

Penge Congregational Church



April 2021

From the Minister

A couple of weeks ago in our Zoom meeting, we were looking at Psalm 139.

“O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me ...

I can never escape from your Spirit,
I can never get away from your presence”.



We decided that you can either find that disturbing or else immensely reassuring. The psalm ends,

“Search me, O God, and know my heart ... point out anything in me that offends you”

Surely in our day to day lives in this world, asking God to alert us when we risk going astray is a very wise move? That way, God can ensure that wrongful behaviour or actions don't get a chance to take root in us. You see, God loves the world of humanity despite its indifference or even hostility to him. He sent Jesus to die for the sins of the world so that everyone who believes in him may have an eternal life in the Kingdom of God.



When we read the story of Good Friday, in John's Gospel we read that he was offered a sponge soaked in some sour wine; when he had tasted it, he said, “It is finished”,

and released his spirit. The original Greek, of which “it is finished” is a translation, is “tetelestai”, which can be used in several ways but most commonly to mean the payment of a debt or the completion of a task. That describes what Jesus did for us on the cross. He completed the task of saving humankind and in doing so he paid the debt that we have incurred. Maybe that’s why Paul asked that he might never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ?

Jesus’ willingness to pay the price of freeing humankind from the bonds of sin is the evidence of how much God loves us. And that’s why we should find the words of Psalm 139 not disturbing but reassuring.

On Good Friday we contemplate with awe the price Jesus paid for us by going willingly to the cross. But on Easter Day, we can know with absolute certainty that the cross was a victory. Jesus rose to lead us all into a new life, a transformed life in the Kingdom of God. A life where we have the absolute assurance and joy of knowing that each of us carries the Spirit inside us, that each of us belong to Jesus and that God has examined each one of us and knows everything about us!

This Easter, may we all experience- and share - the joy of our resurrection to new life through our Lord Jesus Christ!

“Jesus is risen!

“He is risen indeed!

“Alleluia!”

Pam

Edward Dylan Joseph Brookes

My thanks, and those of Christina and Dan, for the many good wishes received on the birth of my first grandchild, Teddy, on 19th March.

He was born at 7.22am, weighing 7lb 13oz.

The maternity staff at the PRUH were wonderful:
thank God indeed for our NHS!

Naturally, Teddy is the most beautiful baby ever!

Dear Pam and everyone at PCC.

Thank you all for your care and prayers through these perilous times. I continue to pray and hope that by God's help very soon there will be some good news for us all.



Let us continue to pray - prayer changes things. God bless you all and let us continue trusting.

Ian

There is a lovely photo of **Franca Spooner**, taken by **Julie Taylor** on her visit to Franca in March.

You may see it on page 21

April Scripture readings

If the Stay at Home order is lifted on 29th March, we shall be back in church on Sunday mornings from Easter Day. These are the readings we shall be following; the ones after Easter each have a service theme. We would suggest you reflect on each reading with that theme in mind, and, if you can, perhaps start reading a little further back and go on further forward.

Good Friday. 2nd April.

Luke 23: 26-31, 44-49.

(But as a devotion, please read all of Chapter 23)

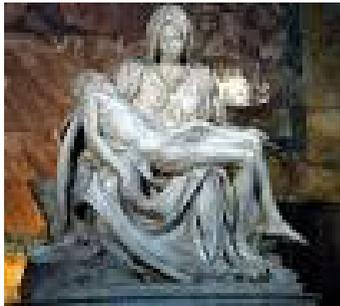


26 As they led Jesus away, a man named Simon, who was from Cyrene, happened to be coming in from the countryside. The soldiers seized him and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. 27 A large crowd trailed behind, including many grief-stricken women. 28 But Jesus turned and said to them, “Daughters of Jerusalem, don’t weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For the days are coming when they will say, ‘Fortunate indeed are the women who are childless, the wombs that have not borne a child and the breasts that have never nursed.’ 30 People will beg the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and plead with the hills, ‘Bury us.’ 31 For if these things are

done when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

44 By this time it was about noon, and darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. 45 The light from the sun was gone. And suddenly, the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn down the middle.

46 Then Jesus shouted, "Father, I entrust my spirit into your hands!" And with those words he breathed



his last. 47 When the Roman officer overseeing the execution saw what had happened, he worshiped God and said, "Surely this man was innocent." 48 And when all the crowd that came to see the crucifixion saw what had happened, they went home

in deep sorrow. 49 But Jesus' friends, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance watching.

Easter Day. Sunday 4th April.

Luke 24: 1-12

24 But very early on Sunday morning the women went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. 2 They found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. 3 So they went in, but they didn't find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 As they stood there puzzled, two men suddenly appeared to them, clothed in dazzling robes. 5 The women were terrified and bowed with their faces to the ground. Then the men asked,

“Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive? 6 He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead! Remember what he told you back in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be betrayed into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and that he would rise again on the third day.” 8 Then they remembered that he had said this. 9 So they rushed back from the tomb to tell his eleven disciples—and everyone else—what had



happened. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and several other women who told the apostles what had happened. 11 But the story sounded like nonsense to the men, so they didn’t believe it. 12 However, Peter jumped up and ran

to the tomb to look. Stooping, he peered in and saw the empty linen wrappings; then he went home again, wondering what had happened.

Sunday 11th April. Deuteronomy 31: 1-8. Wherever you go, God is there.

31 When Moses had finished giving these instructions to all the people of Israel, 2 he said, “I am now 120 years old, and I am no longer able to lead you. The Lord has told me, ‘You will not cross the Jordan River.’ 3 But the Lord your God himself will cross over ahead of you. He will destroy the nations living there, and

you will take possession of their land. Joshua will lead you across the river, just as the Lord promised. 4 “The Lord will destroy the nations living in the land, just as he destroyed Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites. 5 The Lord will hand over to you the people who live there, and you must deal with them as I have commanded you. 6 So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the Lord your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you.”

7 Then Moses called for Joshua, and as all Israel watched, he said to him, “Be strong and courageous! For you will lead these people into the land that the Lord swore to their ancestors he would give them. You are the one who will divide it among them as their grants of land. 8 Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord will personally go ahead of you. He will be with you; he will neither fail you nor abandon you”

Sunday 18th April. Hebrews 3: 1-6.

Fix your eyes on Jesus

3 And so, dear brothers and sisters who belong to God and are partners with those called to heaven, think carefully about this Jesus whom we declare to be God’s messenger and High Priest. 2 For he was faithful to God, who appointed him, just as Moses served faithfully when he was entrusted with God’s entire house. 3 But Jesus deserves far more glory than Moses, just as

a person who builds a house deserves more praise than the house itself. 4 For every house has a builder, but the one who built everything is God. 5 Moses was certainly faithful in God's house as a servant. His work was an illustration of the truths God would reveal later. 6 But Christ, as the Son, is in charge of God's entire house. And we are God's house, if we keep our courage and remain confident in our hope in Christ.

Sunday 25th April. Joshua 3: 14-17.

He commands the waters

14 So the people left their camp to cross the Jordan, and the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant went ahead of them. 15 It was the harvest season, and the Jordan was overflowing its banks. But as soon as the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark touched the water at the river's edge, 16 the water above that point began backing up a great distance away at a town called Adam, which is near Zarethan. And the water below that point flowed on to the Dead Sea until the riverbed was dry. Then all the people crossed over near the town of Jericho. 17 Meanwhile, the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Lord's Covenant stood on dry ground in the middle of the riverbed as the people passed by. They waited there until the whole nation of Israel had crossed the Jordan on dry ground.

Sunday 2nd May. Mark 6: 45-51.

Walk with Jesus on the water

45 Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and head across the lake to Bethsaida, while he sent the people home. 46 After telling everyone good-bye, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. 47 Late that night, the disciples were in their boat in the middle of the lake, and Jesus was alone on land. 48 He saw that they were in serious trouble, rowing hard and struggling against the wind and waves. About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. He intended to go past them, 49 but when they saw him walking on the water, they cried out in terror, thinking he was a ghost. 50 They were all terrified when they saw him. But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage! I am here!" 51 Then he climbed into the boat, and the wind stopped. They were totally amazed.



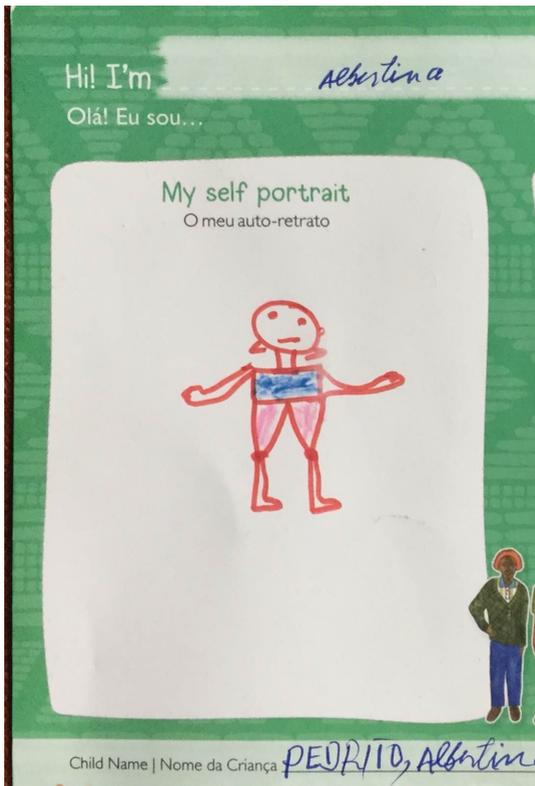
Albertina

We are supporting a child living in Mozambique called Albertina.

Every month we send money to **World Vision** for **Albertina and her family**. Here is her latest letter to us. Maybe you would like to try and answer her question to us... she asks us

“How do you water in your community?”

This is an interesting question.



Let's get to know each other!

Vamos nos conhecer



Someone special to me is...

A(s) pessoa(s) especial(is) para mim é (são)

Papá e mamã

They are special because

É (são) especial (is) porque

*eles me cuidam bem;
dam-me de vestir,
de comer, também
para escola.*



My Parents ^{Translation}
Tradução

*Take care of me
Provide clothes,
Food and
Take me to school*



a

Child ID | ID da Criança

MO2:213309-0073

A Poem (anonymous)

A country minister visiting his flock,
at old Rebecca's cottage gave a knock.

"Good morning, Dame, I mean not any libel,
but in your dwelling, do you have a Bible?"

"A Bible, Sir?" exclaim'd she in a rage,

"D'ye think I've turn'd a Pagan in my age?"



"Here, Judith, and run upstairs, my dear,
'tis in the drawer, be quick, and bring it here."

The girl returned with Bible in a minute,
not dreaming for a moment what was in it.

When lo! On opening it at parlour door,
down fell her spectacles upon the floor.



Amazed she stared, was for a moment dumb,
but quick exclaimed, "Dear Sir, I'm glad you've come,
'tis six years since these glasses were lost,
and I've missed them to my poor eyes cost!"

Then as the glasses to her nose she raised,
she closed the Bible - saying "God be praised!"



Thoughts - Maundy Thursday

When someone we love dies, how do we remember them?

Jesus is about to die, and nothing will ever be the same again.

But Jesus makes provision for the time *after* his death, and with great sensitivity, he uses the ordinary and familiar to make that provision. He takes the **Jewish pascal family meal** that was at the heart of the disciples' lives and faith, and he **transforms** it.

He provides for them in the context of something they know well. Now is the time for the familiar and for directness, as he speaks to them of his impending death:

“Ah, now you are speaking plainly, no more figures of speech.” John records the disciples as saying*.

Jesus knows that what people want more than anything is for their loved one to return - and if not to return, then for there to continue to be some connection with them.

We light a candle or we go to a graveside, we continue to speak to the loved one as though they were there, in the room with us...

Jesus leaves us with the Last Supper...

He comes to us in the 'breaking of the bread'

* St John 16:29

Memories of a 7 year old

I greatly enjoyed reading “**World War 2 and my part in it**”, Ron Kirby’s memories of his childhood in South London during the years of the Second World War. (PCC Newsletter, March.)

After reading it, I went and looked out one of our family’s most treasured heirlooms - not one that would earn a place on “The Antiques Roadshow”, but pages of a childhood diary written by my late husband, Brian. It is not in a notebook, but on 3 pages of what was obviously once a brown paper bag. Amazingly, it has survived all his parents’, and our, house moves since then.

The first page is missing; the story begins, in the childish handwriting (and style) of a young primary school child, thus -- ”a boy named Graham came, a boy named Barry came, a boy named....” and so the list goes on until we get to -- ”a boy named Harry was invited, but he got the chicken spots and could not come.

That was on June 22nd 1939.” This careful recording of the date in the childish script tells us that it was his 7th birthday.

The diary continues “On the 25th I had chicken spots for 3 weeks.”

Then the following sentences talk about their summer holiday at the seaside, and then playing with his friends back home in Sheffield. Then -- “At last it was September and on September 3rd a war began. It was

on a Sunday and on the Sunday night the sirens went. O dear when Monday morning came I had not to go to school because of the war.

In about October we went to houses I went 11-12 each day and they gave us homework. In November we went to our proper school and now it is December 19th.” And there, abruptly, it ends.

In the quoted extracts, I have edited the spelling - apart from the “chickin spots” - but the careful recording of the dates, surely a bit unusual for a 7 year old boy, is exactly as he wrote it.

I find the comparison so interesting -- the 7 year old boy in Sheffield on December 19th 1939 writing down his memories going back to June 22nd 1939, and now, all these years later, in 2021, Ron writing his memories of the war breaking out in London, when he was 6.

Thank you, Dorothea, for extending the memories of the war in such a delightful way.

And she continues over the page...

As some of you will know, Dorothea (Jessop) is a representative for **Churches Together in Beckenham** (CTiB)

And in Elmers End ...

Morrison and Anderson Shelters

We bought our house in Elmers End in 1972 from the estate of a lady who had lived here, with her husband and grown-up children, since 1936, when the house was built.

One of those children was **Bett**, who later, with her husband **Ginge**, bought the house next door. So we were then their next door neighbours. They were very good neighbours, and we became friends as well; and we were always interested when they would tell us about their memories of Beckenham and Penge, especially of the wartime years when South London was being so heavily bombed.

When we bought the house, we bought some of the furniture as well, including the dining room table, which they told us had been their shelter during the bombing raids in the War.

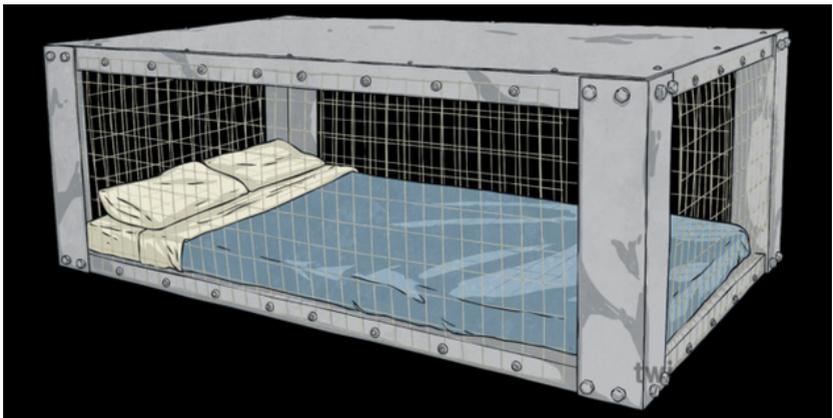
Many years later our granddaughter, **Grace**, was one of the primary school generation doing research into the **Second World War**; so she went next door to talk to Bett and Ginge about their memories, and to ask them about the table, as she had been told the story on her visits.

Ginge then said he thought he still had the parts of the Morrison shelter in his shed. Ginge's shed being the sort of shed where you could look through well-ordered piles until you found, in 2008, the remains of the

Morrison shelter you had stored there in the 1940s, he produced the steel sides of the shelter and showed us how they fitted on; and we took photos of Grace under the table, peering out from the steel bars of the Morrison shelter. The Anderson shelter, shown in the photo in the PCC Newsletter, came later, I think. Ginge used to show us whereabouts in our garden theirs had been.

The table, by the way, is still my dining table, and more often, desk: just the right height for zoom meetings!

The Morrison shelter was an **indoor cage** that was designed to protect the occupants from masonry and debris if the house was hit by a bomb. During March 1941 the Morrison shelter, named after the Home Secretary, was introduced.



Be prepared and all that it entails...

Many thanks to **Colin, Chris P** and as always, **Chris D** for all their work keeping us afloat.

The firm 'Stevenson' has now been in to sort out the tiles on the roof of the **Kenilworth Hall**. But before they could come in, **our scout leader, Colin**, showed just how enterprising **Scouts** can be. I have included a couple of photos in case the words don't make sense to you!

The tarpaulins made sure that wherever the leak was we could catch all the drops, which a bucket by itself just can't do.

Colin writes:

The Kenilworth Hall roof was leaking in two places and I have put tarpaulin sheets running into buckets. The floor had lifted but I have removed a strip from under the boxes which has meant the floor has mostly levelled itself. Chris Parker is in contact with Stevensons roofing who were due to come once the worst of the winter had passed.

The cause of the Church Hall floor lifting was the outlet above the old stores. Chris and I have re-routed the downpipes and this should be better now.

Well done to all!



What ingenuity!
Tarpaulins in place.

Bucket
receiving!



The English Language

We'll begin with a box and the plural is boxes

But the plural of ox is oxen, not oxes.

Then one fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,

Yet the plural of moose should never be meese!

You find a lone mouse or a whole set of mice,

Yet the plural of house is houses, not hice.

If the plural of man is always called men,

Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?

If I speak of a foot and you show me your feet,

And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?

If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,

Why shouldn't the plural off booth be called beeth?

The one may be that, and three would be those,

Yet hat in the plural wouldn't be hose.

We speak of a brother and also of brethren,

But, though we say mother, we never say methren

Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,

But imagine the feminine she, shis and shim!

So English, I fancy you all will agree,

Is the funniesst language you ever did see!





Julie Taylor has sent us this photo of **Franca Spooner**, taken during her first, in person, visit to the care home for over a year.

Virtual visits have taken place over FaceTime, which Franca managed to master remarkably well, but she was very pleased to see Julie and hold her hand.

Website:

www.pccweb.co.uk



To arrange a marriage service, funeral, baptism or similar event, please contact the Minister: **Pam Owen** on:

pamjowen@hotmail.com

To book any other events (concerts etc.), please contact **Bernie Hall**:

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Tel: 07900 518 537

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