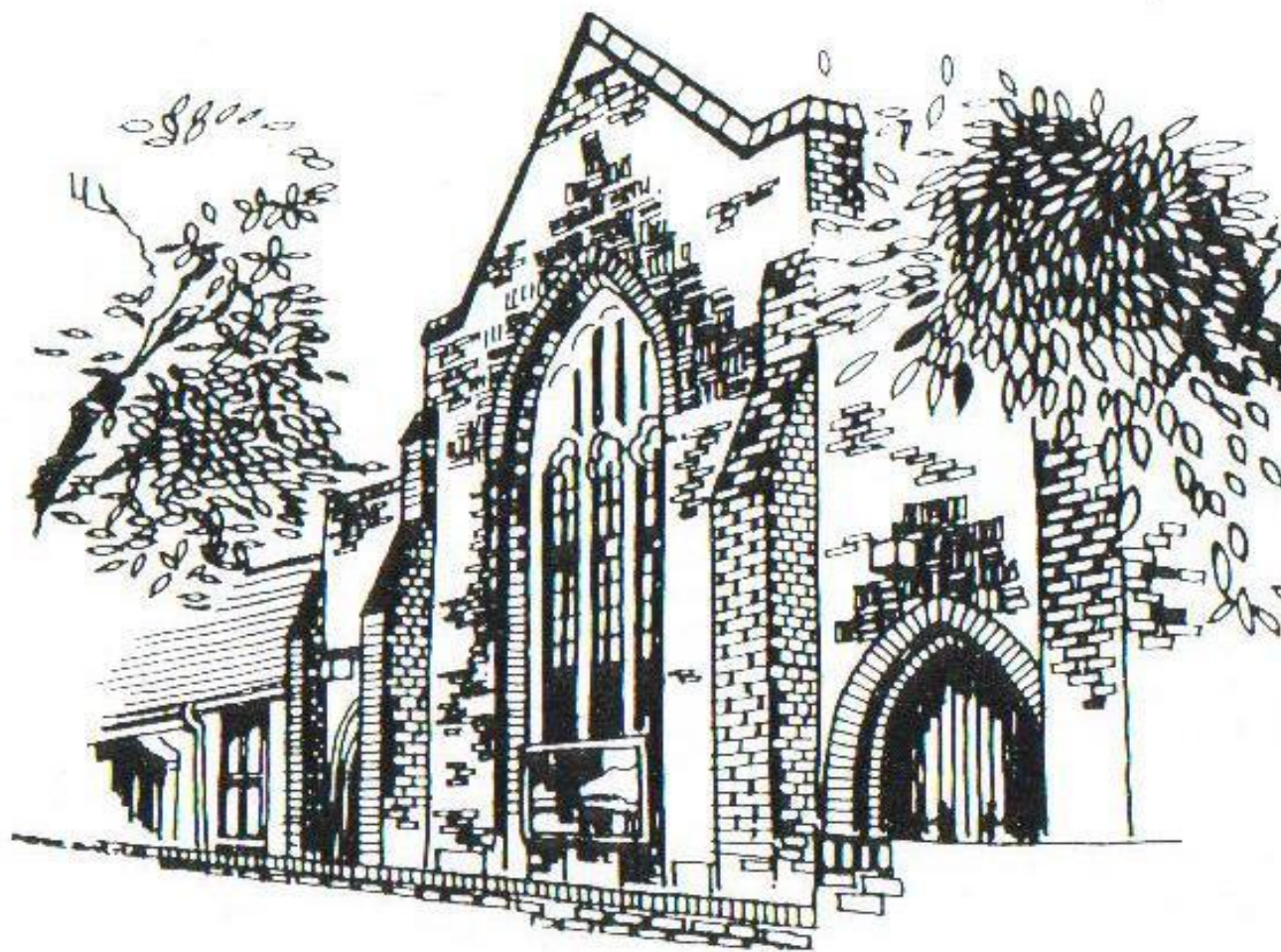




The Magazine
of
**Highams Park Baptist
Church**

Cavendish Road, E.4.



JUNE / JULY 2022

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
- The offering plate will be at the back of the church for your use on the way out or you can speak to Jason about other ways to contribute.
- 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 approach the duty deacon.

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

Weekly Home Zoom Group is held on Tuesdays at 7.45pm. recommencing Tuesday 26th April. Please contact Sarah and Paul Raymond for details.



The deadline for items for the next edition is Sunday 24th July 2022
Editors : Dave & Jacque Lyus. Email : magazine@hpbc.co.uk



Cavendish Road, London E4 9NG

June / July 2022

<p><i>Moderator:</i></p> <p><i>Rev. Andrew Willis</i></p>	<p><i>Please contact:</i></p> <p><i>contact@hpbc.co.uk</i> <i>or</i> <i>07967 655661</i></p>
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Let the light shine!

Many years ago I attended Sunday morning worship in late Spring. The service proceeded in the usual manner: welcome, notices, first hymn then a reading; so far, so normal. It was at the end of the second hymn that proceedings started to veer from the norm and livened up considerably. The young contingent of the fellowship had, for once, been conspicuous by their absence but no longer! Through the chapel doors came a dancing, singing group, wearing party hats, waving balloons, streamers, party poppers and other sundry party items. These they proceeded to distribute lavishly to the somewhat startled congregation before gathering at the front and bursting into a slightly un-coordinated, but none the less, enthusiastic rendering of 'Happy Birthday'. You've probably guessed it: this was Whit Sunday, and the young members of the Church were reminding everyone that this was the Church's birthday and as such, should be celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. That was a memorable service and one that I have called to mind each year at this time. So often we move through the periods of reflection and gravity of the Lenten period, then rejoice in the hope that the resurrection brings on Easter Sunday then relax back into our everyday routine, but the story doesn't stop there - in fact, it is only beginning.....

Some of you will know that Graham Kendrick is a favourite Christian songwriter of mine and leafing through one of his reflections recently I came upon a hymn he wrote about Whitsun and the gift of the Holy Spirit: '*We'll Walk The Land with hearts on fire, and every step will be a prayer. Hope is rising, new day dawning, sound of singing fills the air.*'

Graham explains his inspiration for that song in a 'quarantine reflection' written last year: *'That first Pentecost changed things dramatically for all those novel Christians, especially the disciples, and it sort of in a roundabout way echoes slightly what most of us have been experiencing. The disciples after being told to stay in and wait, wait and something wonderful will happen to you, they were told were waiting for this advocate (Holy Spirit) that Jesus had promised. Many of you have been staying in and waiting, only leaving for your daily exercises. The disciples went to the temple to pray and exercise their faith through prayer, praying and hoping for their expectations of God and the promise their teacher had left them with. When at that first gathering the Holy Spirit fell and filled the hearts of the people there for them that was the first day of their new normal and while at the gathering there was many languages being spoken and understood and I imagine it might have been and felt a bit like a really good concert of a really popular band where people from different nations knew what was being sung and what the feeling was even though the languages were different (a bit simplistic but I hope you get my drift). The disciples new normal was going out into the world and I'm sure they did that a little tentatively whilst filled with excitement of what lay ahead of them. The birth of this new church and the three thousand that had been added to the new church on that first Pentecost (Acts 2:41) began to share the gospel message and grow Christ's kingdom.'*

The last verse of Graham's song inspires us to take the opportunity of considering how we move forward in our faith journey; witnessing in our community and using the gifts bestowed on us by the Holy Spirit to proclaim God's love and be an advocate of Christ:

Let the flame burn brighter, In the heart of the darkness. Turning night to glorious day, Let the song grow louder as our love grows stronger, Let it shine, Let it shine!

JL

Cavendish Circular

The last few weeks have seen a gradual, but encouraging return to 'normal life' once again after the restrictions of the past few years. This culminated in the wonderful scenes of jubilation as the country celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. If you watched the Horse Guards Parade, the Service at St. Paul's cathedral, the pageant in the Mall and the concert, or joined in with your own street parties and private celebrations, you will have caught the excitement and joy as once again most of us were able to gather together without restriction and fear, to give thanks for the life and service of Elizabeth 11. May this sense of joy and thanksgiving imbue us with a fresh determination to celebrate all that is good in our lives, thanking God for His many gifts to us, while remembering those who still suffer in mind and body from the effects of Covid. Our thoughts are also with the people of Ukraine who attempt to continue living with the terrible effects of the war raging in their country. May there be a peaceful resolution for them soon and a return to a normal life once more.

In our Church fellowship too we are able to relax restrictions in our worship where it is safe to do so. Our services have continued to inspire and be a witness of our faith and we are grateful to those who have worked so hard to arrange speakers or lead our services each Sunday. There are plans to extend our social events once again and you can read details of our first Church Social further in this issue.

We continue to pray for those in our fellowship who are in especial need. We think of Emma Lewis-Azayear who was to have a knee and hip replacement in May. Sadly there were complications with the procedure leading to her receiving a blood transfusion and the surgery having to be postponed. As she continues to require hospital care and observation may she be strengthened by God's presence and be at peace.

Josh Aguss had to be admitted urgently to hospital some weeks ago for surgery on his spine. The operation was successfully completed, and he is currently recovering well at home as he carefully regains mobility. We pray that he will soon be pain-free and back to full strength.

We ask for your continuing prayers for Jharna Saha who has lived with a great deal of pain for many months. She is to have a scan after much delay and we pray that the investigations will lead the way to the right treatment as soon as possible, and that she will get relief from her long-term pain and discomfort.

As always, we think of those who cannot worship with us regularly at present for various reasons, including Dorothy and Cliff Tayler, Hazel Ansell, Mavis Grint and Marilyn and Mike Robinson. May they be strengthened by God's continuing love and care, and the knowledge that they are still much valued members of our Church family. We are delighted that Doris Thorndyke has been able to worship with us again recently and thank those who help to bring her to Church each Sunday and offer support to her day by day.

JL

Church Social



Our first church social evening since Covid has been planned for Thursday 23rd June from 7:30pm in The Royal Oak pub in Highams Park. Watch this space for other events now we are getting nearer to summer and, if you feel like organising something that others may enjoy, please speak to someone on the church council.

SPRING HARVEST

Equipping the Church for action

It was with a mixture of excitement and nervousness that we set out on 11th April to go to Skegness. Excitement because it was time for Spring Harvest and nervousness because it was time for Spring Harvest. SH had been forced online as Covid broke out and our world was turned upside down in 2020. The SH team pulled off a miracle and put such amazing content online but with the best will in the world it is not the same as being there in person worshipping and learning and having fun with so many Christians in one place.

After lockdowns, isolation, social distancing, mask wearing and constant rule changing SH was back, but what would it be like?



Many things the same, amazing content and lots of sessions to choose from, something for everyone plus snooker, swimming, the fun fair and bowling. Many things different, no Big Top for a start.... No Big Top! the focus of many Big Starts and Worship sessions of past years but it was impractical - too many people too close together, and expensive to hire.

So Butlins have a new venue Studio 36, huge hall, stage, video screens, seats in blocks with wide corridors between (good for dancing in!) and banks of air filtering machines down each side. Very quickly nerves disappeared, we relaxed and felt comfortable. SH lives on 😊. It seats less people but now there are two venues! Centre Stage and Studio 36 so we had a choice of worship leader and speaker each evening. There was also a video relay into Skyline.

There were a few niggles, a few last-minute changes of speakers but overall it was amazing, fab, fun, thought provoking, tiring, laughter inducing, and I can't wait for next year. Talking of next year, the booking line opens at 8am on 8th June and I am ready, thumbs poised to hit redial many times until I get through to book our apartments.

Wanna come? Its great fun and there is nothing quite like it whether you want to be busy or quiet. Setting aside time to meet with God, worship him, listen to him and talk with him, everyone should give it a go.

Don't be put off by the price, if you are on a low income there are a few bursary schemes to help with the cost, talk to me about it. These are the basic adult prices including an early booking discount.

Gold Apartment	£235
New Style Silver Apartment	£219
Silver Apartment	£219
Standard Apartment	£199
Silver Room	£185
Standard Room	£139
Fairground Apartment	£219
Seaside Apartment	£245

More information can be found at www.springharvest.org and there is a video on YouTube telling you what it is like. It can be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzLPgMFKjIY or e-mail me and I'll send you the links mandy.edwards@bridol.co.uk

Mandy

The History of Hymns

As readers will know we have started a series of articles whereby people nominate their favourite hymn, and we try to find how it came to be written. But where has the practice of singing the praises of God come from?

Within the Bible we find that the Apostle Paul has written to Christians that they should "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs."

The actual word 'hymn' has a Greek root 'hymnos' which may be translated as 'a song of praise', which would originally be in honour of the Greek Gods. The word 'hymnody' meaning 'the singing or composing hymns' has developed over the many centuries dependent on such things as different ways of thinking about religion and its beliefs. As these have changed, then so has the practice of hymn writing.

Originally the singing of words of praise was limited to few people – during the Middle Ages there would have been Gregorian chants which were sung in Latin usually by those in monastic communities – it was also called 'plainsong' but if you hear Gregorian chants today it is anything but plain!

Things began to change in the 1500's with the introduction of the printing press giving more people access to written hymns and the fact that Martin Luther, the German theologian, would encourage congregations to sing together. But it was not only in Germany that this occurred – Isaac Watts, who was a non-conformist minister in England, wrote many hymns that congregations could 'sing from the heart'. It changed the scene from the singing of Old Testament psalms to hymns that have stood the test of time – he wrote at least 750 hymns perhaps the best known today include 'When I survey the Wondrous Cross, Our God Our Help in Ages Past, and Joy to the World'. But Watts was not alone – The Wesley Brothers John and Charles, wrote for the Methodist Church producing many hymns that were so suitable for congregations to sing – as they are to the present day. Towards the end of the 19th Century a new type of hymn/song began to appear – they tended to be very harmonic with a strong lead vocal and attracted the name 'Gospel' – and were a formative part of the later contemporary style of singing.

From the twentieth century to now we have seen further changes with new writers and updating of older hymns There seems to be less emphasis on the use of the word hymn and more on 'songs'. Many churches use live music groups of a much more contemporary style. Some songs use a more repetitive form of words while others still use distinct verse or verse chorus forms in a modern format.

Whether you prefer old or new styles of hymnody they all give the opportunity to sing your praises to the Lord...

My Favourite Hymns

We continue with our new series of favourite hymns/songs, chosen by you. We are grateful to Jason Close who has chosen the Graham Kendrick praise song: 'Shine, Jesus, Shine' and explains what this song means to him.

"I chose this because it was the song I had when I was baptised at HPBC. I remember our organist: John Hough, played it in quick time! It sums up to me that no matter how dark we feel, and our lives can be, Jesus will make it shine with and for us."

Lord, the light of your love is shining,
in the midst of the darkness shining,
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us.
Set us free by the truth you now bring us,
Shine on me, shine on me

(chorus) Shine, Jesus, Shine,
fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, spirit blaze,
set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy,
send forth your word Lord and let there be light.

Lord, I come to your awesome presence
from the shadows into your radiance,
By the blood I may enter your brightness.
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness,
Shine on me, shine on me.
(Chorus)

As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
so our faces display your likeness.
Ever changing from glory to glory,
mirrored here may our lives tell your story,
Shine on me, shine on me.
(Chorus)

Graham Kendrick wrote this praise song in 1987 within the context of the 'March for Jesus' movement of the late 1980's and Icthus Christian Fellowship's focus on the theme of the presence and holiness of God – the God who dwells in unapproachable light. He remembers:

"I had been thinking for some time about the holiness of God, and how that as a community of believers and as individuals, His desire is for us to live continually in His presence. My longing for revival in the churches and spiritual awakening in the nation was growing, but also that we cannot stand in God's presence without 'clean hands and a pure heart'. It was kind of a new generation finding its voice and representing what was happening in the Church".

At that time many people were writing short songs or choruses, and this was quite a substantial work -more like a hymn, so Graham was unsure as to whether it would be picked up by worshippers very quickly. Originally written without a chorus, on completion, he felt that for some reason it "wasn't quite happening" and filed the song away.

Returning to it several months later he felt that it was not complete and needed a chorus. The phrase 'shine, Jesus, shine' came to his mind and adding the chorus proved a very quick process. He remembers singing the song at Spring Harvest when it was still very new, and he had no idea of its potential success. It was obvious that the song's dynamics were in the content of the chorus.

"It's a prayer for the nation" he continues: "but because it says: 'fill this land', it's generic. For my generation such a widespread spiritual impact had almost seemed too big to contemplate. Decades of decline in the Church had produced a siege mentality and it had become quite hard to imagine the nation being touched by the Gospel. But faith was rising towards that, and the song was carried on a wave of prayer. Shine, Jesus, shine, was new and caught the moment. It was very Jesus-focused. Sometimes, when I'm writing songs, I ask the question of God: 'can you endorse this song? Is there any reason why you can't put your stamp on it? Is there something about it that fails to expound the truth, exalt Jesus or offer an emphasis on something important?"

Something about this song seems to connect with people, even those of no faith. Graham Kendrick tells the story of a man caught in a war zone, watching gunfire and missiles from his hotel room. *"Though a non-believer, he felt the need to pray, but did not know how. The only prayer he could think of was in a song he had learned at school, and, as he prayed what words of 'Shine, Jesus, shine' he could remember, a spark of faith ignited, which became a life-changing flame. When people sing worship songs that mean something to them, they become part of their spiritual journey."*

Stanza one focuses on the light and Christ as the 'light of the world' (John 8:12). This light 'sets us free by the truth...' (John 8:32). Stanza two reflects on coming before the 'awesome presence of Christ, where 'the shadows (turn) into your radiance'. Christ's brightness 'consume(s) all my darkness'. The final stanza focuses on how Christ's brightness may be reflected in our lives 'as our faces display your likeness' and reminds one of Charles Wesley's hymn 'Love Divine' as Christ's brightness is ever-changing (us) from glory to glory' as we mirror him.

The song has proved enduringly popular, staying at the top end of the Church Copyright Licence charts in the UK and USA for a decade and was voted tenth in a survey of favourite hymns, conducted by BBC's *Songs of Praise* TV programme in 2005. It was sung at the Dunblane Memorial Service, used at Billy Graham crusades, and has become one of the 'folk songs' of Spring Harvest. It has crossed continents and denominations, been translated into many languages, and continues to be among the most sung hymns in Churches. It has not proved universally popular however, being felt by some critics as an example of the modern 'happy-clappy' hymns. Graham Kendrick answers this criticism thus:

"If the 'happy clappy' label is being awarded then I hope I qualify! I will not apologise for following in the tradition of the apostle James (5:13) singing songs of praise if I am happy (and presumably clapping if I feel clappy). Mind you, please give me a label also for praying when I am in trouble, in the exact same tradition, of course, and for the times when I must weep with those who weep."

Graham Kendrick was born in 1950 in Northamptonshire. The son of a Baptist pastor he began song writing in the early 1970's. He now has over 30 albums and 400 songs to his credit and his songs are sung throughout the world and in many languages. *JL*

YOUTH GROUP - LOOKING BACK

Unless you are of a certain age, you won't remember the fact that we used to have a Youth Group down the Church every Tuesday evening and at its height, had around a HUNDRED teenagers turning up regularly. We had a talented Staff led by Carol and Phil Slaney, Barbara and Roger Parmenter, Jacqui and Dave Lyus, Linda and Dave Tomlinson, Dave and Barbara Young and remembering particularly Martin Briggs and Brian Turley (who have both sadly just passed away) and of course myself.

The Group was formed in the late sixties, at the time when the inspirational Michael Walker was Minister here and when Michael left the Church, the group carried on almost to the start of the eighties. Prior to this, the Church had a YPF (Young People's Fellowship) but in the sixties, there were big social changes.

The Youth Group evenings were typical of the time, the music, and of course, the fashions, long hair, flare trousers, Ben Sherman/Brutus shirts, stacking heels, tie n dye t shirts etc and who could forget the miniskirts!! A 'normal' Tuesday evening would consist of paying subs as you arrive, play table tennis/ pool or snooker, and listen to all the great music. Who can forget the discos, that took place when 'The Undertakers' used to turn up in a hearse and their all-black outfits and top hats to boot. They really arrived with their equipment in a coffin!

The highlight of every Tuesday evening was the 'pastoral plug' a regular weekly item led by a different leader. It was meant to be a kind of a thought for the week, a time of reflection and a few words of inspiration, sometimes from the Bible and the kids loved it.

These were the days when we had fun, evenings were very challenging and memorable, this was tested in particular when we organised weekends away, when we had to arrange night guards - that's another story!

We also arranged special events and some of the Staff attempted being disc jockeys!! A lot of work went into the arrangements for our reunion lunch of Staff and former members about five years ago; as you can imagine we had some wonderful items of memorabilia on show, which linked up beautifully with all the memories shared on the day.

The event was a moderate success, and this article is now a reminder of the great times we had but also noting that we are all getting older and sadly, some of our former Staff are no longer with us, presumably so too are some of our younger Youth Group members.

It was great to recall some of the names, and many experiences. David Lange, a former Staff member took over the leadership of the Group in the late seventies, until its demise in the early eighties and did a wonderful job in keeping the Group going in very difficult circumstances.

For me, I look back on those days with a lot of pride and satisfaction. Although I am not sure whether we achieved our aim re the Church, we had great times, and met some wonderful people who we hope were influenced in some small way courtesy of the Youth Group.

Bob Jenkins

Ed's note: We thank Bob very much for this trip down memory lane. He notes that two people very much a part of those times have sadly passed on. It is a sad fact that the names of Brian Turley and Martin Briggs will not be known to many today, but we feel it is right that in recognition of their past connection with the church we include memories kindly provided by Bob and Brian's brother-in-law (and previous magazine co-editor) Dave Young.



Brian with Martin



The Life of Brian

I've never been able to remember dates and events in any chronological order and the passing of the years has certainly not helped. I may well mis-remember the timing of some of the events I mention. Mea culpa, que sera sera, et cetera.

I first came to Highams Park towards the end of 1965 and attended what was then the local Congregational church. Brian attended the Baptist Church.

I would have known him from the joint youth activities of the various local churches, known rather pompously as the Highams Park Christian Youth Council, or HPCYC. In 1970 Barbara and I were married, and I joined Barbara at the Baptist church where she had been brought up. At that point, I would have got to know Brian better.

The three of us became involved in helping to run an open youth club, which proved to be something of a challenge. Fortunately, the leader in charge was considerably bigger than Brian and me. Brian had gained a reputation for taking himself off on exciting and exotic holidays. Faraway places with strange sounding names, going on his own and before the days of cheap package holidays to those sorts of countries. I'm sure I was not alone in envying his sense of adventure and initiative. We both had a liking for folk music, and I also envied his skills as a guitarist, since I was blessed with ten thumbs in this respect. Holidays and folk music came together when the three of us arranged to go on holiday to Padstow in Cornwall. These days, Padstow is better known for its association with the seafood chef, Rick Stein, but then its main claim to fame was its May Day celebrations.

I think this would have been in 1973 and would have encompassed Brian's 28th birthday. Our daughter, Sam, would have been about 17 months old. Barbara and I never did get to see the May Day celebrations since the advertised evening baby-sitting service was operating an un-advertised exception on that particular date. We do, however, have fond memories of Brian on another occasion during that holiday.

At the beginning of May, the sea is more or less at its coldest, having yet to start the annual warming up process.

We had found a small beach, which Sam considered ideal for her first attempts at paddling in the sea. I duly took her by the hand, and we paddled. It wasn't very long before my feet had become numb, so we turned back.

Sam still wanted to paddle, so Brian took her hand and went back in with her.

There followed a series of relays with Brian and I handing over to each other when our feet could stand it no longer, while Sam paddled on, seemingly unconcerned about the icy temperature. Brian was highly amused at this introduction to parental responsibility, which he obviously enjoyed and remarked on at the time. I'm sure this enjoyment would have been remembered in later years when Steven appeared on the scene.

Music continued to play a role in our friendship and Brian, Barbara and I, along with Jacquie Lyus, formed an occasional group to perform at the Baptist Church. The four of us were also involved with a drama group based at a Methodist Church in Woodford Green. Brian included panto dames in his repertoire and Lyn tells me that she still has lots of his dresses. I'm not entirely sure how often he may have worn them in later years, but that's just between them.

Barbara and I wrote our first panto, a version of Aladdin, which Barbara directed, and I stepped in late in the day as Widow Twankey. Brian was cast as the evil Abanazer. Brian was not entirely happy about this role. He didn't think that he could do justice to the song "I'm Bad!" that Michael Jackson had recently made famous. However, he did persevere and managed to inhabit the role and give a good performance. He also, to our surprise, learned some magic tricks involving flashes of sparks and smoke. The write-up in the local paper had Brian's magic in its title and was full of praise for him. I, on the other hand, was described as "a useful Widow Twankey", not that I was jealous of course.

In the late seventies Brian was hosting a birthday celebration in a pub in Theydon Bois, to which we were invited. We brought Barbara's sister Lyn with us and the rest, as they say, is history. Now, when I first heard that the processional music was to be "Annie's Song", I was thinking of starting this eulogy by saying something like "isn't it fortunate that after all these years, Lyn never did find out about Annie." Fortunately, I decided against it. In fact, it was evident that Lyn was Brian's Annie. During that first meeting, they never stopped talking, while the rest of his party carried on without them. In retrospect, it may perhaps have been that Brian never stopped listening. Clearly, they have been more than enough for each other ever since, with Steven's arrival being the icing on the cake.

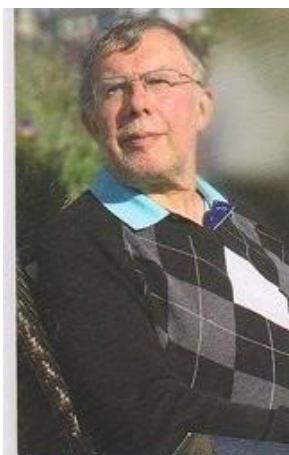
Over the years we have enjoyed going to Thursford at Christmas and eating out to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. Our children, Sam and Chris, got to know, Steven, Lyn and "Uncle Brain". Brian was known to us as both a relative and a friend. His silly sense of humour was much appreciated, but I shall end, not a moment too soon, with something Brian wrote back in the seventies for a serious recipe book that HPCYC had produced to raise money for Christian Aid (see Page 16). Brian had chosen some time previously his "Exit Music" which was "Goodbye" by Peter Cook and Dudley Moore which marked the end of each episode of "Not Only, But Also" many years ago.

Dave added a further note later:

You may know that Brian was a steam train enthusiast since boyhood. On what would have been Brian's 77th birthday Lyn and some of her relatives (8 of us in all) took a return trip from Holt to Sheringham on the North Norfolk Railway ("Poppy Line") today and Brian's ashes were consigned to the firebox of the train and by now should have settled over and around Kelling Heath. Brian's son Steven was allowed on the footplate to shovel the container into the firebox.

TRIBUTE TO MARTIN BRIGGS

17.4.48 – 20.3.22



At the beginning of April this year, Phil Slaney, Dave Lange (a former leader of our old Youth Group) and myself, travelled to St Joseph's Catholic Church in Thame in Oxfordshire, for the funeral of our good friend Martin Briggs. The Funeral Mass was attended by over a hundred people and was a fitting tribute to a much-loved individual.

The Service included Communion for some and there were various memories and tributes given, from Martin's surviving brother, his eldest son and Angela's sister.

The main tribute was given by Gareth, a friend of Martin's for over thirty years and I am happy to reproduce his eulogy courtesy of Facebook through which the Service could be transmitted and is currently still available.

Who would have thought that a Baptist boy brought up in Orford Road, Walthamstow would conclude his earthly life by having a funeral mass at a Catholic Church. Martin was a much-travelled person, in a geographical, intellectual and a spiritual sense and although he was not a Catholic, he was a catholic in the other meaning, generous, all embracing and very interested in sports, literature, music and politics. He was always open minded, keen to learn, very humble and helped out when he could, even curious of how things worked! Gareth recalls that when he first met Martin, he was intimidated by him because of his intellect and knowledge. At this time Martin was a Church Warden and Gareth was being interviewed to eventually become the Vicar of Leamington Spa. They became good friends for many years and developed a great and warm trusting friendship including sharing relationship difficulties. And then Angela came into Martin's life in 1998, they married and became a 'dream couple'.

Martin was born in 1948, the eldest of three sons to Maurice and Beryl Briggs, both of whom were former members and deacons of HPB. Maurice became a Head Teacher and Beryl was a Civil Servant. They were a close family; tragically the youngest son Andrew died last year which was a severe shock to one and all. Martin attended the local primary school across the road at Selwyn, and because he was very bright, won a scholarship to the private Forest School.

He won a place at the University of East Anglia reading history, philosophy and excelled in all his studies and of course made the most of socialising and meeting many new friends and colleagues. He was a committed Christian and member of HPB for many years and was an inspirational deacon and worked alongside other friends when the Youth Group was at its height in the seventies when a hundred teenagers used to arrive at the Church Hall every Tuesday evening!

In his first marriage to Gill, they had four children, Zak, Seb, Joel and Merrilee and as a family, they shared homes in London, Nottingham and Warwick. Martin's career reached dizzy heights when he became a Civil Servant, working as the Head of the East Midlands Regional Development Agency initially dealing with 'levelling up' as we would refer to it today, but back then Martin was a leading and dominant figure, and his valued views were much sought after and he was to appear regularly on local television talking about planning and development. In short, Martin was a star, well read on any subject, talking to anyone about any topic ranging from world politics to cricket, and local matters at a Costa Coffee house, showing as ever, richness of language, knowledge, clear understanding, and no ego.

On meeting Angela in 1998, it was great that Martin's own family and Angela's family all developed love and respect for each other, and it was typical of Martin to support Angela's father Larry, in the latter years of his life. One can just visualise Martin being at ease and in his element whether it be as a husband, father or granddad. In Thame, where he and Angela lived, Martin had a wide circle of friends and he showed typical genuine interest to all and in addition, he became chairman of the local Citizens Advice bureau devoting a lot of his time to local affairs, and of course, helping others. Some of the friends at HPB would regularly meet up with Martin from time to time for a special lunch and he was always so pleased to see them. Sadly over the last ten years or so, his health deteriorated through strokes and a heart attack, and he was suffering with illness and disability. He never complained about his situation and became more aware of the pressure he was putting on Angela rather than thinking of himself. However this did not stop him from being positive and he still retained his strong faith, through his humour, grace and fortitude. Gareth recalled the final days when Martin knew that he was to meet his Lord and they prayed together knowing that his faith had been so strong in this final time of trial.

We would all agree with Gareth that Martin was a very special person, as is shown on the Order of Service which says:

'Martin Briggs, resilient, faith filled, clever, witty, true gentleman, kind and impeccable values.

R.I.P our friend

Bob Jenkins

The (infamous)

RECIPE FOR TOAST

Ingredients and utensils

- 1 Large loaf of bread
- 2 Ounces of best butter
- 1 Bread board
- 1 Automatic electric toaster
- 1 Saw tooth knife
- 1 Butter knife

Method

Place the loaf of bread on the bread board and then place the left hand on top of the loaf with the thumb about half an inch from the right-hand end of the loaf.

(If left-handed, these instructions should be reversed).

Take the saw tooth knife in the right hand and, using the left thumb as guide, commence drawing the knife backwards and forwards across the loaf whilst simultaneously exerting a downward pressure. (Great care is necessary during this operation as it has been found from past experience that the left thumb is particularly vulnerable). When the knife reaches the bread board it will be possible to separate a thin slice of bread from the main loaf.

(NOTE, if using cut bread this step may be omitted – simply open the pack and withdraw one slice) take the electric toaster and plug into a suitable power socket. Switch on. (This latter step is very important as preparation will be considerably delayed if overloaded).

Take the slice of bread and place in one of the apertures on top of the toaster. Operate the toaster to commence preparation. The slice of bread will turn a golden-brown colour (more noticeable if white bread is used) and a delicious aroma will fill the room. The slice of bread will then pop up out of the toaster. (CAUTION, if preparation is accompanied by dense smoke and a distinctive smell of burning, the toast will have reached the stage of being 'well done').

If rather more 'rare' toast is preferred it will be necessary to adjust the toaster accordingly. Remove toast from toaster and spread thickly with best butter using the butter knife. Toast is now ready to be served.

(Average portion per adult is 2 -3 slices, or if it is me, 8 – 9). Please note, when the toast is removed from the toaster, a slight curvature on the edges may be apparent. Also, numerous holes will have appeared through which the butter will drip on to the clothing and furniture etc. Both of these are perfectly normal incidents and should give no cause for concern

Brian Turley

Memories

With the celebration this year of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee probably many of us will spend some time thinking back to years and events past. I have to admit that, unlike some people, I am not someone whose first memories go back to their days in a pram or appearing on a bearskin in their bare skin! My years at infants' school are somewhat of a closed book – two things stick in my memory – the first was the relief and pride I felt when I was able to recite the alphabet in full! The other was a very important (as it turned out) event. I was then six years old and for whatever reason still have a vivid memory of being taken with all my class to a different room than that which we usually used. On the wall of was a large wooden box from which came sounds of a man speaking in a serious voice. And what he told us was that the king had died. This was on February 6th, 1952.



That news probably meant little to me at the time but over the next sixteen months it became obvious that something special was to happen – the word 'Coronation' was much used. We discovered what was to happen at Westminster Abbey on June 2nd,

1953, and strange words were heard – Orb, Sceptre, Stone of Scone and Anointment. And stranger still, for the first time, we would be able to watch the ceremony. If you had one of those new-fangled television sets that is. I cannot remember if we had a set prior to the day but we were able to sit and watch the whole colourful event in black and white on the BBC - the only channel available at the time! There had apparently been much discussion as to whether live broadcasting of such a solemn event was right and proper but good sense prevailed. The television programme was, in reality, in two parts – the actual ceremony of the Coronation and the parade of dignitaries and bands which Britain seems to do so well. Very unfortunately nobody had consulted the weather and the rain came down...



One abiding memory of this was the carriage procession – of course all were able to be closed keeping the rain out but the occupants hard to see. There was one exception – Queen Salote of Tonga was not going to let a cloudburst stop her being seen.

She was a lady of generous proportions and was six foot three inches tall. Throughout the procession she could be seen to be smiling and seemingly was not getting wet! She shared the carriage with the Sultan of Kelantan who was quite small and was getting wet. There was a (possibly apocryphal) story going round at the time in which someone asked who the little man in the carriage with the Queen was – the answer was 'her lunch!'.

These were different times – rationing was in full flow in 1952. Items including sugar, butter, cooking fat, meat and tea were still limited. Perhaps coincidentally sweets were taken of the ration in February 1953 in time for the Coronation. I do not have any recall of austerity, but then having grown up with it I would not have known better! What was then normal was the freedom for children in comparison to today. Admittedly there were no electronic games and all the paraphernalia expected in our lives now. Entertainment was the cinema, radio and for (an increasing number) television. But children were used to 'playing out' in the streets and fields. There were, of course, less cars and many mothers did not work and so could keep an eye on the little ones. There were no lines of cars appearing outside schools as happens now. In fact I can remember walking home on my own from infant's school. Perhaps not far from Handsworth Avenue to Vincent Road where we shared a house with relations. This was quite common after the war when housing was in short supply. I still had to negotiate three roads to cross but I must have done so since I am still here. We lived at 23 Vincent Road, next door at 21 lived Mrs Coles – strangely a postcard to her appears on an online auction site.



Where the flats are now sited in Vincent Road was a field which contained a low built structure made from what seemed to be sacks filled with cement – this was the Air Raid Precaution site. I assume it was a shelter but also was the base for the local Air Raid Wardens – it also made a good place to play.

I suppose if the young me could be transported to the Highams Park of today much would still be recognisable. The station is still there although you cannot order your supply of coal there anymore. Most of the shops are existing even if most are now used for different services and products. Most of the changes have taken place on The Broadway side of Highams Park – there was no Tesco store back then. In fact the whole aspect of Larkshall Road up to Inks Green has altered considerably. The library is fortunately still there – I spent many happy hours trawling through their stock leading to my love of books.

Memories tend to be selective, especially over a long period of time but looking back over the last seventy years has been a very pleasant experience. DL

Highams Park Snippets



The Highams Park Society continues to work hard to make Highams Park a great place to live and part of that is keeping the station garden in good shape. To this end they are putting out:

A CALL FOR NEW GARDENERS

If you feel able to assist them in this really useful task, please contact sd.christian19@gmail.com or telephone 07414 810013. We are sure that you will be welcomed with open arms...

Highams Park Day Saturday 16th July

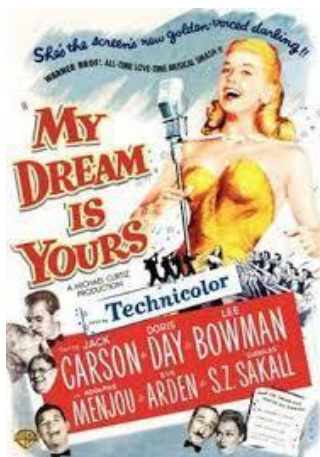


Highams Park Day is back this year after a two-year absence due to the covid pandemic and is going to be held in The Highams Park. More details to follow.

If you or anyone you know would like a stall, please contact Christine Sherret on 07718 990572.

A Film and Afternoon Tea

Saturday 30th July



More details about this event will follow nearer the time but since numbers are limited to 40 make a note in your diary. Jenny Cove can provide further information.

Then and now

There has been much focus on 1952 in recent times for obvious reasons but how much has life changed? The brief answer is 'to a huge extent' – perhaps even greater than that for the Industrial Revolution.

Technology has made so many advances in those seventy years. Just remember back to 1952 and think what is available now that was not even thought of then...

One of the things that we have come to rely on now is some form of computer. Charles Babbage in the 1800's had tried to make a mechanical mathematical computer – his 'difference engine' but had failed due to the lack of available means of obtaining suitable parts. The first 'real' computers were those constructed by Post Office Engineers to assist in breaking the Enigma codes during World War Two – but these were huge and, due to valve technology, were not utterly reliable. Matters did start to get better in the post war years but, at the time, little use was foreseen for them – as Thomas Watson, president of IBM, 1943 said "**I think there is a world market for maybe five computers.**". How wrong can you be?

Domestic appliances were still limited. I can remember back then when my parents used a gas powered 'copper' to heat water for clothes washing – the first twin tub machine did not come to market until towards the end of the 1950's. We then had a gas-powered refrigerator! Refrigerators were available but not common. After all many women did not work and thus could go shopping everyday if needed. And as for freezers – it took until the late 1970's for half the homes to have one.

Telephones were seen almost as a luxury. The Post Office had not foreseen that they would need to increase the capacity of their exchanges and, as a result, there was a long wait for a line to be provided. That line might be shared with a neighbour on what was called a 'party line'. Not helpful if you both wanted to make an urgent call.



How they have changed!

Cars were certainly not as common as now. Petrol had only come off of wartime rationing in 1950 and it was government policy, that, in order to earn much needed currency we had to export as much as possible and this included cars. If you had a car and could get petrol (not diesel or electric!) you would find that the road network did not include motorways, so journey times were considerably longer.

In the early 1950's there were the first stirrings of teenagers as opposed to younger versions of parents. The Edwardian based 'uniform' of the Teddy Boys could be seen on our streets. But in the 70 years since there have been so many changes of style from the Mods to the Rockers to Flower Power and Carnaby Street fashions and on to Punk. Nowadays it seems that anything goes and the recent pandemic with 'working from home' has made even work clothes much more casual.

Have we used all these changes wisely? The world seems a much smaller place because of technology. Television is colour and much higher quality pictures (even if the programmes may not be). News is instantaneous and, as we have recently found, can be beamed from areas in conflict. There is a huge choice of channels brought by satellite, cable or streaming. There are programmes for every interest. You can record items of interest to be watched when you want to and not when the television company does.

Mobile phones, tablets and computers keep you in contact at all times and you can find the answers to almost any question in seconds. If you put the words 'The Baptist Church' into Google in about half a second you can find 157,000,000 results. Finding an appropriate result would, of course take much longer... Technology has had a great effect in the pandemic. Only a few years ago the word 'Zoom' would have meant going fast – now it allows you to meet with friends and colleagues on screen. It has proved invaluable in keeping the ethos of churches going even when churches were closed.

And what of religion in those seventy years? Changes have, of course, happened. In Highams Park we have lost some mainstream places of worship – there is no longer the Anglican church in Selwyn Avenue, that went to provide a site for Helwys Court. The Methodist Church in Handsworth Avenue is no longer there but has provided space for flats. The Congregational (later URC) in Malvern Avenue is now used by the Seventh Day Adventist church. For our part we have had eight ministers starting with Stephen Winward and ending for the present with Rosemary Eaton. There have been several periods of the church being without a minister, but we have been extremely fortunate over the years to have had excellent moderators and support from within the congregation to keep the church functioning. In 1952 there was no Fellowship Hall – that did not start building until 1955. The manse in Warboys Crescent was not part of the church until 1961. Prior to then the manse was situated at 6 Alma Avenue. Over the years the congregation has changed both in size and make up. Looking back it has decreased in number (as with most mainline churches) but is still well known for its welcoming attitude (as commented on by many people). There are less children at the moment and over the years this has sadly meant that first the Girl's Brigade and lately the Boy's Brigades have had to close due to lack of numbers. There are changes too in the Sanctuary – there have been at least two sets of curtains and two wooden crosses to my knowledge. With regard to the crosses Phil Slaney and I erected the first many years ago and then put the new one in place some years after. (Readers will notice that no specific dates have been given – another result of 70 years passing is that memory is not what it used to be!). It is also a more comfortable place to enjoy a service – the old wooden chairs having been replaced by nice, upholstered seating.

It is often said that you should not look back but look forward. Well, I hope that you have enjoyed a brief look back and would join me in looking forward to the coming of a new minister to continue the excellent preaching of the Lord's word for many more years to come. *DL*

CHURCH DIARY

June

Sunday 5th	10 am	Morning Service Led by Amanda Edwards
Thursday 9 th	7.30 pm	Church Council Meeting
Sunday 12th	10 am	Morning Service Led by Dr. Paul Davis
Sunday 19th	10 am	Morning Service with Communion Led by Rev. Andrew Willis
Sunday 26th	10 am	Morning Service Led by Jason Close

July

Sunday 3rd	10 am	Morning Service Led by Anil Chumber
Thursday 7th	7.30 pm	Church Council Meeting
Sunday 10th	10 am	Morning Service Led by Amanda Edwards
Sunday 17th	10 am	Morning Service TBC
Sunday 24th	10 am	Morning Service Led by TBC
	11.30 am	Followed by Church Member meeting
Sunday 31 st	10 am	Morning Service Led by Muneyi Antoniou

June

Thursday 4th	7.30 pm	Church Council Meeting
Sunday 7 th	10 am	Morning Service Led by TBC