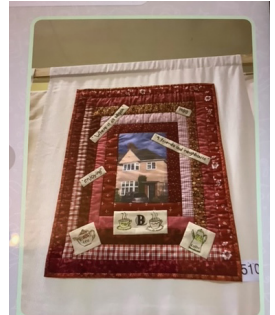


Penge Congregational Church



February 2024

The funeral of **Jean Hurle** has been confirmed:

Her son, **Mike**, writes, 'The funeral will take place at **Beckenham Crematorium on Friday, 25th February, at 11am.**

It will be followed by the **Wake at the Elm Tree, Croydon Road, Elmers End.'**

Mike would like to invite everyone at Church to both the Funeral and the Wake.

From the Minister:

Just a few words to express my thanks to my church family for the send-off they gave me at the end of December.

I had thought that the busyness of the Christmas services would keep fuss to a minimum. When it was first mooted, I was told there would be a “farewell” after the morning service on 10th December. Then it became a bring-and-share lunch. Then it began to be referred to as a party. Eventually it became a “Bash.” This gentle build up lulled me into a false sense of security. It was only when I arrived on 10th to see a lot of tables in the Hall, accompanied by a long serving table, a hissing urn, and a microphone and speaker on the stage that I fully understood what was planned!

And what a “bash” it was, with so many people there from the church family, the community and other local churches! Thank you all for such a lovely afternoon. Thank you to Norma for not one cake but two. Thank you to those who gave me cards. And thank you all for my lovely leaving presents: a beautiful warm, soft cashmere shawl and a garden voucher. I had been thinking that at long last, when the summer comes, I will have time to relax in my garden - and now I will be able to buy myself a nice comfy sun lounger!



After the very successful and well-attended Christmas services, when I had led my final service on 31st December, we had the second cake afterwards followed by a long and happy lunch in the Moon and Stars. I have carried away the warm memory of so much affection and love from my church family. This will be what endures: many people have remarked that we are a welcoming and accepting fellowship, and it is that closeness that I shall treasure and remember always.

God bless you all.

Love, Pam.

There are a few photos of Pam's 'bash' on page 19



Next worship planning meeting in the Moon and Stars - **Thursday 15th February at 7:30pm.**
All welcome.



The Readings for this month:

4th February: Numbers 13:26 - 14:10

Don't be afraid.

11th February: Daniel chapter 3

God is with you in the fire.

18th February: St Mark 5:24-34

Reach out to Jesus

25th February: Brunch and share your hero!

Advance Notice

World Day of Prayer - Friday, 1st March at 7.30pm

And also, please, join **Dorothea Jessop** (CTiB rep.) in her Prayer Focus.

For more details of both - go to **page 9**



John Webber Saturday 17th February 2024, Organ Recital 1pm, Penge Congregational Church.

In addition to being a professional organist

John Webber is Director of Music at St. John's, East Dulwich. He also runs two choirs for young people: Beckenham Junior Choir and Beckenham Youth Voices.

The programme includes works by

J.S. Bach and César Franck.

Tickets £5.

PENGE MUSIC PRESENTS

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS

JOHN WEBBER. ORGAN

featuring works by J S Bach, Clark,
Dubois, Franck and Walond.

**17TH FEBRUARY 2024
1PM**

£5 entry on the door
cash and card taken
under 16s go free
tea, coffee and biscuits served on arrival

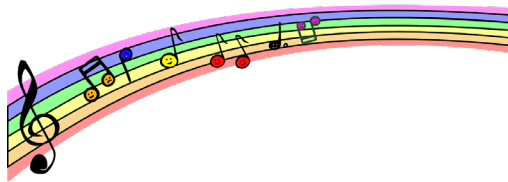
Penge Congregational Church
172 High Street Penge, SE20 7QS
Tramlink: Beckenham Road tram stop
Nearby train stations: Kent House,
Penge East, Penge West, Clock House
Bus routes: 75, 176, 197, 356, 354,
358, 227, 194, N3
FREE PARKING at a
nearby multistorey carpark



Saturday 24th February 2024, 2.30pm, Penge Congregational Church. Southwark & South London Society of Organists. Donations towards the upkeep of the organ are gratefully received.



We have a lot of music happening at the moment in the church. **A Music Festival planned for the weekend of 19th April - so keep your diaries open!** Highlights include an inaugural Open Friday local performers' event, vocal and instrumental performances from a range of local performers including: harpist **Iona Duncan**; **Zanyar Hesami** on 'daf and saz'*; **Penge Junior Voices and Penge Chamber Choir**. *'daf and saz' are Iranian instruments



These are amazing events run by **Alan and Rosie Langridge, Jessica Blake and Vicky Rockport**.

They are making such good use of the open space and the organ and piano, and musicians love the acoustics of the building. Come along if you can.

Christmas 2023



Christmas services were a blessing again this year and we had many visitors joining us.



On Christmas morning we had a **snowman** delivering the message!

What a surprise for everyone. He did say it was a bit hot for him indoors.



And musicians Chris and Ewan playing at the Midnight Service



The Joy of Christmas

and the Star (on the notice board) shining down on the
Baby Jesus



World Day of Prayer

Friday 1st March 2024

Anerley Methodist Church at 7:30pm.

The service has been prepared by the **Christian Women of Palestine – these services are prepared 5 years in advance so it is amazing that right now** we will hear their words when there is such a **need to pray for Palestine and Israel.**

The theme is **“I beg you, bear with one another in love”.**

Prayer focus

Dorothea Jessop has asked us all to pray for the charity **ABCD: Action Around Bethlehem Children with Disability**, is a small British-based charity which has been doing excellent rehabilitation work with disabled children in Palestine for 40 years or so. It has a strong link with St. Mary’s, Shortlands. Their Director of Music, **Canon Claire Tillotson**, has spent time as a music therapist in ABCD centres.

On January 3rd, 2024, their health centre south of Jenin in the West Bank, suffered horrendous destruction in a raid carried out by the Israeli Defence Forces. They ransacked the building, destroying equipment, essential paperwork, throwing walking frames, mattresses and beds into the street and caused much other damage. ***Can we please pray earnestly for ABCD, and especially those who suffered this dreadful, destructive raid.***

Week of prayer for Christian Unity.

Every year **Avenue Road Baptist Church** invite everyone to a **Friday evening Campfire Worship.**

It is never actually outside, which was lucky as this year it was rather cold.

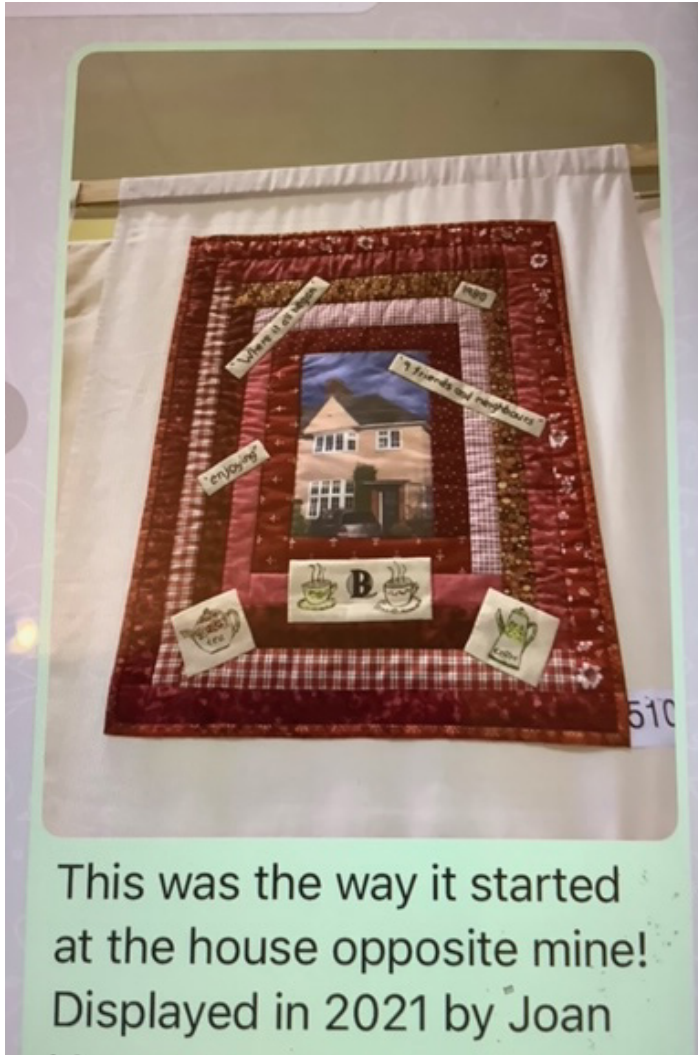
Below is a picture of the campfire. There were about **eight churches represented this year - about 20 people.**

Even though churches are divided in ways of praying and worshipping and doctrine, we are united in **loving Jesus and praising the one true and living God.**

Lynn



For a project of '**Genuine Joy** which has spread out into the Community', continue reading **Jenny Froude's** account 'From Small Beginnings' in the next few pages...



This was the way it started
at the house opposite mine!
Displayed in 2021 by Joan

FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS ...

come amazing things



Last November, the 21st biennial exhibition of **Beckenham Quilters** was hosted by the **Beckenham Methodist Church** where its first exhibition took place in 1981.

Befriending Quilts

Working with Age UK, Beckenham quilters provide between 30 and 40 quilts at Christmas to help keep the elderly warm and valued.



Formally unveiled by the Mayor of Bromley, a memorial quilt commissioned by the LBB following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth 11, had been created by stitchers across the community, including **Bromley Embroiderers**.

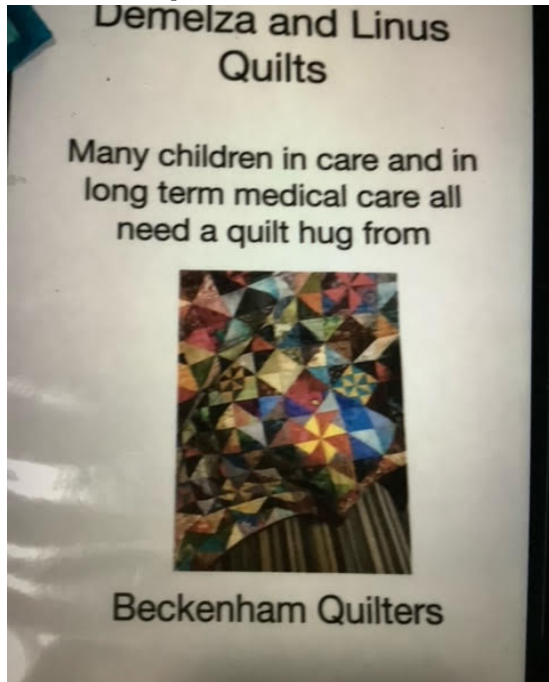
The prodigious amount of stitching that members display to such awesome

effect is incredible. **Fiona** (creator of quilts raffled for Christian Aid at St. George's in the past) had stitched an innovative *Ten in the Bed by Penny Dale* which will be used in **Bromley Libraries** at Story Time, to the delight of youngsters I feel sure!

Members were creating quilts for families and friends long before **craft** became a buzz word during and

after Covid! In fact, locally , it was in 1977 that **Jo Blackmore**, one of the young mums in the local NCT (National Childbirth Trust) suggested we make and raffle a **Silver Jubilee quilt** to celebrate the Queen's 25 years on the throne. I don't remember doing any of the stitching but my husband made the **wooden frame** on which to stretch and complete it and I invited **Esther Rantzen** and her baby daughter to draw the winning ticket at a fund-raising fair we ran in Petts Wood.

Joan Vesper, a dear friend and neighbour, took



great interest in the quilt and she it was who **started Beckenham Quilters on 13th March 1980**, beautifully remembered, naturally, in quilted form which was displayed in the November 2021 exhibition. Just nine friends and neighbours who enjoyed stitching (the day after my third son

was born so I was not one of them!) formed the nucleus of what grew to be what we know today!

What is so special about Beckenham Quilters is that they don't indulge their talents solely or selfishly in

making beautiful things for themselves and their families but **spread genuine joy out into the community in the most sensitive and heartwarming ways.**

For example, a premature baby at the PRUH may well sleep soundly on a cotton quilt or under an incubator



cover, or a Christmas baby might wake to a tiny stocking on their incubator. Working with **AgeUK Befriending Service** over 40 quilts have been gifted to elderly, housebound folk and many more were in the pipeline for Christmas. Fidget quilts for residents in care homes flustered by dementia or children in hospital must be a

challenge to make but so rewarding for recipients as a soothing, tactile gift for vulnerable people.

Demelza House, a local children's hospice and Linus have received countless beautiful quilts, guaranteed to ease the stress of respite and care for both parent and patient when, whether for social or medical reasons, a quilt hug is so valued. In 2023 Beckenham Quilters have supported **Bromley Brighter Beginnings**, supplying quilts for babies



and children rendered homeless for various troubling reasons.

After 40 odd years I had the pleasure of a surprise meeting with Jo, attending the Monday morning **Craft & Chat** group at St George's. Engrossed in catching up with those intervening years of family life I had

to undo my crochet blanket when I got home, since I discovered I had been turning corners where none were needed and vice versa! Fortunately mere crochet is easy to unravel; it is quilting that is a craft requiring concentration and imagination, and in the right hands, its capabilities seem endless!

I am in awe of all such craftspeople and feel blessed to know Jo and Joan for their inspiration and to see how **Beckenham Quilters** have grown so gracefully and generously over the past 40 plus years.

Well done everyone, past and present.

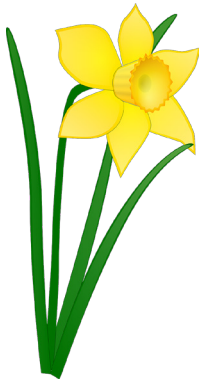
Jenny Froude

(For information check out www.beckenhamquilters.co.uk)

Chris Parker brings us good cheer and growing delights

Well, Christmas is well behind us and as I write this, we are already two weeks into the new year. Many who know me are aware I have an **allotment** and I have contributed several allotment stories in past publications of the newsletter. You would think that January would be a fairly quiet time for gardening but if you can brave the temperatures now is the time to put your boots on.

I ventured over to my plot just a few days into the year, knowing I had a shed roof to attend to due to the couple of storms that have ripped through our country. On my



way I noticed a solitary daffodil in full bloom, bolt upright searching for the early morning sun rising over the houses and causing the tall frost covered thistles to sparkle and glisten. Was it nature's way of proclaiming 'You know all those strips of tinsel and flashing lights you had up last month, well look what I can do at no expense'. A contributor on Penge Tourist Board Facebook site commented that they had daffs emerge in December. How nature is so confused.

For the gardener, January is the time to start off a few seeds in pots on a windowsill, sweet peas, leeks, onions, chilli and tomatoes. New life will soon be

springing through and maybe I will try to find something new to grow this year. Last year I was introduced to Cuca melon. A very small fruit looking like a cucumber and watermelon.

January is traditionally a time to make resolutions. These can be to stop eating a particular food or stop drinking alcohol or even give time to do something which you never seem to get around to. To do something new. Here at PCC we have entered a new time, a new time without our Minister Pam. As has been reported Pam retired at the end of 2023 after many years' service and we wish her the very best as she enjoys time to do perhaps things in her life which she has been unable to do due to the busyness of being a Minister.

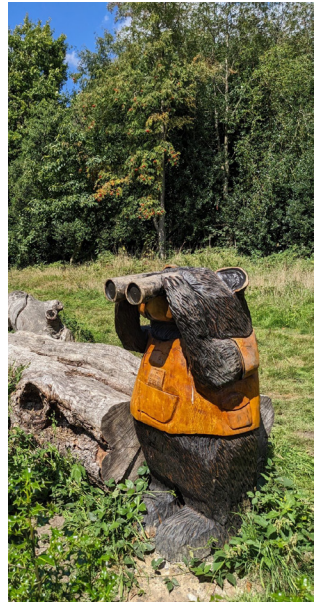
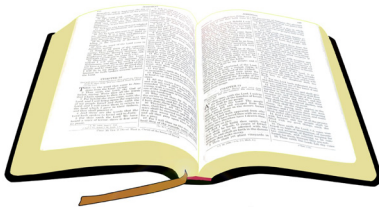
Yes it's a new time but not one with which some of us in the congregation are unfamiliar. We have had over the years several times when there has been a period between a Minister leaving and another arriving and we have had to pick up the reins and carry on God's work. Due to certain circumstances this time may be a longer period and all hands will be required at the pump. It is however a time to reflect on what is working well, what can be improved and what new can be brought to the table. I remember someone saying to me once 'what would Jesus do?' That is always the best starting point. How can we know what He would do?

Pam and other church leaders have been instilling into us at our Sunday services and church meetings that **we have to pray**. Prayer time is like the office

meeting with the manager. If we don't discuss with our office manager what ideas we have then how do we get any feedback? Same with the Almighty, if we don't speak and open up to Him, then how can we expect a conversation?

Therefore, if you have not made a resolution for the year, **I urge you to pray for the future of this church, that it will flourish and that we may continue to serve this community** as we have done for over 100 years under the guidance of God and that His glory will be magnified.

Chris Parker





Minister Pam at her
'Bash' on
10th December 2023

Chris making the sparkling
Farewell Speech of thanks
to Pam on behalf of the
congregation.

And below:: Debbie and
Barbara drove over from
the Isle of Sheppey for the
occasion.



The cake made by Norma



And on the right, Lynn
welcoming Ronald and his
medley of songs.
Linda sang for us too.





How good were you at solving the anagrams?

Made slightly more tricky in that a couple had mistakes!!

1. love

2. expectation

3. searching

4. welcome

5. following

6. justice

7. openness

8. angels

9. messiah

10. giv(e)ing

11. family

12. trust

13. Bethlehem

14. safety

15. joyful

16. shepherds

17. hope

18. starlig(h)t

19. waiting

20. health

21. trust

22. homes

23. peace

24. saviour

25 birth



Website:

www.pccweb.co.uk



To arrange a marriage service, funeral, baptism or similar event, please contact the Deacons:

Lynn 07817 862 158

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

pcclettings@outlook.com

Tel: 07999 296 686 (new number)

For enquiries related to this website please contact **Iona McShane** on:

iona.mcshane@gmail.com

To submit articles for the monthly newsletter:

margaret@ecoharmony.org

Deacons at the moment are

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Douglas Rathbone

Chris Parker

Lynn McShane (treasurer)

lynn.mcshane22@gmail.com