

Penge Congregational Church



May 2024

Here is the plan for May 2024

Sunday services

5th May: What do the Psalms say about peace and war?: Psalm 2 and Psalm 122

12th May: Christian Aid Week

The victory of love 1 Cor 13:13

19th May: Pentecost

Acts 2:1-13 The Spirit for all the nations

26th May: Cafe church Prayer for peace

Morning service starts at 10:30 but come along to sing and praise God from around 10am

Sunday evening Bible study has been very lively recently and worth coming to. Some people join online and others are in person in the church. It is exciting to see how God shows who He is in the Old and New Testaments and now!

The Bible Study on Sunday evening takes place from
6.30 until 7.30pm.

Images of Easter

In the news recently there was a description of how an advert was made for the Sony "Paint" advert. This was back in 2006. They exploded paint bombs of different colours all over a derelict estate in Glasgow. This is what Easter is like in our lives. When Jesus comes into our lives places where there is darkness can be changed and transformed with the colours of the resurrection. What colours do you think express the resurrection? The green of new life, the gold of the sunrise, or the red of the fire?



Sometimes it is a matter of seeing the colour that is already there. For example, I have a pair of red slippers with white spots. When I get up in the night and look for them they are hard to find. The red colour looks black! They are hard to see in the dark and my feet get cold while I'm looking for them. When the day comes, I can find them easily. In the daylight, they are bright and cheerful.

We tried to reflect the colour of the resurrection in church over Easter. At the front of the church, hanging from the cross is a tapestry made of cross-stitch squares. These are sewn by **Linda Pearson**. She learnt this skill at school and it keeps her busy. She loves

bright colours, rather than pastel colours. This tapestry represents work she has done over the last year. The cross is not a place of sadness, it is full of joy, freedom and healing.

At the back of the church, thanks to **Chris Doran**, we have our Easter stained glass. These are put up each year. The lights behind them mean that they shine out at night-time into the street for people who are walking past the church.

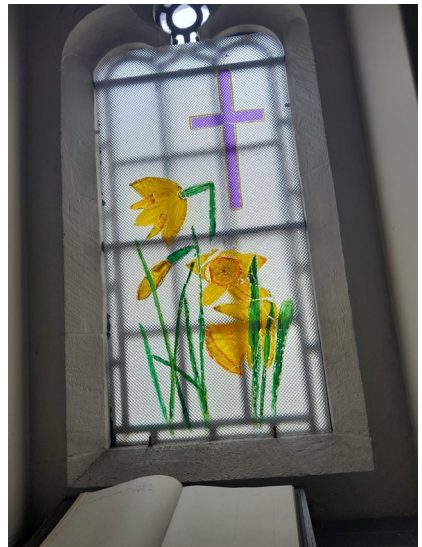
And in the entrance, our thanks goes to **Khadija**, who has beautified the doorway to the church with flowers and table and chairs.

When we come to **Pentecost, this year on 19th May**, hopefully we can take some of this colour outside.

The more ways we can find to do this the better!

Lynn







Joyce Audrey Perry lived her whole life in Ravenscroft Road, Beckenham, all 98 years, first in a flat with her parents, Tom and Gladys, and younger brother Rex, then at the family home at 182 and eventually at 184.

Joyce had many tales to tell of her childhood, how her father would bring a heart home from the butcher and teach his children about the various parts, their names and what they did.....before her mother cooked it for their meal.

Her father was a keen gardener and Joyce remembered, as a very small child, picking all the heads off the pansies her father had so lovingly grown and planted. Poor Gladys was aghast! She floated all the heads in various bowls of water. Joyce remembered how Gladys said, "Now don't be cross Tom!" when her father came home from work. The next day father and daughter took a walk down the garden past the headless pansies.

Father talked to daughter. Daughter knew that she would never do such a thing again!

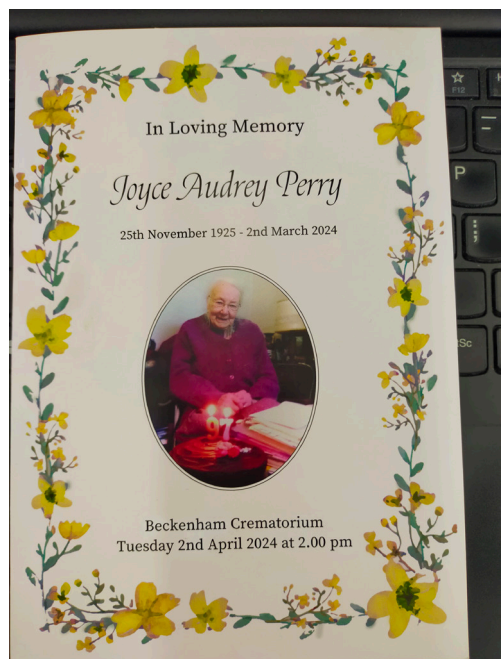
Tom and Gladys called Joyce 'Miss I Can'. They would say ..No.. to something Joyce wanted to do, she would go off and return, fists clenched, saying "Yes, but I can...." having thought her way round the problem!

The family attended Penge Congregational Church, indeed Joyce's mother had been a six year old in the very first Sunday School in 1908.

Joyce was a pupil at **Churchfields** where she and **Joan Lee** became firm friends until Joan passed away 18 months ago. There aren't many who can say they've been friends for over 90 years! Joyce also talked about senior school. She was undoubtedly a very clever girl both academically, practically and she enjoyed sports too - a real all rounder.

Joyce left school aged 14 just as the **Second World War** was underway. In this day and age Joyce would have stayed on at school and then gone to university - but it was a rare privilege for women and girls back in the day.

When Joyce was 18 she was asked to help with the **Cubs** and became **Baloo**. Joyce always loved children and being with children.



Her time with the Cubs was very happy despite it being wartime. She had many tales to tell, some sad, but most very happy and funny. It grieved her in recent years every time she heard that another of her Cubs had passed away. In latter days she thought only three might still be living.



Joyce's books of the Bible - each is a small handmade book, with the colours showing the kind of literature the book is - a wonderful teaching prop.

The church was a central part of family life. Joyce was **baptised on 30th January 1926**. She entered the **Sunday School in June 1929**. She became a church member in **1942** and became a **deacon** first in **1972**. She was **treasurer** from **1973-76**. In **1958**, when the church celebrated its 60th anniversary Joyce produced displays to mark the occasion.

She and her parents were members of the **church choir** for many years. Joyce organised the **Flower Rota** until she was 90. And for years Joyce tended the **church gardens**.

She also helped with the **Children's Holiday Club**, devising templates for the children to make up and doing lovely drawings to illustrate the stories. She made a big impression on the children she taught.

Her love for children extended to **Great Ormond Street Hospital** which she supported from early days to the end of her life. In younger days she knitted toys and visited the children on Christmas Eve to hand them out.

In her work life Joyce said she did everything she had never wanted to do. She would have liked to have been a botanical artist, a practice she carried on until perhaps ten years ago. She had trained as a **florist** and would have loved to have had her own flower shop. Instead she worked in shipping, then headed a team exporting goods all over the world, and lastly for Swiss Life in the accountancy department. Her friend Beryl, who can't be here today, has very fond memories of working alongside Joyce for twenty years.

Joyce bought 184, Ravenscroft Road next door to her parents. She set about decorating it from top to bottom, wallpapering and painting, building the tiled fireplaces in the dining and sitting rooms, boxing in the water tank in the bathroom and sewing the curtains and cushions - she was a very good seamstress. She also used her talents, learnt from her father, to make a beautiful garden - I'm sorry I never saw it in all its glory.

From her father she learnt other skills from bookbinding to carpentry. Together they did maintenance work at the church. I'm told she devised bookshelves out of a wooden pallet, then made replica books of the Bible, all colour coded, and it hangs on the wall at PCC to this day.

I came to know Joyce over 50 years ago through the **Orpington Free Church Choir**. Joyce was a very faithful member until it closed down a few years ago. Joyce was working at Sevenoaks at the time when my aunt, also in the choir, asked what she did between work and the rehearsal at 8pm. "I go to The Golden Egg for something to eat and then I window shop until I can go to the rehearsal," she said. "Well, you'd better come and have dinner with me," said my aunt and so began their friendship of many years.

When my aunt died, ten years ago, I started visiting Joyce. My aunt had Alzheimer's towards the end of her life and Joyce visited her once, sometimes twice a week, doing little jobs for her and bringing over something she had made for tea. It seemed right to me that I should return her kindness. Through these

visits I heard all her life stories and got to “know” her family, past and present, her friends at church and her neighbours. Joyce was a prolific letter writer and made numerous phone calls, particularly during the Pandemic. Joyce spoke to me often of her friend **Jean Sumner** to whom she spoke every day on the phone.

In better times she and her brother **Rex** would meet in London to go to concerts and spent their Christmases together.

I am sure Joyce would want me to mention her neighbour **John** who kept her supplied with food all through the lockdowns and beyond. Once allowed, he visited her regularly and also when she was in hospital and after she’d moved to **Baugh House Care Home**. He had known Joyce since he was a little boy and I know he will miss her greatly.

Her neighbour Liz King waited with Joyce for ambulances after various falls. Peter and Jean her neighbours next door to 184 rescued Joyce after a fall one night and later also visited her in hospital. Her neighbours June and Eric cut her front hedge for her. Another friend, Elizabeth, brought her bits of shopping and made a her a beautiful cross stitched Happy Birthday and framed it for her 98th birthday.

Joyce survived a heart attack and triple bypass operation 12 or 13 years ago and then had a hip replacement at a later time. She was forever indebted to the surgeons who had operated on her at her beloved King’s College Hospital.

At Baugh Care Home, the staff were kind and Joyce, now suffering with dementia, was safe, was warm through the winter, was fed and cared for.

John and **I** and **Chris McShane** visited her more or less weekly, which I know she valued. Others kept in contact with cards, as did her relatives Carol and Peter in Leicestershire.

Finally, as is often the case, Joyce succumbed to a chest infection which became pneumonia. She passed away peacefully on March 2nd in Orpington Hospital.

When Joyce was young she talked about going skiing, mountaineering, horse riding and ballroom dancing. I am so glad that Joyce is now free from all the frailty and frustrations that she suffered in extreme old age. She is now with 'A Higher Authority' as she often called God and I hope that just maybe she's dancing in heaven!

God Bless You, Joyce!

*Marilyn**



Push back against poverty

Penge Congregational Church
fundraiser

Target

£

We have supported Christian Aid for many years. They support our brothers and sisters all over the world who are in poverty. We are one family!

Visit my envelope page:

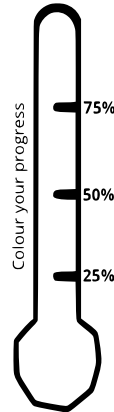
<https://fundraise.christianaid.org.uk/envelope-2024/penge-congregational-church-fundraiser>



Push back against the inhumanity of poverty this Christian Aid Week. **Scan this QR code to donate and make a difference today.**



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****The Eulogy given by Marilyn Crisp at Joyce's funeral on Tuesday, 2nd April, has been edited for the article on the previous pages.***

Please come along to our Annual Church Meeting from 12 to 1pm on 19th May, Pentecost Sunday.

This meeting is a **legal requirement** as a church and all are welcome - although voting on anything is restricted to formally received members.

We will have some big decisions coming up as a church - not at this meeting though! Particularly about the church hall - but these are just **discussions** at the moment.

The Annual Church Meeting is also a chance **to thank everyone** for what they have done over the year: acknowledging Pam Owen's work as our recently retired minister, and our two staff members Bernie Hall and Jackie Byrne. Not forgetting Margaret Tremeer for keeping the newsletter interesting and Iona McShane for her hours in the garden. Lots of other unseen things are happening too. For example, in the last few weeks **Chris Parker** has become a roofing repairman. See the before and after pictures of the roof here! And the rain didn't come through after the job was done. Well done, Chris.

We will hopefully have brief reports from the users of the building particularly Penge Music, Smiling Faces

Nursery, the uniformed organisations to name a few.
And a treasurer's report if I do it in time!!

Do come and let's make it festive.

Lynn McShane

*For the Deacons - Chris Parker, Douglas Rathbone and
Jannett Ashby*



Before (*above*) and

After (*to the right!*)



The banner outside the church announced

EXHIBITION of WEDDING DRESSES

25 - 27 April

Once inside St. George's Church it was obvious that it was so much more than that! It was indeed, as the flyers predicted, **“A Celebration of Marriage”** which would offer “nostalgia for some, inspiration for others”.



The original idea was curtailed by Covid, the second by the sudden death of H M The Queen but the event was well worth the long wait.

No amount of pre-planning could ensure that people would be prepared to part with their precious clothes, hats, photos and other memorabilia but as the date drew near more and more items were taken from safekeeping and delivered (like the bride?) to the church on time!

With a busy, working church and the necessary stewarding required for welcome and security, the team were up against time! Thanks to their impressive dedication and hard work a transformation had occurred and cakes been baked, bunting adorned the footpath leading from one of the oldest Lych Gates in the country, stunning paper flowers created, pews and noticeboards decorated and wedding finery in situ.

Most of the exhibits were enhanced by a laminated card with their personal history, set against the background of hazy flowers currently blooming in the churchyard. Each tale was fascinating in its own way and many were stories of three generations, from the wars to the 60s, and right up to the present time.

Standing at the chancel steps was the beautifully colourful cope, presented by Canon Eric Metcalfe's widow, after his death one Holy Week at St. George's. Its bold word LOVE makes it perfect for a marriage service.

By Saturday the word had got round and as the bells rang out the folk flocked in. The regular Saturday recital audience may have been bewildered by the changed surroundings, while the visitors expecting a foray into fashion were treated to the bonus of a beautifully appropriate organ recital.

A truly community event and one which delighted so many visitors, some of whom were from abroad and who added their appreciative comments to the Visitors' Book. While helping as a steward I caught up with at least a dozen people from past days, all different walks of life, but last but not least was an unknown young woman sporting sturdy boots and trailing a wheeled case which bore witness to the fact that she had just returned from undertaking the Camino de Santiago de Compostela pilgrimage!

Standing chatting amidst the froth of white gowns that encounter seemed to me a significant moment somehow. We all embark on a journey of faith when we marry. Alongside the support of others and with all the ups and downs we may meet on the way, those memories that stay with us are surely a blessing, and to be celebrated, come what may.

Jenny Froude

Market Harborough Congregational Church

Greetings to you all in the South East Area from Market Harborough, in South Leicestershire. Some of you may know the area and even the town. We are a strong Congregational Church family of around 60 people, with usually 50 people who worship regularly on Sundays. We are a very happy and inclusive church, active in outreach.

Since the summer of 2023 we have been without a Minister. We have been very active and have remained resilient since that time which has ensured that the faith and commitment to Christ continues to be strong. We are very blessed that through the Christian service of our church family we have been able to continue in this way.

Prayers have been a great strength to us; we remain prayerful about our situation and are patient and wait for our dear Lord and Saviour to guide us and show us the way He would have us take. The vacancy for a Minister at our church is on the Congregational Federation website but so far we have not had much response. We know the power of prayer and feel that if our other brothers and sisters in Christ are also praying for us it would be a wonderful thing and would bring us that extra assurance at this time.

As I conclude this letter, I would like to ask on behalf of the Congregational Church family here in Market Harborough, that if it is at all possible please would you encourage prayers for our church and ask that God will show us His way and guide us forward on this journey.

Thank you for your fellowship. Every blessing, Margaret

Margaret Nash Church Secretary on behalf of the church family at MHCC

Penge Festival of Music.

This was a very successful event. 'Various choirs and many talented musicians'. On the Saturday night, we enjoyed the **Iranian musician, Zanyar Hesami, with a group of singers called the Sounds of Love (SOL) Band.**



The picture here shows the group rehearsing and, across the page, there are photos of the instruments from **Kurdistan**. The **daf** is a hand drum like a tambourine and the **saz** is a long-necked lute or stringed instrument.

When I closed my eyes I was transported to somewhere far away and I imagined a village in the sand dunes under the moon.



I think next month we may have some other feedback from the weekend.

Thanks to Rosie and Alan Langridge, Jess Blake and Vicky Rockport and all the wonderful singers and musicians who made this weekend such a success.





PLANT SALE

**SATURDAY 11 MAY
3-4:30PM**

Plants and cakes available. With music by
SYDENHAM SINGERS
All donations support Living Well

Holy Trinity Church,
66 Lennard Road, SE20 7LX





Beckenham Methodist Church

is seeking to appoint an **experienced** and **highly motivated**

Community Café Manager

This is an exciting new role for someone who is passionate about working in a popular, first-rate community café, who enjoys interacting with a wide variety of people and who has an understanding of, and empathy with, the Christian ethos of the café

Duties will include:

- Taking orders, food and drink preparation and delivery
- Managing the day-to-day activities of the café, including rotas, volunteer recruitment and retention and volunteer development (this includes volunteers from MENCAP)
- Ensuring a warm and welcoming environment for all customers
- Exploring options for the future development of café activities

The successful applicant will have a background in catering, preferably in the community sector, and will be positive, self-motivated, have excellent literacy and numeracy skills and be proficient in the use of Word and Excel

**Working hours: 25 hours per week Monday to Friday
40 weeks per year mainly during term time**

Salary: £18,000

Start Date: September 2024

For more information, an application pack and full job description, please email:

JKManagerapp@outlook.com

Closing date for applications: 23:59 on Sunday 2 June 2024

Interviews for short-listed candidates: Saturday 15 June 2024

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

Jannett Ashley

Douglas Rathbone

Chris Parker

Lynn McShane (treasurer)

lynn.mcshane22@gmail.com