

WORSHIP in MARCH

- Sunday March 7th** 11am Morning Worship including Communion - Revd. David Jenkins
Theme: **'Who will Buy?'**
- Sunday March 14th** 11am Morning Worship - Revd. Ray Adams
Theme: **'Overwhelming Love'**
- Sunday March 21st** 11am Morning Worship - Revd. David Jenkins
Theme: **'Ring out the Old, Ring in the New'**
As usual on Vision4Life Sundays, worship is followed by a discussion and activity session and lunch

- Sunday March 28th** 11am Morning Worship on Palm Sunday is part of the Open Weekend of 'Journeys'
Theme: **'Journey to Jerusalem'**

5.30pm 'Songs for our Journey' - hymns, songs and readings on the Weekend theme. Tea available from 4.00 - 5.00pm

WORSHIP in APRIL

- Thursday April 1st** **8pm** Maundy Thursday Communion Service

There will be Reflections for Holy Week between Monday March 29th and Sunday April 4th, with an act of worship on Good Friday prior to the Walk of Witness. Full details will be given in the April magazine and in the Sunday notice-sheets.

- Sunday April 4th** **9am** Easter morning breakfast communion led by Revd. Ray Adams
- 11am Easter Day Worship including Communion - Revd. David Jenkins
Theme: **'Christ has Risen'**

- Sunday April 11th** 11 am Morning Worship - Mr. Paul Ashitey, URC accredited lay preacher
Theme: **'The End and the Beginning'**

- Sunday April 18th** 11 am Morning Worship - Revd. Ray Adams
Theme: **'Holy, holy, holy'**

- Sunday April 25th** 11 am Morning Worship - Mr. Martin Wells, URC lay preacher
Theme: **'An End to Suffering?'**

Lunchtime prayers with the Burford Centre guests at 12.15pm on Wednesdays are open to all.

Vision4Life Bible project: The lectionary readings for March Sundays are:

- 7th**
Isaiah 55: 1-9 Psalm 63: 1-8
1 Corinthians 10: 1-13 Luke 13: 1-9
- 14th**
Joshua 5: 9-12 Psalm 32
2 Corinthians 5: 16-21 Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32
- 21st**
Isaiah 43: 16-21 Psalm 126
Philippians 3: 4b-14 John 12: 1-8
- 28th**
Luke 19: 28-34 Psalm 118: 1-3, 19-20
and
Isaiah 50: 4-9a Psalm 31: 9-16,
Philippians 2: 5-11 Luke 23: 1-49

Pastoral Letter

Nelson Mandela was in the news recently when South Africa commemorated the 20th anniversary of his release from imprisonment on Robben Island. What projected him from being a political prisoner to an inspiration for people of all ages was both his vision for the future, and, perhaps more important, his lack of bitterness for the prime years of his life in which he had been locked up in prison.

I saw Nelson Mandela once address an audience of about 10,000 people in Trafalgar Square. It was back in 2005 when people turned up to a rally to support the 'Make Poverty History' campaign. Despite his frailty, Mandela spoke with a strong voice about his decision the previous year to retire from public life - 'yet as long as there is poverty, how can any of us rest?' There was a real sense of this great world statesman handing on the torch to a new generation. And it was to young people in the audience he spoke mainly, as the generation, which could eradicate world poverty.

Everyone was entranced by the magnetism of this otherwise frail-looking man, both during his speech, and later when I saw him emerge from his car at the side of the South African Embassy as he turned to smile and wave at the crowds. People were genuinely overjoyed - and many held cameras in one hand and mobile phones in the other, telling their friends excitedly that they were in the presence of Nelson Mandela. At times, I couldn't hear what Mandela was saying because of the excited running commentary of people talking to their friends elsewhere.

The joy he radiated was quite moving: and it was wonderful to see street-wise, sophisticated young London workers and students so genuinely delighted to see a gracious old man with charisma but also the determination to motivate and inspire them to action.

"Sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great. You can be that great generation. Of course, the task (of eradicating poverty) will not be easy but not to do this would be a crime against humanity, against which I ask all humanity now to rise up".

What interests me at this time of Lent, as we think again about Jesus' suffering and death and his influence over our lives, is the connection between giving and forgiving. Forgiveness seems to emerge from the same source of grace from which God enriches our lives with other gifts, so that we can turn outwards to give and forgive rather than always being self-absorbed.

I wrote last month about generosity. Forgiveness is a generosity in relationship, which begins with God's grace to us, and needs us to respond with a generous spirit to help set things right and begin the process of healing where relationships have broken down.

Forgiveness can be especially hard when we have been the victim, and we may well look at the Mandelas and Tutus of this world and admire them from far off, thinking they are so exceptional that we cannot aspire to their standards. But their attitude strikes a deep chord within many of us who recognise it as the only way forward that sets everyone free, despite the long slow process involved and the cost to those who have suffered most. In Desmond Tutu's words, there can be 'No future without forgiveness'. Nelson Mandela's ability to let go of bitterness and resentment has provided a springboard for many others to do the same.

Archbishop Tutu writes of a visit he made to a village called Ntarama, near Kigali in Rwanda. It was one of the villages where Tutsis were massacred by Hutus while they were taking part in church worship during the Rwandan genocide in 1994. A few kilometres away, some women subsequently built a settlement to house many of the widows and orphans created by the genocide. They called the settlement 'Nelson Mandela Village'. The project leaders knew that recovery would be a long uphill struggle, but maintained that 'life must also go on, we can't go on weeping'. Desmond Tutu noted, 'Over at Ntarama, we might say, there was Calvary, death and crucifixion. Here in the Nelson Mandela Village was resurrection, new life, new beginning, new hope'.

As usual, I remember words better when they have been set to music! These have stayed with me:

*'How can your pardon reach and bless
the unforgiving heart
that broods on wrongs and will not let
old bitterness depart*

*In blazing light your Cross reveals
The truth we dimly knew:
What trivial debts are owed to us,
How great our debt to you!*

*Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls
And bid resentment cease.
Then, bound to all in bonds of love,
our lives will spread your peace'.*

May God help us all, in this Lent season, to think about our own lives, God's gifts and how we use them.

Ray

The Revd Ray Adams

References: 1. Desmond Tutu: 'No future without forgiveness' - 1999 Random House page 207

2. 'Forgive our sins as we forgive' - words by Rosamond E. Herklots
see *Rejoice and Sing* no.84

The recently released film, *'Invictus'* starring Morgan Freeman as Nelson Mandela, is highly recommended and well worth seeing.

Recognition for Pat Rogers - Assistant Explorer Scout Leader at 23rd Southgate Scout Group

Pat Rogers has been awarded a Jack Petchey Award in recognition of her voluntary work with the Guide and Scout Movements at the United Reformed Church in Fox Lane.

Pat Joined the 23rd as an Assistant Venture Scout Leader in 2001; prior to this she had been running a Ranger (Guides) Unit, at the same church as the 23rd, for 21 years.

Whilst Pat was a Ranger Leader, she and her rangers, participated in numerous events and camp with the 23rd Venture Scouts.

Over the 30 years that Pat has been in the Guide & Scout movements she has had many 100's of youngsters through her hands. Pat is a very cheerful and bubbly person and has a great affection for all her rangers and ventures/explorers and has always run a caring unit.

It was quite common when she ran the Rangers for her 'old rangers' to turn up on a Ranger night with their new babies etc. and join in the activities. No one was ever excluded on account of age or family circumstances.

(Sarah Brandi)

Vision4Life The bible made contemporary

Greek bail-out?

During February the business pages of the broadsheets were rife with speculation about the possibility of a huge deficit in the economy of Greece having knock-on effects for the European Union and the strength or otherwise of the Euro single currency. It seems that it was not so much the size of the Greek public deficit that was causing alarm (in terms of percentage of Gross Domestic Product comparable to that of the UK) as the ability of the Greek government to make its proposed austerity measures take real and lasting effect.

In the Bible, of course, we read nothing directly about 'Gross Domestic Product', 'public sector deficits', 'single currencies'.

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In Old Testament times (say 800-480BC) the Greek world was divided into at least a hundred self-governing cities and towns, and most of these issued their own coins. Some coins circulated widely beyond, indicating that they were being used in inter-city trade. Coins of other cities came increasingly to be minted to the same weight standard although marked with the symbols of the issuing city. So although not a single currency, there was clearly something a *de facto* trading currency. This increased as Greek culture spread across a large part of the known world, with Greek-speaking kingdoms in Egypt and Syria, and for a while in Iran and as far east as what is now Afghanistan and northwestern India. Greek traders spread Greek coins across this vast area.

The other main currency of New Testament times was that of the Roman Empire, although again with local variants. Trading through barter decreased, and the services of money-changers (*see Matthew 21: 12*) were in demand. Nevertheless, there was a banking system. There was even 'quantitative easing' (to you and I, 'printing money'), especially when Roman Emperors needed to augment taxation to fund their military ambitions. The only state benefit scheme was the pension paid to retired legionnaires.

But we can read in the Bible about the principles of mutual help in the Hellenistic world and the early Church was in the vanguard.

In Romans, Paul described how the Greek churches helped the church at Jerusalem: "*...for Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to share their resources with the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. They were pleased to do this, and indeed they owe it to them; for if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material things.*" (Romans 15: 26,27)

They were held up as an example to the self-seeking church at Corinth: "*We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints*" (2 Corinthians 8: 1-4)

The Philippians too, were also held up as a good example by Paul: "*You Philippians indeed know that in the early days of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you alone. For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs more than once. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the profit that accumulates to your account.*" (Philippians 4: 15-17)

At the time of writing, the UK Government seems determined not to be part of any EU bail-out for modern Greece. Contrast this with "*All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.*" (Acts 2: 44,45)

(David Jenkins)

AGE CONCERN, FAIR TRADE, ONE WORLD WEEK, CHRISTIAN AID - these were the headings on the January agenda of the CHURCH IN THE WORLD CORE GROUP. Our responsibility is to keep the members of the church in touch with these and other local and national issues.

During Christian Aid week in May we will be co-operating with St John's to collect in local roads. VOLUNTEERS are urgently needed.

Christian Aid asks us, during Lent, to COUNT OUR BLESSINGS and respond to the needs of others with reflection, prayer, money and internet support. Pick up a leaflet at the back of the church but keep it at the front of your heart and mind.

During FAIR TRADE FORTNIGHT, February 22nd - March 7th, increase awareness by asking for FT goods in local shops if not available. Nestlé's and Cadbury's now do FT chocolate. Treat yourself!

Leaflets were circulated about the London Churches Refugee Network, Poverty and the Elderly and Children in Detention. Anyone concerned about these issues and others please get in touch with members of the Core Group. Our meetings are open and welcoming.

(Margaret Jepson)

MARCH and April DIARY

'A Place for Coffee' is open every Saturday morning from 10.30 to 12 noon

Tues	2 nd	Lent series at Winchmore Hill Methodist Church at 8pm
Sat	6 th	Enfield Chamber Orchestra Concert <i>info@enfieldchamberorch.org.uk</i>
Tues	9 th	Lent series at Winchmore Hill Methodist Church at 8pm
Tues	16 th	Lent series at Winchmore Hill Methodist Church at 8pm
Tues	23 rd	Last in the Lent series at Winchmore Hill Methodist Church at 8pm
Sun	21 st	Vision4Life - shortened morning worship followed by discussion/activity and lunch
Fri	26 th	A Weekend on the theme of 'Journeys' beginning with a Formal Dinner 6.30 for 7pm with the Revd Andrew Prasad, Thames North Synod Moderator, as after-dinner speaker
Sat	27 th	Treasure Hunt around Palmers Green (or around the church) at 2pm followed by tea
Sun	28 th	Sunday afternoon tea from 4pm onwards followed at 5.30 by 'Hymns for the Journey' - an invitation to sing new and favourite hymns on this theme

APRIL

Thurs	1 st	Maundy Thursday service at 8pm
Sun	4 th	Easter Day 9am Breakfast - Communion at 11am service
Tues	13 th	Worship & Study core group meeting 8pm at 61 Lakeside Road
Wed	14 th	Elders' Meeting - 8pm
Sat	17 th	Rowantree Choir performance of Handel's 'Messiah'
Sun	18 th	Church Meeting at 2pm
Sun	25 th	Children's International concert at 3pm

NOTICEBOARD

'EASTER TALES' Lent Series

Churches Together in Palmers Green and Winchmore Hill

The self-contained sessions, led each week by a different minister from one of our churches, will be held at Winchmore Hill Methodist Church, Green Lanes, at 8pm and finish with light refreshments served at 9. The evenings will include

- o reflections on bible passages about the ministry and Passion of Jesus,
- o watching a recorded monologue produced by the BBC
- o then further group discussion and prayer.

The dates and themes are:

2nd March: 'The Rich Man' - performed by Peter France
9th March: 'Barabbas' - performed by Joss Ackland
16th March: 'The Mourner' - performed by Eileen Atkins
23rd March: 'The Thief' - performed by Jonathan Price

All are welcome to observe and reflect on the meaning of Lent with brothers and sisters from different Christian traditions.

ALL ABOUT THE 'OPEN WEEKEND' on the theme of 'JOURNEYS'

THINGS TO SEE, THINGS TO HEAR, THINGS TO DO...

Friday March 26th

6.30 for 7.00 **Dinner** with Revd. Andrew Prasad, Thames North Synod Moderator, as the after-dinner speaker.

Tickets £7.00 per person: £20.00 for a family with children. BOOK EARLY AS PLACES ARE LIMITED!

Also a chance for a pre-dinner "private viewing" of the art exhibition and power-point presentation in the church.

Saturday March 27th

10.30-12noon The exhibition and presentation are open again during 'A Place for Coffee'

2.00pm **Treasure Hunts** in Broomfield Park or around the church.

4.30pm(approx) Tea, followed by short talks by some of the exhibitors

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Sunday March 28th

11.00am Morning Worship on Palm Sunday "The Journey to Jerusalem"
4.00-5.00pm Tea - exhibition and presentation on show
5.30pm '**Songs for our Journeys**' - hymns, songs and readings on the theme of the Weekend.

The church will be open during the times shown on Saturday and on Sunday afternoon for people to drop in and stay as they wish. The Treasure Hunts (especially the one in Broomfield Park) have families in mind.

Come yourself and invite your friends and neighbours to join you.

and there's more.....

Saturday May 8th (10.30-4.30) **and Sunday May 9th** (2.30-4.30) An **exhibition of Heraldry.**

Saturday May 15th A '**Christian Aid Quiz**' at 6.30pm in the Burford Hall. Tickets £5.00

Saturday June 12th A '**Mystery Dinner**' at 7.00pm A meal to enjoy and a mystery to solve!

Saturday July 24th '**Summer Serenade**' - 7.00pm Music for cello, violin and piano

Friday October 29th to Sunday October 31st - **The Church Away Weekend**

Saturday November 20th **An evening with a Spanish flavour** - 6.30pm

Sunday December 5th The annual **Christmas lunch!**

not to mention...

the regular Vision4Life sessions on Sunday mornings and weekday evenings, open-house suppers and other opportunities for entertainment and conversation.