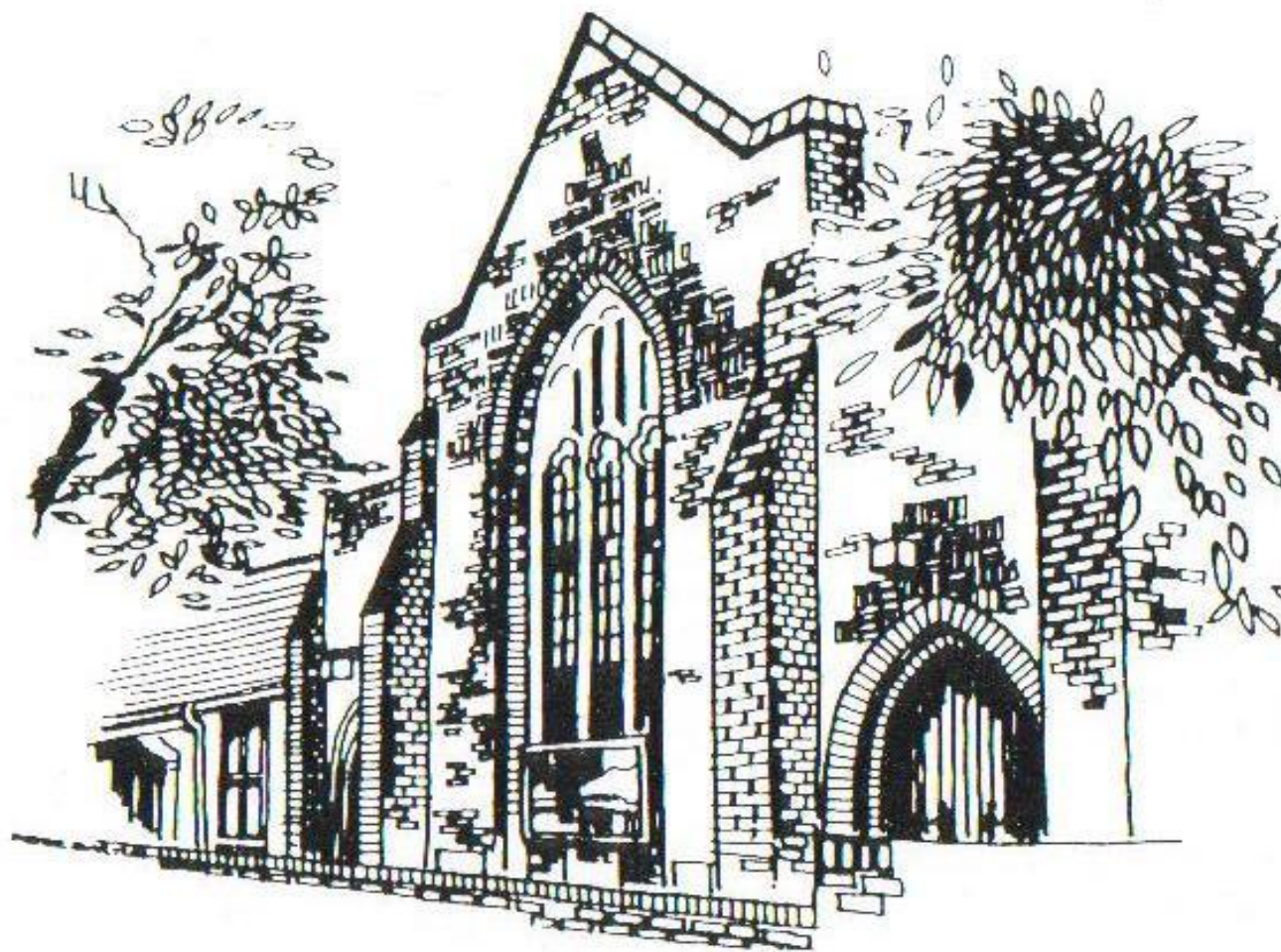




*The Magazine*  
*of*  
**Highams Park Baptist  
Church**

Cavendish Road, E.4.



**February/March 2024**

## CHURCH PROGRAMME

### At the time of writing

#### Current Covid Safety Arrangements

- Please stay at home if you show any Covid symptoms - a recording of the service will be available later on the church website.
- It is your choice whether you wear a mask in the building or not, please feel comfortable whatever your choice, hand sanitiser will remain available, and we are continuing with increased ventilation and cleaning.
- If you test positive for Covid after attending a service, please let us know so we can complete extra cleaning and circulate an anonymous information to the congregation to be more vigilant for symptoms.

If there are any concerns, please speak to the duty deacon.

*Details of Services are given in the Church Diary at the back of the magazine.*



The Zoom Home Group has started again on most Tuesday Evenings. Please see Cherie for details and how to join.

There is a box just inside the main church door collecting food contributions for The Hub. If you are able please put an extra item or two in your shopping to add to this for those who are struggling in the current financial climate.

The deadline for items for the next edition is Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
Editor : Dave Lyus. Email : magazine@hpbc.co.uk



**Cavendish Road, London E4 9NG**  
**February / March 2024**

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Dear Friends



The picture on our new verse-of-the-year card is one that I took myself last year; it is of Avery Hill Park in Southeast London, just half a mile from my old home. It was my favourite place to walk when I lived in Eltham, and I would go there most days to exercise, get some fresh air and pray as I walked. So, it seemed to me a very fitting photograph to use for the verse that I have chosen for the church this year, as this was the place where I spent most time listening to God.

***Listen to God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go;  
he's the one who will keep you on track. Proverbs 3:6***

Our verse speaks of how listening carefully to God keeps us on track, on the right path and going in the right direction. The path in the picture wound its way around the outside of the green space, close to nature and with wonderful views across the vast parkland. One of the reasons I liked walking there was that the path was a hard, all-weather surface, which never got muddy or slippery. This made it suitable for walking on any season, and also made it accessible for people with mobility challenges, wheelchair users, pram pushers, buggy joggers and tots on scooters. Everyone could use this path together.

All of us are on a journey through life, and we are also on a journey of faith. Being part of the church community means that we can travel together on His path to see what God wants to do in our church.

Whether we are young or older, whether we have been a Christian for decades, years or weeks, or if we are still seeking, if we are confident or doubtful, flying high or struggling – we journey together.

For many of us, it seems hard to listen to God when we don't usually experience his voice in an audible way. But that does not mean that he is not speaking! Often, we use the word 'speak' when we describe an *effect* that something has had on us: we might say that a film *spoke* to our sense of injustice, or that a certain look a person gives *speaks* volumes, that a piece of music spoke of the intensity of pain, or that the beauty of a piece of artwork *spoke* to our souls. These things speak without articulating actual words, and God can speak to us without words too.

*'The heavens declare the glory of the Lord' Psalm 8*

In order to listen to God though, to hear his voice spoken and unspoken, we must adopt a posture in which we are able to hear. If we can't be still, take time, and be quiet then we might miss his still small voice.

God wants to speak with us; we need to be expectant to hear as God wants to reveal himself. The most obvious way is through the Bible, which traces God's story and interaction with humankind. And of course, God speaks through Jesus – not just his words spoken that are recorded by the gospel writers, but also through his actions and his character. Jesus himself is described as The Word. God also speaks through prayer, when we engage in conversation with him. And he can also speak through other people, in church in a Sunday service, during coffee fellowship time, or at home.

Pete Grieg that says,

*'Nothing could ever be wilder or more wonderful than the human capacity to hear God's voice... learning to hear God's voice is the single most important thing you will ever learn to do.'*

I pray that we will all be earnestly seeking to listen to God, and that we will grow better at being able to recognise his voice, particularly so in the period of Lent as we approach Easter.

People often give things up for Lent... perhaps this year I can encourage you instead of giving something up, to start something? Making time at the beginning of each day to pray,

*'Lord God, would you help me to listen to your voice at all times'*

God Bless,

Cherie

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## *Cavendish Circular*



As I sit writing this, the weather has turned seasonably cold – no snow YET but... But we look back on an enjoyable Christmas. Many events took place as you will read about later. But we have to remember those whose Christmas was, for whatever reason, less happy. We hear much at Christmas about rough sleepers and homeless people but the relief they may have experienced over the festive season does not last and they may well be in

difficulties again. We can support those charities that support them or, closer to home, put some food in the collection box for The Hub Food Bank

It was very good to see Pauline and Mike Stanton at church recently and this reminds us to think of those we know that are unable to get to church as often as they would like.

Your thoughts and prayers are also asked for Rob Edwards who is booked to have a corneal graft operation on February 1<sup>st</sup>. We all join in the hope that this will restore some sight and allow a further operation on his other eye in the near future. He has borne up so well in what must be an immensely difficult situation.

This issue of the magazine represents the start of my third decade of being magazine editor. Jacquie and I started in 2004 taking over from Dave and Barbara Young who moved away first to Norfolk and now to Scotland.

I had a Christmas card from Marion smith who (kindly) said how much she enjoyed the magazine. It is always good to know that people enjoy it – we have always tried to make it readable. Now that Jacquie is no longer with us the proof reading may not be so good, but I do my best!

I also heard from Ruth Underhay with the news that her ex-mother-in-law, Eileen had died. Probably not many of you will know her but Jacquie and Judy Rowsell used to visit her for an evening out some years ago. Ruth also gave an update on her new life and has agreed that I can include this in the magazine:

*Life in Headcorn is good. I stopped work six months ago too just six weeks after moving so it was all change but all change for the good! I certainly do not miss work at all. In fact my new waking up time is now usually around 9 am rather than 5 am. What can be bad about that! Headcorn Baptist Church is small in membership but large in its welcoming of me! They are a lovely group of people albeit on the older side in the majority. We are without a minister, so Rosemary takes a service every month to help out and also helps out with the music. Ray also plays sometimes and tells his stories. I swim and gym twice a week with Rosemary, have joined a craft group that meets once a week and what with that, shopping, going for walks round and about, generally I am just enjoying the more relaxed way of life. It does help immensely already having friends in place when you move. The only thing I miss are the folk from HPBC really. After 50 years there, its not surprising but I am updated regularly of the news and of course read the magazine! It's so good to hear of Cherie's arrival and she seems to have settled in really well. All the news I get is positive. I am certain she will do well there.*

*Getting the new house to where I wanted to make it a home took quite a long while and a lot of shopping (!) and as it was a new build, the garden was really just laid to lawn. So with the help of Ray, we have dug out a rather large bed and planted bulbs and hedging. We did that in November in cold weather at times and as we have had so much rain and the earth is clay, it was hard going but I think our efforts will be worth it eventually! Already some of the bulbs have sprung!*

I am sure that you will be as pleased as I am that Ruth seems to be really enjoying her life and we are grateful for all the hard work she gave to the church over many years.

### *Hazel's Homespun Humour.*

As we introduced in the last issue, Hazel collects phrases or sayings that she finds interesting – here is another: -

*'Friends are quiet angels who lift us up when our wings have forgotten how to fly.'*

*Unknown author*

# CHRISTMAS AT HPBC

What may well become a tradition happened on the afternoon of Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December. This was the carol singing and delivery of invitations to the Christmas services by a small number of stalwart singers. A tea light was also handed out. It was hoped that we would have a full church especially for the Carol Service.

On Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December about 20 people from HPBC were very fed up - but in the nicest way. It was the occasion of the Annual Christmas Meal which had been arranged by Althea (many thanks to her). An evening of fellowship and good food was enjoyed by all present. So well enjoyed was it, that I got the feeling that the staff were wondering if we were ever going home!



The Church was made very Christmassy by decorations and the tree. We are very grateful to Dave, Jason and Tony for getting and setting up the tree which was then decorated Liz Jones and family. The beams for the candles were put in place by Dave and Jason ready for the Carols by Candlelight and Midnight Services.

We are every grateful to all those who played a part in setting up (and later dismantling) all the elements of decoration that play such a part in Christmas.

We must not forget the part played by Dave and Dianne Kendrick in acting as our postpeople for the delivery and collection of cards.

There were a really good number of such cards distributed in in this way. Perhaps because we have not used the post box so much in recent years due mainly to Covid it was noted that, although people dropped cards off, some did not seem to remember to collect their cards!

Because the Carols by Candlelight service was held at 4.00pm it was decided that there would be no morning service - however, it was also decided that people could meet at Costa Coffee in Tesco's for a time of fellowship and several people took advantage of this. Over the years a fair number of people have arranged to meet up in Costa after the normal Sunday service - if this carrries on perhaps they will consecrate it for us!

It would seem likely that the carol singing and delivery of invitations to our Christmas services worked as there were at least 70 people attending, and the church was full The church looked so welcoming with the lit candles casting a warm glow and the beautifully decorated tree. People poured in much to our delight and the service began. It consisted of Carols and readings with an address by Cherie at the end. The children's corner was extremely busy!!

All were invited for tea, coffee, mince pies and sausage rolls afterwards which finished off the celebration with time to chat and get to know those who stayed.

The Carol singing really helped to bring our church into the community. Thank you to those who gave their time to do this.





Because numbers of young people coming to church seems to vary week by week (although, very encouragingly this number is growing) it is difficult to rehearse for a Nativity play. So, on Christmas Eve, as has happened in the past, Mandy Edwards arranged a 'scratch' production which, as ever, proved a good way of telling the Christmas story. As the children arrived, they were asked if they would like to take part and dress up as one of the characters in the Nativity story. A few adults had been given readings as each scene was set previous to this but had no instructions as to how to set the scenes or involve the children, but it all flowed and worked really well.



The children did us proud and got caught up in the story, whether it was walking around the congregation on the long journey to Bethlehem or following instructions to build scenes.

Our youngest children weren't at all overwhelmed except one of our Three Kings was so taken with his gift for baby Jesus that he didn't want to part with it. It all added to the occasion.

Nothing went to plan when Jesus was born too, so our Nativity was just as it should have been. It was a delight and those watching thoroughly enjoyed it.

Our thanks to Mandy for all the organisation of costumes etc. and putting the Scratch Nativity together for all to experience. Thanks to our children too for being willing to take part.



The Midnight Communion and Christmas Day services were, perhaps, a little less well attended than might have been hoped but were very much appreciated and enjoyed by those who came.

The service on the Sunday after Christmas was led by Dr. Paul Davis and after the freneticism of Christmas was a well received low key time of reflection and also of looking forward. He preached on 'The Hopes and Fears for All the Years' which, I imagine, is a topic deeply entrenched in many of us. As we look back on 2023 we know that there have been good times as well as less good times but, we enter 2024 unknowing what is to come but secure in the knowledge that God will help us through in His own way.

Although perhaps not strictly part of the Christmas celebrations on Friday 12th January the Women's Group from our church ventured out for the first time since COVID. Althea arranged for us to go to a Turkish Restaurant called Nefis Ocakbasi which is in Old Church Rd, Chingford Mount. There were nine of us all very much looking forward to being together and enjoying some Turkish cuisine. We ordered two Turkish Platters which provided an amazing selection of breads, dips, salads, rice, and meats. A feast of plenty!!! We were joined by Chhindo, a church friend which was a lovely surprise. It was great to catch up with her news. We had a really good time filled with lots of chat and laughter leaving the venue knowing that the evening had been real success.

The lights all seemed to reflect as shining halos. I hadn't noticed at the time but there it is in the photo. How apt for our church group!!!! Perhaps we were meant to go there as our first visit after such a long time. Thanks to Althea for all that she did to make this a success.

DK



## Sunday School / Junior Church afternoon out.

On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January, we as Highams Park Baptist Church Sunday School (Junior Church) and leaders together with a few parents, went on a trip to Bowling followed by a visit to McDonald's, for our New Year event.

There were 13 children and young people and 6 adults. With 5 cars, we all made our way to Dagenham Bowling Centre. We all enjoyed a game of bowling, with many of the people keeping the side of the bowling lane up. But fun was had by all. The highest score was Bezaleel with 100 and for the Adults it was Rachel Jones with 117. While there, the children were able to go on a few machines, and we all had a soft drink or slush puppy. After the bowling we went over the road, to the Golden Arches (McDonald's) for a Meal Deal each, or for the little one, a Happy Meal. Everything was eaten plus more.

Our thanks to the leaders, for joining the children on a fun afternoon.

Jason



Winning child Bezaleel with A Score of 100



Wining Child Lucas with a score of 85



Winning Child was Tyler with 80

*Ed's note: My thanks to Dave, Dianne, Jason and all who played a large part in the words and pictures in producing this article. Christmas was certainly a busy time at HPBC this year!*



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER (A WOMEN LED, GLOBAL, ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT)

*'I beg you, bear with one another in love'*

The Christian Women of Palestine are calling us to connect with the land from where Jesus came; where he was born, ministered and died – and from where our faith began and is rooted. Despite living in an area of the world where there is ongoing conflict and the future is uncertain, the women of Palestine are sharing with love a reminder that they are there, and they want to give hope to everyone. The theme of the service 2024 'bear with one another in love' seems very appropriate for these women who will not give up witnessing the love of Jesus Christ.

World Day of Prayer is an international, inter-church organisation led by women which enables us to hear the thoughts of those women from all parts of the world: their hopes, concerns, and prayers. The preparation for the day is vast. An international committee is based in New York and there are national committees in each participating country. Regional conferences meet to consider the service and then local groups make their plans. Finally, at a church near you on Friday 1 March 2024 people will gather to celebrate the service prepared by the women of Palestine. The Day of Prayer is celebrated in over 146 countries. It begins in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world - through Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before finishing in American Samoa some 38 hours later.

With all the many problems faced by Palestinians at this time it may seem strange that it is their story that is being used for the World Day of Prayer, but as is often the case, the decision to use Palestine as the focus for the day had been taken long before the troubles started. The invitation to write the service for 2024 was an opportunity to reflect on continuing challenging times, encouraging Palestinian Christian women to keep searching for a deeper understanding among all the people who share the land, trusting for and hoping in the humanity of one another.

Part of the publicity material tells of Halima Azi is a passionate Palestinian visual artist and design student based in Germany. Her parents are from Tulkarm and Gaza. She grew up in Palestine but, following the war in 2008, the family moved to Germany.

Halima was interested in art from an early age and started painting professionally in 2017 while participating in an art school project. She paints in acrylic and oil on canvas, or sometimes with watercolours on fine art paper. She enjoys making colourful and eye-catching paintings most of which express specific feelings or have a specific meaning. Halima is mostly inspired by nature, art museums, books or her native Palestine. Through her paintings she is proudly representing Palestinian heritage, identity, life, culture, history and tradition.



The artwork, shows three Palestinian women praying together in a peaceful, outdoor space and is aptly named 'Praying Palestinian Women'. Halima has used motifs and symbols which indicate the origin and cohesiveness of these women: Olive trees are a sign of everlasting and abundant life because they can live for thousands of years. The Palestinian people are deeply rooted in their country, and this is underlined by the golden roots of the tree. Poppy flowers are abundant and meaningful as they are a reminder of loved ones who have given their lives for their country.

Traditional Palestinian dress such as the tatreez (embroidery), thobe (dress) or the white scarf symbolise the people's creativity and their country's rich heritage. The keys are a symbol of the hope to return back to Palestine.

As you will see from the Church Diary the celebrations for the World Day of Prayer are taking place locally at Winchester Road Methodist Church of March 1<sup>st</sup> at 10.30. All are welcome.

If you have any questions, please see Cherie or Di Kendrick.

## *Thoughts from Peter*

As many of you will know Peter Burke has been going through some difficult times, but with prayer, support and his own hard work is coming into a better place. He has written the following article which sums up his feelings:

2023 has been transforming. The journey to find love and hopeful myself. To truly know God loves me. To see so many wonderful things in the world around us when time can be so hard is a truly remarkable sign of life.

Our church is still running through the faithfulness of the body of believers, the courage to recover from Covid, the genuine connection there is between us and our wonderful new minister, and then to the beautiful smaller things of being looked after by this wonderful church when I needed to recover from a difficult time in life.

There is so much good around us. Sometimes like the Apollo 8 mission, you have to leave earth to see how good it is, and just like Houston, God is in contact with us and knows exactly where we are.

So I took a moment this week to visit Sloan Square, to hear the Salvation Army playing Christmas carols with their beautiful brass band, the decorations in the shops, being amazed by the artists drawing with incredible skill and lastly as you can see in the picture, taking a moment to visit the Holy trinity church and notice the nativity scene and for once seeing the main characters in the story without being crowded.



God is with us, and sometimes the crowds just don't flock to us, but the ones he sends us are enough.

Peter

*Ed's note: This article was received just too late to include in the last issue.*

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Some of you may have been lucky enough to see Peter and his band perform in church, both during the service and afterwards. Peter has written very much from the heart about his music and what it means to him and how it is, for him, a form of therapy. We are delighted to share his thoughts with you now: -

*Music may seem very easy to listen to, although the more widespread our taste for various styles and decades of tunes gone by, the more we hear influences that link styles lyrics, melodies and musical phrases.  
It in some ways hadn't changed much.*

*Putting music together is a very receptive experience. When a tiny lyric idea or melody drops out of nowhere and you start humming or singing to yourself, dash to your voice note before it disappears and wow, a beautiful moment to savour but not to celebrate just yet is a fabulous, adventurous and creative one.  
If it is the beginnings of a song, waiting patiently for the rest of it to arrive may take a while.  
The melody, the lyrics and the music have to match.*

*'Lord lead the way' which I wrote just before lockdown was exactly this experience. The jigsaw of recognising various lines that have dropped into my melody mind that go together is a wonderful but patient experience.*

*I have made hundreds of voice notes and for this song which was inspired by my recollection of the children's song I remember from 40 years ago, 'when the road is rough and steep, keep your eyes upon Jesus...' only 2 lines I came up with which stuck but we're an exact fit, just like the beginnings of a thousand-piece puzzle.*

*Lord lead the way, I'm like a sheep that keeps going astray.  
and  
All my trying to find my own way, gets me nowhere... are the foundations of this song.*

*Jesus is guiding us, not shouting at us, he is leading us, not assessing us.  
Let us thank the Lord as we trust Him, like I had to when thinking, a year ago when I had to cancel a gig due to poor health, that I may not be able to continue with music, playing Lord lead the way at church on the 7th January 2024.  
Praise God.*

*Pete.*

*To listen to the song on YouTube, search Peter Burke Lord lead the way*



# HPS

The Highams Park Society  
Promoting Community Life

The Society has provided information about events in the coming months: -

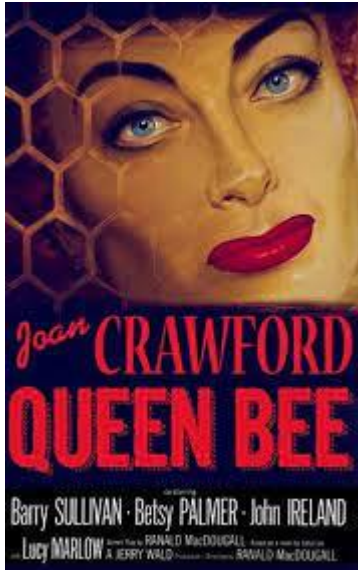
- |                 |                                                                                                              |                                                           |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>February</b> | 24 <sup>th</sup>                                                                                             | Film – 'The Lady in the Van', Lunch 2pm                   |
| <b>March</b>    | 9 <sup>th</sup>                                                                                              | Guided Walk – 'Finsbury Circus<br>Meet at the Clock 10 am |
|                 | 23 <sup>rd</sup>                                                                                             | Film – 'A Place to Go', Lunch 1 pm. Film 2 pm             |
| <b>April</b>    | 21 <sup>st</sup>                                                                                             | (Sunday) - St. George's Day Parade                        |
|                 | 27 <sup>th</sup>                                                                                             | Film – 'Queen Bee'. 2 pm                                  |
| <b>May</b>      | Week Commencing 20 <sup>th</sup> – Exhibition –<br>'Aldriche Way Estate - Changing Land Use from 1300 -2023' |                                                           |
| <b>June</b>     | 1 <sup>st</sup>                                                                                              | Film – 'Maytime in Mayfair'. 2 pm                         |
|                 | 29 <sup>th</sup>                                                                                             | Film – 'Girl Crazy'. 2 pm                                 |
| <b>July –</b>   | Launch of Photographic Competition – details to follow                                                       |                                                           |
|                 | 20 <sup>th</sup>                                                                                             | Film – 'Holiday'. Afternoon Tea                           |

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Membership of The Highams Park Society is £5 for individuals. Membership entitles you to reduced entry at our films and talks – from January, films are £5 for members and £7 for others.







Walks are free for members and £5 for others

Film Club Lunches (including the film) are £10 for members and £12 for others

## HIGHAMS PARK STATION GARDENING

We garden on Tuesdays from 10 until midday. Come at any time between those hours and do as much or little as you are able to.

**13<sup>th</sup> February**

**19<sup>th</sup> March**

**16<sup>th</sup> April**

**14<sup>th</sup> May**

**11<sup>th</sup> June**

**9<sup>th</sup> July**



## HIGHAMS PARK SNIPPETS

This time we look very slightly afield, although there is a Highams Park connection. We are indebted to Bob Jenkins for the loan of a programme for a football match played between Chingford Town and Hastings. I would have to admit that I was unaware that there was such football club – I knew of Walthamstow Avenue but not a Chingford side. I am not certain of the date of the programme, but it is likely to be either late 1940' or early 1950's

It would seem to have had a chequered history shown on the internet as below:



*Chingford United FC was initially founded in 1948, as Chingford Town FC. The team continued as Chingford Town until the 1960s when the club decided to change the name to Chingford Football Club™. In 1997, Chingford Football Club once again changed their name, and decided on Chingford United Football Club. The club played one season under this name, and the change back to Chingford Town occurred. The team shortly folded and in 2017, it was re-established as FC RED DOGS. The tradition of name changes was inevitable and in less than a year, the team was once again known as Chingford United. The team is currently named Chingford Football Club™ and hold sole rights for the given name. As can be seen there have been a number of club badges over time...*



*The club colours (as shown in 2014) are:*

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1st choice colours Sky Blue Shirts, Navy Shorts, Navy & Blue Hoop Socks

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Alternative colours White Shirts, Navy Shorts, Navy & White Hoop Socks

*The Highams Park connection is that their home ground is shown as The Jubilee Sports Ground in The Avenue.*

As readers will know we have looked back at companies that advertised in the Church magazine in the 1930's. We can move forward a number of years as the football programme is a cornucopia of small adverts for companies mainly around Chingford but also Walthamstow. I wonder if anybody remembers any of them – a few are shown below: - Somehow the telephone exchange shown as 'SILverthorn is much more appealing than 0181.....

<p><b>F. G. TIMMS</b></p> <p><i>High-class Footwear Repairs</i></p> <p><b>1, HALL LANE, E.4.</b>  <b>Opp. Prince Albert</b>          Tel: SILverthorn 5316</p>	<p>The Microphones, Loudspeakers and Music on this Ground are installed by :-</p> <p><b>THE BRITISH SOUND EQUIPMENT CO.</b>          47a, Chingford Mt. Rd. E.4</p> <p>You may hire equipment for any function          Also Recordings Made Anywhere          Send your own voice to friends abroad          SILVERTHORN 3595</p>
<p>“The Mans Shop”</p> <p><b>JOHN SOUTH</b></p> <p>Hosier, Hatter &amp; Outfitter</p> <p>31, Old Church Road,          Chingford, E.4.</p>	<p><b>HARGREAVES</b></p> <p><b>7 &amp; 17, HATCH TERRACE,          CHINGFORD HATCH.</b></p> <p><i>Wet, Dried &amp; Fried Fish.</i>          SIL 2493</p>

<p><b>CHINGFORD RESTAURANT</b>          (Opposite the Odeon)          All supporters welcome.</p> <p>Finest Luncheons, Teas &amp; Suppers.          Excellent Service.          We cater for Wedding Parties.</p> <p>Open 10a.m. to 10.30p.m.          Telephone: Silverthorn 4749.</p>	<p><b>F. C. FEDRICK</b>          F.V.I.</p> <p><i>Estate Agent, Valuer, Insurance Broker.</i></p> <p><b>Estates Managed.          Rents Collected.</b></p> <p><b>4, Hall Lane, South Chingford, E.4.</b>          Telephone: Silverthorn 3300.</p>
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<p>Telephone: Silverthorn 2372</p> <p><b>L. A. GRAVATT,</b>          Typewriters and Supplies          Hire, Repairs &amp; Sales Service</p> <p>20, Shaftesbury Road,          Chingford, E.4.</p>	<p>Telephone: AMH 5894.</p> <p><b>G. IMPEY</b>          Building and Public Works          Contractor.</p> <p>Works:          27, 29 &amp; 29a, White Post Lane,          Hackney Wick, E.9          Office:          29, White Post Lane, E.9.</p>
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# Musings - *A few random thoughts about...* February 29<sup>th</sup>

A bit like the Olympic Games, February 29<sup>th</sup> comes around every four years (with some exceptions) which means that there will be one in 2024. But why is this the case?



We count the 'normal' year as having 365 days, however, in fact it is 365.25 days, so in four years there is the need to add a day. This has been known for millennia - Ptolemy II tried, but failed, to implement such a scheme in the 3rd century BCE. In 46 BCE the Julian calendar introduced a leap day every four years, but a problem with the measurement that was used led to a mounting discrepancy over the course of several centuries. The Gregorian calendar reformed the concept in 1582 by eliminating leap years in century years that weren't exactly divisible by 400. This is why the years 1600 and 2000 were leap years but not so 1700, 1800, and 1900. So we are now mathematically reasonably correct but, probably, due to the unusual situation a number of traditions have grown up about the day...

Probably the best known is the idea that women are allowed to propose to a man. But why should this be? Apparently, the right of every woman to propose on 29<sup>th</sup> February each leap year goes back hundreds of years when the leap year day had no recognition in English law (the day was 'leapt over' and ignored, hence the term 'leap year'). One tradition holds that in 5<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland, St. Bridget lamented to St. Patrick that women were not allowed to propose marriage to men. So legend has it that St. Patrick designated the only day that does not occur annually, February 29, as a day on which women would be allowed to propose to men. It was thus decided that the day had no legal status, meaning that a break in tradition on this day was acceptable. There is a slight amendment in Scotland however, to ensure success they should also wear a red petticoat under their dress – and make sure that it is partly visible to the man when they propose. Perhaps less well known is the naming of 29<sup>th</sup> February as 'Bachelors' Day. This refers to the fact that if a man had been proposed to and refused, he had to pay a penalty such as a dress or money. In some European countries this is taken a step further, especially in the upper classes of society, whereby a refusal from a man proposed to is the buying of twelve pairs of gloves for the proposer.

This is believed to be so that she has a covering for her hands to ensure that a lack of engagement ring is not obvious. In fact during the Middle Ages this was the law.

In at least two cases the situation was made even worse by having 30 days in February. In Sweden the changing from the Julian to Gregorian calendar in 1700 meant that there was no leap year in the Gregorian calendar but there should have been one in the Julian. Added to this the years 1704 and 1708 became leap years by error. This left Sweden out of synchronization with both the Julian and the Gregorian calendars, so the country reverted back to the Julian calendar. February 30, 1712, came into existence in Sweden when the Julian calendar was restored, and 2 leap days were added that year.

Sweden's final conversion to the Gregorian calendar occurred in 1753, when an 11-day correction was applied so that February 17 was succeeded by March 1 that year. Not everyone was pleased with the calendar reform. Some people believed it stole 11 days of their lives.

Another case occurred in the Soviet Union in 1930-1931 after the Soviet Union introduced a revolutionary calendar in 1929. This calendar featured five-day weeks, 30-day months for every working month, and the remaining five or six days were "monthless" holidays. The abolition of the seven-day week in favour of a five-day week was intended to improve industrial efficiency by avoiding the regular interruption of a non-working day. However, the Gregorian calendar continued to be used in the Soviet Union during this period. This is confirmed by successive dates found in daily issues of *Pravda*, the official newspaper of the Communist Party, in which February had 28 days in 1930 and 1931, in accordance with the Gregorian calendar. The Soviet revolutionary calendar was discarded as it was difficult to eliminate the Sunday rest tradition. The original seven-day week was restored in 1940.

People born on February 29<sup>th</sup> are apparently called 'Leaplings' and may celebrate their birthday either on February 28<sup>th</sup> or March 1<sup>st</sup> except every four years they can actually celebrate on the correct date.

Christopher Columbus found that on one occasion February 29<sup>th</sup> proved to be a life saver. In 1504 He was marooned on Jamaica when his boat was fatally damaged by woodworm. The local people were fortunately friendly and were happy to provide food and shelter for Columbus and his crew. But as time went on the situation got worse as the natives felt it was a one-sided arrangement and became annoyed and angry and threatened to stop the supply of food. As the matter came to a head Columbus found that on 29<sup>th</sup> February there would be a lunar eclipse.



He told the natives that his God would make the moon appear 'inflamed with wrath' if they stopped the food. When the eclipse occurred the moon did indeed look as a dim red ball in the sky. This so scared the natives that they asked Columbus to intercede with his God to restore the moon and that, if successful, they would continue to provide food. This is what happened, and Columbus and his crew were saved till a rescue boat came some time later... DL

## The truth can hurt...

*A Poem that I came across recently - perhaps humorous or (just maybe) too near the truth! - but still better than the alternative.*

*There's nothing the matter with me,  
I'm just as healthy as can be,  
I have arthritis in both knees,  
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.  
My pulse is weak, my blood is thin,  
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.*

*All my teeth have had to come out,  
And my diet I hate to think about.  
I'm overweight and I can't get thin,  
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.*

*And arch supports I need for my feet.  
Or I wouldn't be able to go out in the street.  
Sleep is denied me night after night,  
But every morning I find I'm all right.  
My memory's failing, my head's in a spin.  
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.*

*Old age is golden I've heard it said,  
But sometimes I wonder, as I go to bed.  
With my ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup,  
And my glasses on a shelf, until I get up.  
And when sleep dims my eyes, I say to myself,  
Is there anything else I should lay on the shelf?*

*The reason I know my Youth has been spent,  
Is my get-up-and-go has got-up-and-went!  
But really, I don't mind, when I think with a grin,  
Of all the places my get-up has been.*

*I get up each morning and dust off my wits,  
Pick up the paper and read the obits.  
If my name is missing, I'm therefore not dead,  
So I eat a good breakfast and jump back into bed.*

*The moral of this as the tale unfolds,  
Is that for you and me, who are growing old.  
It is better to say "I'm fine" with a grin,  
Than to let people know the shape we are in.*

## CHURCH DIARY

### February

*During Lent this year, our sermon series will be reminding ourselves who Jesus is, his character and mission on earth. Having worked through Luke's narrative for Christmas, we continue in that same Gospel to get an overview of this man who was God, his life purpose and his works, that will culminate with the story of his death and resurrection at Easter.*

Thursday 1st	7.30 pm	Church Council meeting at the Manse.
Sunday 4th	10 am	All Age Morning Service Led by Cherie Rogers <i>Listening to God</i> 1Samuel 3: 1-10 and Luke 3:21- 22
	11.30 am	Followed by Church members meeting
5-7/2/24 Cherie away attending the London Baptists Minister's conference		
Sunday 11th	10 am	Morning Service with Communion Led by Bob Jenkins and Cherie taking Sunday School
		Church Council 'Away Day' in the afternoon.
Saturday 17th	11.am	Prayer Walk on the Aldriche Way Estate.
Sunday 18th	4 pm	Morning Service with packs in Service for children Led by Cherie Rogers <i>Lent: Spirit filled Jesus</i> Luke 4: 1-3
Sunday 25th	10 am	Morning Service with Communion and Sunday School Led by Cherie Rogers <i>Lent: Teacher Jesus</i> Luke 14: 25-34

## March

Friday 1st	10.30 am	World Day of Prayer Meeting Winchester Road Methodist Church
Saturday 2nd		Deacons Training Day Broadmead Baptist Church
Sunday 3rd	11 am	All Age service Led by Cherie Rogers <i>Lent: Prayerful Jesus</i> Luke 11: 5-8 and 18: 1-14
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Church Council meeting at the Manse
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Mother's Day Morning Service with Communion and Sunday School Led by Cherie Rogers <i>Lent: Compassionate Jesus</i> Luke 14: 14-21
Saturday 16th	11.am	Prayer Walk.
Sunday 17th	10 am	Morning Service with packs in Service for children Led by Cherie Rogers <i>Lent: Healer Jesus</i> Luke 5: 31 and 8: 40-56
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Palm Sunday Morning Service with Sunday School and Communion Led by Cherie Rogers <i>Lent: King Jesus</i> Luke 19: 28-40
Friday 29 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Good Friday Reflective Service Led by Cherie Rogers <i>Crucified Jesus</i> The Passion Narrative from Luke 22 and 23
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup>	10 am	Easter Sunday All Age Service Led by Cherie Rogers <i>Risen Saviour Jesus</i> Luke 24: 1-12

*Refreshments are served in the hall after the Service.*