buggy park, and the children always seem pleased to see us, the familiar surroundings and their small friends. They gather on a large mat, sitting in a circle, children on their carers' laps. The age range is from maybe six months to three years. At 9:30 Valerie welcomes everyone, and the first song appears on the screen; the songs are a mixture of ones you might recognise ("Row, Row, Row your Boat," "Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes") and ones specific to *Mainly Music*, such as "Down in the Deep, Deep, Deep, Deep Sea". There are always a couple of 'God Songs'; our witness to the families is not hidden, and the introduction of the Prayer Teapot, into which any requests for prayer are quietly put during the session, seems to indicate that the families respond positively to this. Some of the songs have actions, some have props (such as the five ladybird finger puppets that accompany "Five



Little Ladybirds," the sheet of blue lycra that becomes the sea, or the very popular bubble machine!) Even quite small babies respond to the music, and as they grow they rock and move to the sounds they hear and start to copy the actions.

After half an hour of singing we conclude with our sung Grace and the children's drinks and snacks (cut up fruit, bread sticks and various 'baby snacks') appear. The families stay together so that the carers can supervise the eating and drinking, then we clear away the food and get out the toys. Thanks to our helpers, most of the carers can move across the tables and chairs at this point and have tea, coffee and homemade cake. They are so appreciative of the chance to have a time to talk to each other, and to enjoy that rare luxury for all parents of small children, drinking a coffee while it's still hot!

The relationships developing during these sessions are such precious ones. Relationships between parents, grandparents and childminders – relaxing, sharing experiences and supporting each other – and between them and the *Mainly Music* team. The atmosphere is just lovely and we have such a happy time together. We are so grateful to all who have supported us through this first year – you know who you are! – in so many ways. Long may the fun, and the blessings, continue!

The *Mainly Music* Team



If Sir David says it's true...

Tony Shepherd of the Green Christian Group in Barnet looks at Sir David Attenborough's latest climate warnings and how you can respond to this threat

by Tony Shepherd

Over the last few months, Sir David Attenborough has been particularly busy. But then again there has been a lot happening in the world of nature, environment, and climate crisis – all topics which are of great concern to Sir David. Topics which are also of concern to many of us as well.

In June, he made a surprise appearance at the Glastonbury Festival, but a clue was provided when organisers showed on the big screen shots from some of his many TV series. When he appeared on the main stage, Sir David was given a huge ovation showing the delight of the festival-goers for his arrival. He announced that over one million plastic bottles of water had NOT been sold because their sale had been banned by Glastonbury organisers. This demonstrates the power of public pressure and will result in less plastic pollution of our oceans meaning less danger to living creatures in those seas.

He also announced that over the last four years he has been working on a new TV series called *7 Worlds One Planet* which is to be screened soon. It shows the huge diversity



(Above) Deforestation and deliberate fires in the Amazon are causing the destruction of its 'carbon sink'

diversity of the natural world across our seven continents. This series promises to be as beautiful, informative, and challenging as his earlier documentaries have been.

Sir David is the most

effective mouthpiece for the environmental challenges that we face. In July, he answered questions (some of them rather inane) before Parliament's Environment Committee (BEIS). And he stated again, as he has done



(Above) A leaning tree in the grounds of Norwich Cathedral is supported to keep it alive, like how our climate needs support from humanity to remain stable.

many times before, "we face irreversible climate changes if we continue on as we are now." The MPs did not seek to challenge him on this or seek further details about what is a momentous declaration. Do they not care? Do they already know this is true? Did they miss the point or just not hear him? Many people outside in the 'real world' have similar reactions when these dangers highlighted. Questions about these challenges do not seem to resonate with some people. Let it be very clear: Sir David and many other experts declare that the survival of civilisation as we know it is under enormous threat as is the future of many natural species.

In issue 11 of the *Herald*, Debbie Windeler noted some possible actions which we could do with the aim of reducing the effect of this climate crisis. Further suggestions and exchange of ideas also appear on our Facebook page, *Climate Concern* as well as information on our website, www.climateconcern.co.uk.

This item first appeared in the 'East Barnet Herald' (Aug/Sept) from St Mary's Church. Reproduced with thanks.

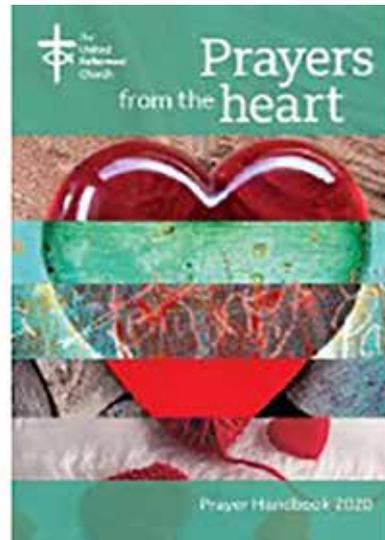
URC Prayer Handbook 2020

Prayers from the Heart

Each year the United Reformed Church publishes a Prayer Handbook which contains material from a range of URC people – many of whom also write for the Daily Devotions project. It has two prayers for each Sunday of the year, based on the Revised Common Lectionary readings, which can be used either in private devotion or in public worship.

This year's editors are Karen Campbell, a URC Church Related Community Worker, and the Revd Ian Fosten, a URC minister, who say this about the publication:

"In offering this collection of prayers, we hope we have captured their raw authenticity; prayers which are beautifully written, deeply thoughtful but not overly clever. We have included pieces which came to us rough-hewn, unpolished or quirky, but all of which echoed the heartbeat of God's people crying out to our gracious God. In using this collection, we hope that you will catch an echo of your own thankfulness



and desires for our beautiful, but often broken, world."

A copy costs just £4.99 – please let me know by as soon as possible if you would like me to order one for you.

Alison Bond

Stamps and Inkjet Recycling

With Christmas fast approaching, over the coming months, you may receive more stamps than usual, so please continue to pass any used stamps and inkjet cartridges to me, or put them in my pigeonhole, or in the box downstairs.

Stamps: I have received a letter addressed to St John's from The Leprosy Mission, which I have put on the notice board, confirming they have been able to raise an amazing £64,780 in 2018 from donated stamps, postcards and coins.

"You have given a kind gift to our Stamps and Collectibles Bureau to help people who are the poorest of the poor, the most rejected, and the most unloved. But with your gift you have shown them love. I'd like to say a really big heart-felt thank you"

Nicky Ward
CRM Project Support Co-Ordinator"

Recycled inkjets: Again, please continue to pass these to me, or put them in my pigeonhole, or in the box downstairs. Money raised from recycling inkjets (via The Recycling Factory) is donated to the RSPB. Over £100 from St John's has been raised so far.

Thank you for your support.

Malcolm Bond

St John's Fellowship

United Reformed Church

Theatrical London – a talk by Diane Burnstein

The talk for our October meeting was delivered by a London Blue Badge Guide with a mine of information about London in general who spoke without reference to notes, but was steered by her excellent slide presentation through an interesting and informative history of theatre in London.

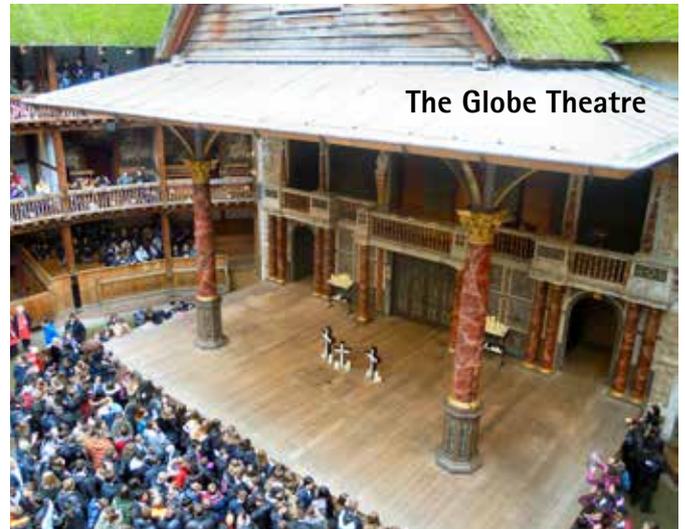


George Inn

Diane began by describing the performances given by strolling players, who performed on village greens and in yards such as that of the George Inn at Southwark, London's last remaining galleried inn. An audience would gather on the galleries to watch, participate and make clear whether the play was to their taste or not!

The Globe Theatre, also at Southwark, was perhaps the first theatre to be built, followed by the Swann and Rose theatres. The Globe was destroyed by fire, as were many other theatres due to fires in their thatched roofs. The late Sam Wannamaker led a long campaign for the rebuilding of a Globe Theatre, eventually opened during 1980 following a long battle to raise sufficient funding. Many features of its design recall the style of the original, but with audience comfort and facilities much improved! However, seats are more expensive than the one penny to stand or two pence to sit.

All theatres were closed during the interregnum by the Puritans who disapproved of theatrical performances, considering them immoral. However, King Charles II was keen to see women on the stage, whereas previously all parts had been played by men and youths. The new theatres received Royal patronage and as such could include Royal in their name.



The Globe Theatre

David Garrick introduced regular rehearsals and became master of the 'grand gesture' style of acting and also introduced the role of the actor manager of players and of theatres. West End theatres continued to become established during the Victorian and Edwardian periods and some more recently, including local Fringe Theatres built by trusts to encourage attendance for a more modest sum than the higher prices charged by the larger theatres. As a result, many plays by new writers and smaller acting companies, often reminiscent of the Elizabethan 'strolling players', receive accolade and invitation to move to West End theatres, which can be interesting and rewarding for the performers and their following.

Diane was thanked for an excellent talk delivered to the large audience who had come along to hear her speak.

Patricia Picken



Theatre Royal, Drury Lane

Church Coffee Mornings - the end of an era?

Coffee Mornings have a long history at St. John's Church. Dorothy and Mick Peryer had run a variety of similar events very successfully for many years before Rosemary and I took over in April 2000. Since then we have helped organise many other events including a Ruby Fair, Summer and Autumn Fair's, Ploughman's Lunches and Cream Teas along with the Coffee Mornings. They provide the opportunity to meet friends and socialise, not just with other church members but with people from the wider community who come and join us.

The other purpose is to raise money, which is divided between the North London Hospice and our church funds plus a small percentage to the Miriam Dean Fund. Since we started in 2000 up to the present through admission charges, table rents for charity stalls, donations and raffles a grand total of over £17,000 has been raised. This figure does not include money generated by other charities for sale of their goods.

Many charities have rented tables with us including the R.N.L.I, MacMillan Cancer Support, Schools for Africa, R.S.P. B, Friends in Need, Fair trade, Save the Children Fund, Barnet National Trust Association and the Justice and Peace group. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to get to know so many good people working hard to raise funds for their own charities. I would also like to thank all church members and friends who have helped in different ways by manning stalls, working in the kitchen, moving chairs and

tables, printing posters, distributing leaflets, counting money, running raffles, etc.

When I look back at the written records I have kept from the start I note that in the early days all the stalls were run by church members and it is rather sad now to see the names of church members, many of whom are no longer with us, who used to help. These include Rene Reynolds followed by Elaine Bartrum on the Choir stall, Margaret Mileman on the Fellowship stall, Tom and Irene Currie on the Books, Joan Thatcher on the Nearly New stall, Jeannette Mulchansingh on Garden Produce, Margaret Barrowcliffe on Stationary and Ann Beath with Janet Harvey on the Cake stall.

Because I have kept a record of the numbers of people attending and amounts of money taken I can see that slowly over the years attendances have been falling away. This is despite advertising our events on posters distributed locally, handout leaflets pushed through letter boxes, in our Church Record, on our website and (in the past) in the local press. It is difficult to know what else we could have done without incurring a lot of expense.

Rosemary and I have now decided that the established routine of Coffee Mornings needs new ideas and vision so we are stepping down from their organisation, but that doesn't have to be the end. If anyone in our church can think of new fundraising and social ideas to encourage people to come together the need will always be there.

David Paul

Change of Cleaner

Cecilia and Gideon Bobie

Gideon has worked for EnfieldNorse for 10 years, and will be taking over from Cecilia week commencing 18 November. Cecilia says she will miss everyone at St John's, but she has decided to spend more time with her family. She also thanks everyone for the card, flowers, and early Christmas present from St John's, which she appreciates very much.



Calendar

November 2019

NOVEMBER	Tuesday 12	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting – Primary Room	NOVEMBER
	Wed 13	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
	Thursday 14	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary	
	Sat-Sun 16 -17	pm-am	Night Shelter + Breakfast (St. Peter's)	
	Sunday 17	11:00am	Worship – led by Julian Templeton	
		12:30pm	Church Meeting	
	Tuesday 19	8:00pm	Prayer & Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park	
	Wed 20	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
		8:00pm	St John's Fellowship- A Personal Tour of New Zealand by David Paul in Sanctuary	
	Thursday 21	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary	
	Friday 22	2:30pm	Community Cafe	
		3:30pm	Short Service	
	Saturday 23rd	9.45-11.00am	Green Christian-Barnet Group	
		10:00am	Community Garden session	
	Sat-Sun 23-24	pm-am	Night Shelter + Breakfast (St. John's)	
	Sunday 24	11:00am	Worship led by Roz Douglas	
		3:00pm	Causeway, Small Hall	
	Tuesday 26	2:00pm	Dementia Club	
	Wed 27	10:00am	Pastoral Team Meeting, Vestry	
		4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
		8:30pm	Men's Group –at Ye Olde Mitre, High Barnet	
	Thursday 28	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary	
		8:00pm	Justice and Peace Meeting – Talk by Sophie Sullivan: ' Life in Zimbabwe, its challenges and blessings'. All welcome.	
	Sat/Sun 30-1 Dec	pm -am	Night Shelter + Breakfast (St. Peter's)	

Calendar

December 2019

	Sunday 1st	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting, Vestry
		11:00am	Advent 1 Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Julian Templeton
		12:30	Shared Lunch – All Welcome
	Wednesday 4	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
	Thursday 5	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary
	Friday 6	4:00pm	Messy Church, Large Hall
	Sat-Sun 7-8	pm-am	Night Shelter + Breakfast (St. John's)
	Sunday 8	10:00am	Singing Practice
		11:00am	Advent 2 Worship and Gift Service – led by Tony Shepherd
	Tuesday 10	2:00pm	Dementia Club
		7:45pm	Elders' Meeting, Vestry
	Wednesday 11	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
	Thursday 12	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary
	Friday 13		Copy Deadline for next edition of Church Record
	Sat-Sun 14-15	pm-am	Night Shelter + Breakfast (St. John's)
	Sunday 15	10:00am	Singing Practice
		11:00am	Advent 3 Worship – led by Julian Templeton
		3:30pm	Crib Service – All Welcome
	Tuesday 17	8:00pm	Prayer & Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park
	Wednesday 18	6:30pm	St. John's Fellowship Meal/ AGM/Christmas Celebration –Large Hal
	Thursday 19	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary
		8:30pm	Men's Group –at Ye Olde Mitre, High Barnet
	Sat-Sun 21-22	pm-am	Night Shelter + Breakfast (St. John's)
	Sunday 22nd	11:00am	Advent 4 Worship – led by Alison Bond
		4:30pm	Carol Service – All Visitors Welcome.
	Tuesday 24		CHRISTMAS EVE – to be announced
	Wednesday 25	10:30am	CHRISTMAS DAY – All Age Service led by Julian Templeton
	Sunday 30	11:00am	Christmas 1 Service led by Paul Elsdon
JAN	Sunday 5	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting
		11:00am	Epiphany Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Julian Templeton



St John's Fellowship

United Reformed Church

This article is not reporting on one of the many stimulating and informative monthly evenings the Fellowship runs, but a reminder of all the very many activities this group organises. I have been aware on many occasions that the Fellowship are there quietly running the AV system or providing refreshments. I have also become aware of the number of non-church people they bring into the church. So, I felt it was about time that we are reminded of their outreach work, and they are afforded due credit.

So, here are some facts and figures...

Fellowship Monthly Meetings

There are 30 paid up members and the average audience is about 30 people, (typically 25 to 35/40). This is a mix of members and guests, often brought along by the speakers.

About half the members are also members of St John's, the remainder are not associated with the church, but are loyal members of the Fellowship. We have introduced a new member to St John's and some Fellowship members do come along to special services and other events. So they are definitely having some success in their "outreach" role.

The Fellowship meeting are advertised in the local U3A, FIN, the other URC in Barnet and also to the Barnet Christian Fellowship.

Financial Contributions

This happens in two ways.

1. Money is generated from the small entrance fee to attend the meetings, as well as the garden party and the Christmas Dinner. They try to ensure they have minimum funds of around £1000 held in reserve and this enables them to pass on the excess to the church. These donations are usually about £1000 per year.
2. Money is also raised from the special events they organise (see below). In round numbers they have raised about £1500 this year (for the organ)

Events

They try to run a big "quiz night" each year as well as two tea dances – usually in spring and autumn. This year a very successful "Guitar Concert" was organised, which brought in a huge audience from many different sources. They are looking for other events that may attract many more people to the church and raise even more funds.

Catering

This is always organised by the Fellowship and tends to be in two forms:

- i) "The ladies of the Committee" cook and provide the food for some events (eg: garden party – quiz)
- ii) They buy in food for the Christmas Dinner: The main course's from "Cook" (<https://www.cookfood.net/>), with the committee providing puddings and other accessories etc.

Overall, Pat Picken, Sue Taylor, Alice Mujtaba and Marjorie O'Connor all step up to agree the menu, who will cook what, and how we will organise the serving etc. This team are to be congratulated not only for the wonderful food that is prepared, but that over the years they work as a good team and have not had any disasters (yet!).

Ron Mobbs, Chairman, insists that St John's Fellowship would not work without the huge efforts of the Committee: Marjorie & Joe O'Connor, Sue, Pat, Alice and Ken Sutherland-Thomas. They are a great little team, but are always looking for new people to join the Committee.

With extra willing hands on board, they could increase the wonderful outreach work. They would be happy for the Fellowship to put on more fundraising events, but they are "resource limited" and given the age of some, are reluctant to take on too much.

Laura Templeton

Could You Be A Volunteer Driver For Barnet Multiple Sclerosis Patients And Help Us On Our Regular Runs?



Are you a good driver who would be willing to drive our MS Society mini buses? We need help to assist our members who cannot get around without transport. At present we take wheelchair users and ambulant disabled members to many of the activities which we organise. This enables members to maintain their independence, and to keep fit and as healthy as possible.

If you would like to help, and you have a clean licence and some free time, please phone our transport officer Mr Terry Wraith on 020 8441 4696. Always leave a clear message. Thank you.



Barnet and South Herts Branch, Multiple Sclerosis Society.
Registered charity 1139257

BARNET REPAIR CAFÉ

Saturday 2 November 2019, 11am - 3pm
Saturday 11 January 2020, 11am - 3pm
 Wesley Hall, 9 Stapylton Road, Barnet, EN5 4JJ

More information at wiseuptowaste.org.uk/repaircafes
 Terms and conditions of participation apply.

Join us for a coffee and get inspired by the creative skills of your community. Where possible, items will be fixed on the event day and our team of repair specialists will show you how to carry out repairs like this in the future. You will also have the opportunity to see how repairs of other items are being carried out too.

Repair Cafes are meeting places where repair specialists provide free repair consultation and training to help you mend broken or damaged household items.



Support for our local businesses

Greenhill Grocers

This lovely local shop is definitely more than a greengrocer. It is truly a family-run business of the old school and a place to buy so much more than fruit and veg.

Chris and George run the shop with their lovely sons as well as occasional help from other family and friends. They work extremely hard, only taking time off for an annual trip back home to Cyprus in the autumn.

Chris told me that she came to London from Cyprus in 1970 to continue her work as a dressmaker. She met her future husband George, at a family wedding. George came over to London when he was 8 years old and lived with his father David and step-mother Emma who was a Yorkshire lass. She surely fitted the reputation of being a canny lass as between them, they owned 14 restaurants all over London.

Chris and George set up a haberdashery shop

in Wood Green with Chris doing dressmaking in the back. This was convenient for looking after their three boys, but as it proved not to be a very profitable business, they bravely decided to open up a greengrocers instead.

After some years of very hard work, in 1990 they managed to buy the property on Greenhill Parade, running the shop downstairs and living in the flat above. This is where Chris bakes her wide variety of Greek cakes and pastries – which Julian can tell you, are absolutely delicious. Not content with baking, she also boils large pans of beetroots, and such is demand, that's nearly every day in the summer.

As I mentioned, this shop is so much more than a greengrocers, providing fresh fruit and vegetables, groceries, delicatessen, flowers, plants and a wide variety floral arrangements and wreaths for any occasion. I can always find most grocery items needed, with the added advantage of hundreds of Greek specialities such as fresh olives, dips, cheeses, sausages, sweets and so much more. They are featured in the book: *Food Lovers' London*. At Christmas of course they sell tasty seasonal treats, holly wreaths, flowers and can deliver your tree.

Anyone who knows the family will be aware of how important the Church is to them. They are members of the Greek Orthodox in Wood Green and I have seen photographs of the huge and elaborate flower arrangements, including the Epitafios, for Good Friday that Chris makes for not just one, but three churches.

When I asked Chris what she liked best about the business, I was not surprised to hear that it's meeting and mixing with people. She reckons it's a great antidote to depression. Well all I can say is that it's always a pleasure to shop there and definitely a favourite with our grandchildren.

Laura Templeton

**www.greenhillgrocers.co.uk
24 Greenhill Parade, New Barnet
London, EN5 1EU
020 8449 3879**



“Charity begins at home” or, actually, almost anywhere!”

Su and I married in May 1981 and a year later we were expecting our first baby in (according to the doctor) September 1982. However, he actually arrived, weighing just 3 lb 15 oz, in May 1982; quite a surprise since I was in Caracas working on a big potential project for BP at the time. Ian was actually, we think, six or seven weeks premature and was born literally when Su was at home by herself but trying to unlock the front door to let in our GP. Literally? Yes, Ian had a high-speed caul birth. Dear reader, I bet you don't know what a caul birth is! He landed on the floor, getting a big bruise on his bottom, so thank heavens that he was also a breech baby! More details available on request!

Ian started his degree education at Essex University (far enough away from Barnet to live away from home, but close enough to be able to bring his washing home every couple of weeks) but left after one year, Both he and I became increasingly concerned about the constant political dogma drilled into the students in virtually every course of his Economics degree, a common theme being “Now, how would Tony Blair approach this matter?” So, he started anew at Middlesex University in Hendon, reading Business Economics. This turned out to be an excellent choice, as nearly every week he had a project to do, a presentation to make, a piece of research to carry out, or a new business software to familiarise himself with, truly a 'university of life' degree. On graduating he worked for six months in the City, then gained a year's valuable experience in Singapore with the DeVere organisation, before joining IPP Financial Advisers in Singapore as a Managing Partner at the age of 26 to create a division of IPP that provides a wide range of financial services to expatriates. IPP was the largest independent financial advisory in Singapore, employing around 300 to 350 staff there and smaller numbers in HK and KL, almost exclusively Chinese. Ian was the first Westerner to join. Now his team is around 30 strong and thriving.

Ju-Li was born with a serious chromosome imbalance in 1991. As Ju-Li's problems developed, she

benefitted from the loving care and support from her two Special Schools in Barnet, from the wonderful Home-From-Home care home organisation in Lincolnshire (HfHC), where she spent the last three – and very happy – years of her life, from The Salvation Army in Grimsby, where she thoroughly enjoyed the music in the Sunday services (many of the instruments being nearly in tune!) and not least from the family of friends at St John's URC. This turned Ian's thoughts towards charitable work. A couple of years before Ju-Li passed away in 2015 he and I founded a charity “The Pryor Foundation” in Singapore, the purpose of it being to seek donations from Ian's clients and then to help disabled and under privileged youngsters . We managed to buy a wheel chair-cum-tricycle for the residents with HfHC, but a limiting factor was that Singapore based charities must spend a minimum of 90 percent of investments within Singapore. He therefore co-founded PIB Holdings, to help parents and educational institutions rent equipment and toys to promote fun-based playing and learning independent of iPads and TV – back to real play!

The Vanda organisation in Singapore have a large city centre gym. Ian now helps to organise and run a twice yearly “White Collar Boxing” event in Singapore, where, for example , the Personnel Manager of HSBC and the Deputy Chief Executive of Shell might fight each other over three two-minute rounds. There might be ten such contests per event, eight male contests and two female contests, each of the contestants probably having been badly over weight and unfit from their desk-based jobs, over-rich diets and alcohol consumption when they started training two or three times a week with Vanda for six to nine months. The key thing is that the events are well (and expensively) supported by the public and raise money for charity, and few people care who wins or loses the actual contests. In December 2018 Ian received the “outstanding contribution award” from the Children's Surgical Centre (hospital) in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, for raising over £300,000 from the boxing events for this Centre in 2018.

Finally, early this year Ian became aware of the Alquity organisation, based in London. They claim to be the largest brokers in the U.K. Alquity put aside ten percent of annual revenues into a charity account (NB, "revenues", not "profits") and use some of this account to fund developing companies in Asia, Africa or Central and South America – companies that are contributing to humanity in a significant way. Ian was invited to join a team of five or six experts to identify up to ten candidate companies in Asia, and then to chose the best two or three for funding, to help them expand. After much research Ian chose a company called Reach from Hanoi in Vietnam. Reach provide vocational training for very disadvantaged youth in Vietnam, e.g. orphans, or from ostracised families with AIDS. One case we heard of was Mae, who was one of four children in a poor family. The parents worked hard to give the other three children a good start in life, but sadly Mae was born with no arms and so the parents believed she had no future. However she was bright and spent most of her time at home educating herself via the radio and TV. Reach trained her to become a graphic designer, using her

feet, and she is now a successful business woman, helping to support her family. Like many of the others to benefit from Reach, Mae herself also helps train others. Reach were awarded \$50,000 to expand and continue the excellent work. In September of next year, when Su and I visit Singapore, we plan to accompany Ian to visit Reach, which should be truly fascinating.

Ian may not be a regular church goer, but he clearly has a Christian outlook on life!

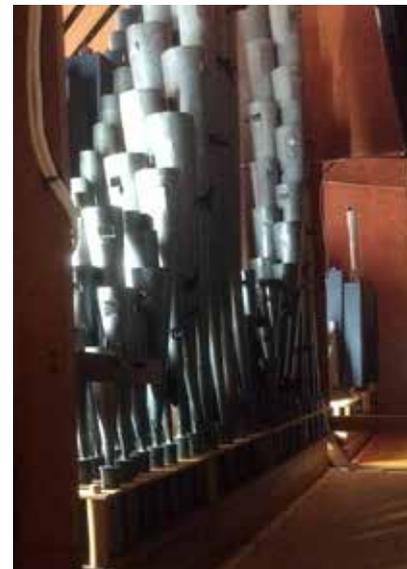
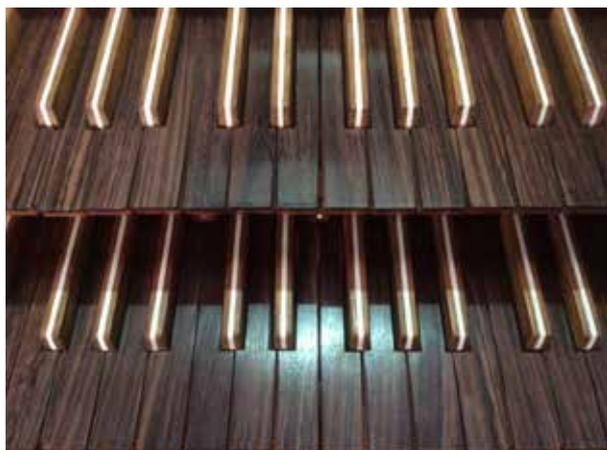
Footnote

When I entered the world in 1941 my mother's mother was entrusted to hold me during the Christening service and to respond to the minister's request: "name this child". Dear granny was nervous and answered "Alan James". Both granny and the minister failed to notice my parents waving wildly a few feet back to correct the information – because their chosen names for me were "Ian James"! So when Su and I were blessed with a son in 1982 his name, inevitably, became "Ian James Pryor".

Alan Pryor

Organ Refurbishment

The organ will be played in a service for the first time on 10 November, after the many months of diligent work. Here are some images of the new workings; the resurfaced keys; cleaned pipes from inside organ.



Friends of Khasdobir Walk

On Saturday 7th September a group of us from St John's set off from the Unitarian Chapel in Kensington on a five mile walk in aid of the Friends of Khasdobir charity.

The route took us through Kensington Gardens and onto Bayswater and then back through Notting Hill. As usual there were clues to search for and questions to answer and by taking part in this, we were able to learn more about the area.

In Kensington Gardens is the bronze Peter Pan statue that J.M. Barrie commissioned Sir George Frampton to build. It was erected in May 1912 without official permission so that children coming to the park would think that the fairies had placed it there during the night. J.M. Barrie put a notice in the Times

Valerie Mills



Toilet Twinning

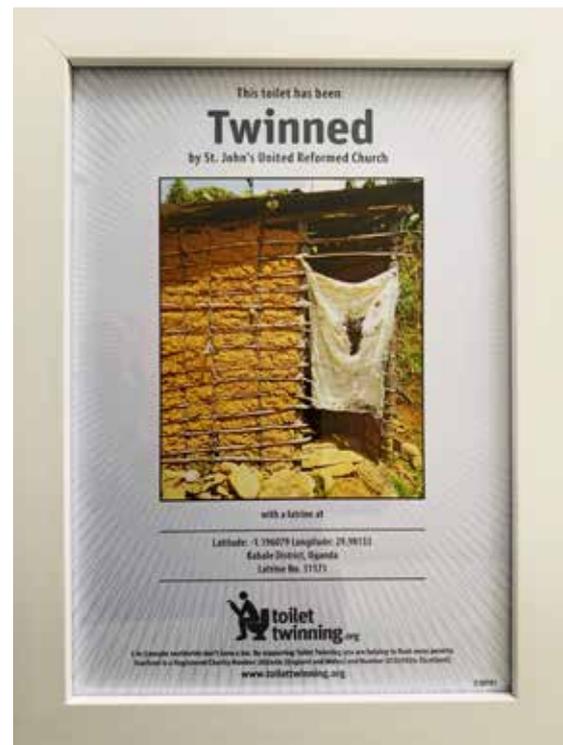
St John's has twinned two toilets with latrines in villages in the Kabale District of Uganda. This is in the South West of the country near the border with Rwanda. You can see the certificates to show this in the accessible toilet in the Sanctuary and in the ladies toilet downstairs.

Toilet twinning raises funds to support water and sanitation work in some of the world's poorest countries. 2.3 billion people do not have access to a safe and hygienic toilet.

It costs £60 to twin a toilet and it is thanks to all those who generously donated towards this that we have been able to provide the two latrines.

World Toilet Day is on 19th November. If you would like to twin your own toilet then information as to how to do this is on the website www.toilettwinning.org. or pick up a leaflet at Church. We are hoping to twin more of our toilets and there is a donation box in the Sanctuary.

Valerie Mills



Green Christian Barnet Group

You are invited to the next event

Celebrating our first year

Saturday 23rd. Nov. 2019

Starting with refreshments and Birthday cake!

9.45 – 11.00 a.m.

Ahead of the Election –

**we will share News, Ideas and Prayers
covering current “Green” issues
including climate change.**

“Newcomers” are especially welcome to this Free Event.

We aim to be the friendliest group around.

Child-minding facilities available on site.

@ St. John’s Church, Somerset Rd., New Barnet, EN5 1RH.

Christmas Services

Sunday 15	3:30pm	Crib Service
Sunday 22	4:30pm	Carol Service
Wednesday 25	10:30am	Christmas Day

All Welcome

