



*The Magazine*

*of*

# **Highams Park Baptist Church**

Cavendish Road, E.4.



**2015 NUMBER THREE**

# CHURCH PROGRAMME



**SUNDAY SERVICES:** 10.00 a.m. Morning Worship (including a crèche and groups for children and young people)

Holy Communion is conducted regularly within the Services. We invite all who believe in Jesus as Lord and Saviour to eat and drink in Communion. Please see the Church Diary (at the back of the magazine) for details.

**Monday** Gathered Prayer 10.00 – 11.00am at the Church  
An opportunity to pray for the life and work of the Church and for the local community

**Wednesday** Gathered Prayer 8.00 – 9.00pm at the Church  
An opportunity to pray for the life and work of the Church and for the local community

**Friday:** Boys Brigade and Girls Association:  
  
Anchors (For boys and girls in school years 1-3) 6:30 - 8:00 pm  
Juniors (For boys and girls in school years 4-6) 6:30 - 8:00 pm  
Company Section (For boys in school years 7+) 7:30 - 9:30 pm

**Cell Groups:** The cell groups are small groups of people that meet together every other week for friendship, support, Bible study / application. It would be great if you wanted to try one of the groups. Details of the dates when the groups are meeting are available from Jonathan.

Sunday Cell Group : 7.30 - 9.00 pm at 21 Falmouth Avenue, contact Margaret on 8527 3544

Thursday Cell Group: 2.00 – 3.30pm at 212 The Avenue, contact Sheila on 8531 5480

The deadline for items for the next edition is Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July  
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**June / July 2015**

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Dear Friends,

My brother-in-law Adam (Michelle's sister's husband) supports Aston Villa. Clearly Arsenal's 4-0 win against Aston Villa in the F.A Cup Final this year came as a big disappointment to him (and to William, the Duke of Cambridge). I wonder if you saw the 'Songs of Praise FA Cup Fans Choir' singing the hymn 'Abide with Me' before the game? Sixty-four football supporters - a mix of male and female fans with ages apparently ranging from early 20's right up to 100 years - represented their football clubs as they joined with The Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas in front of the almost 90,000 people at the match. Each fan represented one of the 64 teams who made it to this year's third round of the FA Cup (including Annette Dimond representing AFC Wimbledon, the team that I support).

I understand that the first and last verses of 'Abide with Me' have been sung at every FA Cup Final since that of Arsenal vs. Cardiff City in 1927. The hymn has been sung prior to the kick-off at every Rugby League Challenge Cup final since 1929 (the first final to be held at Wembley Stadium). It was also sung at the 2012 Summer Olympics Opening Ceremony, performed by Scottish recording artist Emeli Sandé. The hymn is sung at the annual Anzac Day Services in Australia and New Zealand and at some Remembrance Day Services in Canada and here in the UK. Doris Day recorded the hymn on her 1962 album 'You'll Never Walk Alone'. In 2013, Joe McElderry and the Royal Mail Choir recorded the hymn which was then released as a charity single to raise money for Prostate Cancer UK. The hymn is said to have been a favourite of King George V.

'Abide with Me' was written by Henry Francis Lyte in 1847. Lyte wrote it as a poem then set it to music while he lay dying from tuberculosis; I understand that he only lived a further three weeks after it was finished. The tune that is most often used now is different from that which Lyte composed. It is called 'Eventide' and it was written by William Henry Monk in 1861.

It seems as though the word 'abide' is rarely used now and sadly the synonyms that are first offered (all of which, it seems to me, completely fail to reflect the way that the word is used in the hymn) include 'tolerate' and 'put up with'. Although that's what we, with all of our faults and failings, at best deserve from God, actually to 'abide', as used in the hymn, is about being present with, to remain (with), to continue (to be with), to stay (with): 'O Lord, abide with me'.

It's described that the hymn is 'a prayer for God to remain present with the speaker throughout life, through trials, and through death'.

As we live out our faith in God through our believing and trusting in Jesus and living for Him, we can be assured that God is present with us in and through all things - God with us in and through the highs and lows of life, God with us in and through the joys and the sorrows of life, God with us in and through the mountain top and deep, dark valley experiences of life.

As we each sing out to God the words 'abide with me' or as we each make it our prayer – a spoken out prayer or an unspoken prayer within just between us and God - we can be confident that it is so. We can be confident that God is for us and with us. We can be confident that God is for us and with us and faithful.

In reference to God, someone has written: 'When I fall, He lifts me up. When I fail, He forgives. When I am weak, He is strong. When I am lost, He is the way. When I am afraid, He is my courage. When I stumble, He steadies me. When I am hurt, He heals me. When I am broken, He mends me. When I am blind, He leads me. When I am hungry, He feeds me. When I face trials, He is with me. When I face persecution, He shields me. When I face problems, He comforts me. When I face loss, He provides for me. When I face death, He carries me home. He is God, He is faithful'.

We can give thanks to God for the reality that, as we live a life of faith in Him, He abides with us.

'God has said "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you". So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper...."' (Hebrews 13:5&6)

God be with *you* in every way as is the need.

Jonathan

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*Holiness should be our aim - not in an attempt to make the Lord love us but simply because He already does.*

Anon

# Cabendish Circular



Since the last issue of the Church magazine our fellowship has met to remember and give thanks for the lives of three people who, in their different ways, have played a much valued - role in the life of our Church family: Ivy McDonald, Bill Johns and Sylvia Tomlinson. On reading through the tributes given

to them in preparation for this issue it struck me that, despite leading diverse lives in varying circumstances, each was described as having a deep love for their family at the centre of their lives. This abiding commitment to their loved ones was expressed in many ways, both spiritual and practical, and was reflected also in their love and concern for others in the extended family, friends and their church fellowship. As we read these tributes, perhaps learning new things about old friends and rejoicing in fond memories shared, may we give thanks for their lives and faithfulness which reflected so powerfully God's love and care for us all.

We pray for those amongst our fellowship who are unwell at present or receiving hospital treatment. Les Edwards has had a series of falls which has meant an operation. He has been recuperating in Wanstead Hospital and is preparing to move to Sheffield to stay with his son Keith and family. We shall miss Les greatly and send him our best wishes for the future.

CARE Highams Park held an Afternoon Tea at our Church on April 25<sup>th</sup>, organised and hosted by Dianne Kendrick and Jenny Cove. A delicious selection of cakes were enjoyed by those attending, with the chance to look over items of bric-a-brac and plants. A total of £162 was raised during the afternoon and we thank all those who helped make this such an enjoyable time, while raising funds for CARE. Our thanks also particularly go to Dianne and Jenny for organising the event.

On Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May Phil Slaney led a section of the Capital Ring Prayer Walk for the LBA during which he managed to render a normally voluble personality speechless! To find out who it was and how Phil achieved this, read further on in the magazine!

The BBGA Awards and Display Evening took place on 8<sup>th</sup> May and you can see some pictures of the event later in this issue.

We hope to have fuller report on the BBGA next time. The group now look forward to their Annual Camp in the New Forest which will take place from 27<sup>th</sup> July to 1<sup>st</sup> August.

Dorothy and Cliff Tayler have welcomed their son Martin and his family home from Malaysia - we wish Martin, Amber, Rebecca and Adam every happiness in their new home in Highams Park.

We rejoice at the news of a new birth: Emma and Lee Dorrington had a little boy, Harrison on 29<sup>th</sup> April, a brother for Nathan. Congratulations and every blessing to the family for the future.

Finally, on a personal note: we have a new grandson, Raif , born on April 11<sup>th</sup> to our daughter Kate and husband Chris, a brother for Thea.

Last November we reported the birth of Nathan , a second son for Lizette and Warren, and brother to Angus. We now have a picture of Nathan with big brother Angus to add to our latest babies' gallery below!

God's blessing on these young lives.



Angus with Nathan



Thea and Raif



Harry

JL

## Ivy McDonald



Ivy Elizabeth McDonald (nee La Grenade) was born on the beautiful island of Grenada in the Caribbean on the 10th December 1920, the fourth of eleven children of Charles and Gertrude La Grenade. Her childhood was an idyllic one in an extremely happy environment spent with loving parents and siblings. Following a number of family tragedies Ivy became the eldest member of her family and it fell to her to bring up some of her younger siblings when her parents both passed away at quite a young age. She did this without hesitation

and her sister Ruby has often told the family that she considered her sister to be her mother also.

Ivy always had a fearless and adventurous spirit. At the outbreak of World War 2 she left Grenada to join the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) based in Trinidad. She did not flinch in her duty to England and the Commonwealth and acted with extreme bravery as she could have been posted anywhere - she was only 20 years of age at this point. Following the war she remained in Trinidad and it was there that she met her future husband. Her father passed away shortly before the wedding and it was at this point that Ivy, now a married woman, returned to Grenada to look after her younger sisters and brother. Five of Ivy's six children were born on the Island of Grenada where she worked tirelessly to ensure that she gave them the best life possible, never settling for anything other than the highest standards, in her own appearance, that of her children and also her home.

Following the breakdown of her marriage, Ivy decided that she would give herself and her children a better life in England and so once again fearlessly embarked on a new journey, leaving her children in the care of others. She arrived in England where she went from employing nannies for her children to being a nanny herself. She was helped by her great friend and cousin, Masie Samuels, who had herself made the journey to England several years prior. Ivy worked tirelessly and saved every penny she could to ensure that she did not leave her children behind for too long. She endured the indignities that most immigrants did in the late 50's and 60's, looking for a place to live only to encounter "no coloured, no Irish and no dogs" as well as at times being rejected for work that she could so easily have done being extremely well educated. Ivy remained focused and determined, singlehandedly sending for three of her five children by 1962.

At this time Ivy was reconciled with her estranged husband Leyland and the youngest of her six children was born. Once again she resumed work and did so six days a week, willing to do any hours that were on offer day or night, saving only Sundays for God, Family and the thorough cleaning of every inch of her home!!

Ivy was convent educated, a very intelligent woman, able to put her education to good use working in offices and stores in Grenada and England where she was always valued and thought very highly of.

She eventually worked in factories because she could earn more doing factory work - always choosing to do what was best for her family. Eventually Ivy was able to bring her youngest son to England, her eldest opting to stay in Grenada as he was already an adult, and this made her family more complete.

After retirement Ivy took the opportunity to travel to many destinations including the USA, Canada, Australia, Barbados and of course back home to Grenada where she spent ten happy years, able to reunite with two of her sisters Irma and Una and their husbands. Even then her sense of duty prevailed and when her son Junior had a personal tragedy with the death of his young wife, leaving him with two small children, she immediately went to Canada where she spent a year with the family ensuring that her son could cope before returning to her retirement in Grenada. However, as with all adventurous souls, Grenada could not contain her: she was often heard to say "Grenada is so quiet" and so a return to England was inevitable.

The last years were happily spent in Helwys Court where she became the oldest tenant both in age and length of tenure. It was here, in her own home and with her children close by that Ivy fell asleep on 17 March 2015 at the age of 94. She died as she had lived - in peace and with great dignity. Ivy leaves behind six children — Robert, Leslie, Junior, Merle, Derrick and Suzann. Daughters-in-law: Rose, Rhona and June, fifteen grandchildren, eight great grandchildren and two great, great-grandchildren, her sisters Myra, Una, Irma and Ruby and also her greatest friend Marie.

Although her family know how fortunate they were to have her with them for such a length of time it has not softened the blow as it is hard to consider life without her at the helm of the family.

*Taken from the tribute written by Merle with help from family, and spoken by Leslie at the Service of Thanksgiving.*

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At Ridgeway Park on  
Sunday 21st June  
from 12.45pm



## Phil the Photographer

Phil Slaney seems to have taken on a new career as the magazine's roving photographer. Here are a few of his pics:



Barry Key has started work on the Church brickwork - Phil's comment is that it seems as if he is praying!



Pictures from the BBGA Awards evening



Pictures from the Walk of Witness on Good Friday

Thanks Phil.

## Bill Johns



William James Arthur Johns, known to almost everybody as Bill or Billy, was born on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 1940 in Hackney hospital to parents Bill and Rose, and sister, Vera. The family lived in Stoke Newington at that time, however whilst growing up Bill and his family lived on the Kingsmead Estate in Hackney. At age 11, Bill secured a secondary school scholarship to the Parmiter's Grammar School in Bethnal Green which speaks volumes of Bill's intelligence and intellect. It was not easy to win a scholarship to such a prestigious school especially for someone who came from the Kingsmead Estate. At school Bill was particularly interested in chemistry and cross country running. His running route brought him through Highams Park and Bill decided he liked the area so much he made it an ambition to live there one day. Outside of school Bill was involved in the Sea Cadets but his main interest then was boxing - indeed his skill was such that he became the London All Boys Champion. He always remained interested in boxing but in later life as a spectator. Upon leaving school Bill went to work in a laboratory in Stratford as a result of his keen interest in science, maths and chemistry but soon discovered that laboratory work wasn't really his thing and so he left after a few months. Instead he became a telephone engineer with the General Post Office (later to become British Telecommunications) and his expertise as a telephone engineer was soon recognised by his employers who promoted him to a lecturer for BT, training other engineers and specialising in electronics.

Bill first met Sylvia on Easter Monday 1959 at the Royal Dance Hall, Tottenham - he was 19, she almost 16. Bill would later say that the moment he saw Sylvia he knew that she was the girl he was going to marry, and marry they did - on October 20<sup>th</sup> 1962. Following their marriage Bill and Sylvia lived at her parents' house in Hornsey, North London while saving for a place of their own and in November 1965 they came to live in Highams Park, just as Bill had dreamt of many years before, moving into 113 Cavendish Road. Originally the plan was that they would live there for three years and then find somewhere different - well that didn't happen!! Bill absolutely worshipped Sylvia. They were 'best mates' for each other. There was never a day when they didn't laugh together, occasionally they cried together, but they fitted like two perfectly matched pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Above all else Bill was a true family man, delighting in his family: Sally, Alison, William and Katie. They recall that while growing up the family didn't have much money, but they were always well-clothed, well-fed and perhaps most importantly, well-loved and happy. Later, Bill treasured his grandchildren - Laurence, Harvey, Matthew, Daniel, Emily, and treated as his own, Tom and Alice. Devastatingly their only son William died in December 2000 - this proved to be a very great sorrow and bitter blow to Bill and the rest of the family.

When asked to describe Bill as a person it was often said that he was a generous, giving man, always willing to help others. Bill had a cheeky and mischievous sense of humour which sometimes got his children into trouble, by making them laugh at 'inappropriate' moments! He was also one for tall stories and pulling people's legs. His tall stories were so convincing they kept his children amused and guessing even into adult years. Sally said it wasn't until she was 32 that she finally realised that Dad had not actually been a secret agent in the war or a helicopter pilot as he had told her when she was growing up!

If his family was his first love then fuchsias were his second – in the summer. In the winter it was woodwork and metalwork that occupied his spare time in his many sheds at the bottom of the garden. Bill served for many years as the Show Secretary for the Metropolitan and Essex Fuchsia Society, also playing a part in the Chelsea Flower Show as an expert on the British Fuchsia Society stand. Such were Bill's skills with both wood and metal that, together with the family's connection to HPBC, Bill became something of a 'Mr Fix-It' for the Church. He was once called upon to free a girl's arm which had got stuck in a carved part of a pew. After a number of unsuccessful attempts to wriggle her arm free Bill told her he would have to go and get his big saw. Imagine her horror - fearing at worst the loss of her arm when Bill returned - but the only casualty was the wooden arm of the pew!

Bill eventually took voluntary redundancy from BT and, given his love of fuchsias and gardening, he took the opportunity to re-train in horticulture, attending courses at Capel Manor College, going on to make a lot of friends through the gardening work that followed. Bill greatly valued his friendships, developing a wide circle of friends over time. He had other interests too: learning to sail he bought a 28ft sailing boat and went on to sail round the Isle-of-Wight on one well-remembered expedition. There are many other memories of times away in sailing boats, motor-homes and caravans seeing different parts of the UK – Bill and Sylvia became well-travelled.

In 2001 Bill was diagnosed with prostate cancer, later Lymphoma and then Leukaemia. Bill stoically took it on the chin. He never grumbled about his misfortune, never once did he ask the question that many people would naturally ask: 'Why me?' Bill was a fighter. He fought the illness with rugged determination not to give in and many times overcame crises that would have defeated a lesser man. His numerous visits to different hospitals were accompanied by reports on the food available in each canteen. He became quite a canteen critic, generous in his praise of good quality but withering in his disdain for poor food. Anybody who came to see him during that time would always be greeted by his wonderful, big smile and when they asked him how he was they would always get the same reply: 'All the better for seeing you!'

Sadly, Bill died in the early hours of Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at Whipps Cross Hospital. He was 75 years young when he finally lost the battle with the illness he had been fighting so vigorously for over 14 years. When told the sad news Katie and Oli's son Matthew aged 6, thought for a minute and then said 'Granddad's in heaven now... he's probably doing some very important jobs for God'.

Bill was very much his own person. If you asked his advice he would give your question careful consideration and then give you his reply – he would always tell you what he really thought whether you liked the answer or not! Bill had a wonderful smile, a generosity of spirit, and a keen mind always eager to learn more. His detailed and general knowledge was vast and for daughter Sally he was her first 'phone-a-friend' on almost any topic. Bill was a man who loved life, his family, his friends, and his fuchsias; always smiling, always optimistic, always generous, always giving and caring. He was a modest but knowledgeable man, a true family man, an inspiration to us all. It has been my privilege to know him and I'm sure yours too. The world will be a poorer place without him. Bill was a good man.

Bill may be gone from our sight but he will never be forgotten from our memories. We thank God for all that Bill was and for all that he continues to be in our hearts, and we now entrust him into God's care.

*Taken from words of tribute to Bill paid by Steve Riches at his Thanksgiving Service.*

# CARE HIGHAMS PARK

Care Highams Park was set up nearly 20 years ago by 'Churches Together in Highams Park' to enable people to help others in times of need or emergency.

HPBC hosted an Afternoon Tea on Saturday 25th April in order to raise awareness of Care and to provide an enjoyable time for those who are users of, or who already volunteer for this organisation. Dave Kendrick, myself, Joan Meunier and Jenny Cove have been volunteers for a while now, serving lunches to those who would otherwise be alone at the weekends. These lunches take place once a month in Winchester Road Methodist Church and give people not only an extremely good value meal but also a time to enjoy the company of others.

Other voluntary help given by Care is as follows:

Duty Helpers

Transport support

Help at home collecting prescriptions, shopping

Visiting/befriending

Dave, Jenny and myself took on the challenge of collecting bric-a-brac for a stall in addition to making cakes to sell with a cup of tea or coffee. Our hope was to make some money for the funds of Care as well as informing people about its purpose.

We had chosen the date some time ago but as the day neared we discovered that it couldn't have been a busier weekend for Highams Park! First of all, Winchester Road had a Table Top Sale with tea and coffee the same morning and there was to be, for the first time ever, a Jumble Trail around Highams Park on the following day (Sunday). We wondered how many visitors we would have!!

We needn't have worried as it was very successful. We pleasingly had a good attendance and as the Highams Park Film Society were showing a film in the church the same afternoon, many of them came into our event after the film finished. We continued offering our remaining bric-a-brac on a donation basis after the church service the next day.

The homemade cakes were much appreciated and sold well.

I would like to give thanks to Dave Lewarne, Joan Meunier and Yvonne Davey who came to help on the day and worked so hard to ensure its success.

Thank you to all those who donated things for the bric-a-brac stall. We had a fantastic selection to offer. Special thanks to the Family of Sylvia Tomlinson who very kindly donated to the stall. Sylvia had been connected to Care in the early years so it was a fitting way to remember her.

We made £162.00 profit which was gratefully received by Care Highams Park.

If you would like further information about volunteering or are in need of help from CARE please phone the Duty Helper on 0208 523 5955

Dianne Kendrick



## Sylvia Tomlinson



Mum was born in Manchester and grew up in a variety of UK towns, with Granddad following his trade as a boiler maker around the country. His name plate was fixed to the side of the Battersea Power Station boilers. She was skinny, her sister rosy-cheeked and less angular. By today's standards she was quite a 'looker' but in those days it was sister Margery who caught the eye. There were cousins in Kent around Cliffe, where Mum's mum came from. On family visits we children got a flavour of farm life: chasing piglets, sheep dipping, even shooting. I remember one trip when we went there by tandem, with me in the back child seat and my brothers in a side car – could you imagine cycling that contraption through Blackwall Tunnel now?!

Mum was evacuated during the war, aged thirteen, which signalled the end of her formal education and she immediately turned to teaching the younger evacuees. I think Mum and Dad met through friends related to the Brandon Mission, a centre of worship and social activity for them and their friends from the earliest days. Mum and Dad's relationship was, from the start, underpinned by a faith which was lifelong and undiminished throughout.

Theirs was an old fashioned marriage even by the standards of the day. Dad worked as a clerk at the London Electricity Board, having served with the Special Operations Executive in the war. Mum kept home and raised children, having previously worked at Chards in Hoe Street. To give you an example of their old-fashionedness: she was eventually allowed to hold a cheque book for their joint account - but was not allowed to use it! This partnership gave Dad the time to do many of the things he is remembered for at Church and elsewhere – but we do not underestimate the value of her invisible contribution. Dad was an Accountant – worse still – an Auditor! and he would have appreciated the elegance of Mum dying at the commencement of a new financial year. For them, and us children, the partnership worked and was immensely strong and loving all through. Mum was always there, softening the management of our family. Through the years the demands on Mum's household management skills (not least of which was her capacity to make endless apple pies of brilliant quality) increased as her father-in law joined us for a while. When we became old enough she started work as a teacher, increasing to full-time over a period, alongside household management and accompanying Dad on many of his Church responsibilities.

Since Dad died twelve years ago it became quickly apparent to what degree he was pivotal to their social life and things became very quiet for her. She had laboured with a missing knee cap as a result of a failed operation in her early forties, the result of which was that her leg would easily collapse. Nevertheless, with Dad to support her she was able to go on massive hikes in this country, in the Canaries where they enjoyed extended winter stays, and during regular trips to Canada to visit Steve, sometimes taking friends with them to share in their enjoyment.

She also walked the famous Samaria Gorge in Crete, eighteen kilometres long with Dad, Yvonne and myself.

Without the regular regime of exercise with Dad and her advancing years her leg muscles deteriorated making her increasingly immobile. Never one for idle chat, deafness became a debilitating condition, making conversation difficult for more than a short while and she became socially quite isolated. Her failing hearing significantly reduced her enjoyment of T.V., radio or music to alleviate her loneliness. I acknowledge the outstanding support of those few who were able to maintain visits, notably Linda, who was central to Mum's support in this way despite similar commitments to Gwladys Taylor.

We had wonderful memories of family holidays, often as family plus. Phyllis and Kathy Taylor had the chance to find out what having brothers might have been like, and we had the opposite opportunity from which I am sure we benefitted! After Dad died Mum, Yvonne and I had a memorable trip to Bruges in 2005 where Mum and I had some beer which was rather stronger than we expected and Yvonne had to deal with a couple of tipsy relatives! She had a final visit to Canada with me in 2013 to see the most recent batch of great- grandchildren of Steve and Jeff's families, which everyone enjoyed, although Jeff reminded me that when we arrived the first thing I said to him was "for the next two weeks she's all yours!"

Her physical condition gradually deteriorated and, following a series of health-related events, I was able to help her with a decision to go into Bayfield Court after fifty-five years at 10A Sunnyside Avenue. She was there for just over three months and, although very well cared for, she had only just become acclimatised, recently making a good friendship with her room neighbour Max.

Mum leaves three children, eleven grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren, spread around the UK, Spain, Canada and Australia. Her card and gift list just for her descendant family, including partners, numbered forty. I am sure you will agree that this legacy, and that still enjoyed by this Church community, is remarkable. She departed this life suddenly though peacefully, and in the belief that she would join Dad; for this we are all grateful.

*David Tomlinson.*

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SYLVIA REMEMBERED – Tribute by Geoffrey Norris

**'Let Love be without hypocrisy, abhor what is evil, cling to what is good, be kindly affectionate to one another'**. . as I read these verses, to be spoken by Melrose, whilst preparing for the service, it struck me that this is an accurate description of Sylvia.

Sylvia's Faith Journey began in Brandon Mission just off Wood Street and it was there we believe she met Laurie. The Preacher was Mr Richard King - folk of my age group will recall his firm: 'Kings Florists'. After infant baptism Sylvia professed her faith by believers' baptism at that Mission in November 1947. Later Laurie and Sylvia attended Higham Hill Baptist. Sylvia was friendly with Mr King's daughter who lived in Highams Park and Sylvia would visit her. Gradually it was realised what a mixture of urban convenience and rural delights was Highams Park and Laurie and Sylvia moved here in 1959, joining Highams Park Baptist Church.

What a blessing were Laurie and Sylvia to this Fellowship! How much we honour their service and value their friendship! Sylvia taught in the Sunday School, participated in the Youth Group and some twenty years ago, when Rev Peter Hudson launched 'CARE Highams Park', both Sylvia and Laurie were active participants: Laurie using his car to excellent effect while Sylvia collected and delivered prescriptions for patients. This service is still recalled and appreciated by 'CARE' and was typical of Sylvia's practical caring for others in such a helpful way. Sylvia also cared for families in the Church; she cared for children whose families were undergoing challenges or were very busy. We can recall at least six young people whom she loved and nurtured and had long term relationships with - Sylvia was often an extra Mum.

Not only did Sylvia have an impact on her own family, her caring practicality impacted on others. With Laurie, Sylvia organised Sunday School outings to Walton-on-Naze and Church family outings. Sylvia knew her Essex and we had many strawberry picking afternoons organised. It was my only experience of agriculture etc , but I can still recall the fun and friendship of these expeditions. At one time Sylvia was a teacher of our daughter Liz, while she and Laurie shared their passion for cricket with our son Paul. Paul went to many cricket grounds in Chelmsford, Ilford, Lords and the Oval with Laurie and Sylvia. How much as parents do we honour and appreciate the practical caring shown to our son - Paul still attends Lords with his children. There were several more who benefited from these sporting activities: Richard, Tony, also Marcia and Arthur Fugler. Our then Minister Rev. Alan Smith was also a frequent attendee with the Church Group. Another gift that Sylvia had was of keeping in touch with friends who had left the area but belonged to the Church Family.

On behalf of all Sylvia's friends may I thank the family for all their loving care, prayer and support of Sylvia. Thank you also to those who lived nearby for their care and visiting: David, Linda and others from this Church. Margaret and I know how much this was appreciated by Sylvia. The visits to Canada were also such a blessing and inspiration to her.

One of the greatest privileges of my life in Christ was to lead Sylvia's Thanksgiving Service. What a two hours we had as Sylvia's sons David, Jeff and Steven and I planned it, sharing memories of a superb wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. A most moving moment was when Jeff produced a letter written by Sylvia to be opened after her death and he read the hymns and Bible readings that she had felt would be appropriate on the day. May I end with two verses from a hymn that I am sure Laurie and Sylvia sang many times which sum up how many of us feel: 'Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love':

**When for a while we part,  
This thought will soothe our pain  
That we shall still be joined in heart,  
And hope to meet again.**

**From sorrow, toil and pain  
And sin we shall be free;  
And perfect love and friendship reign  
Throughout eternity.**



# 7 Stewardship

*Part of the 'Baptist Basics' Series  
Series Author: Dr. Nigel G Wright  
Produced by the Baptist Union of Great  
Britain*

Jesus told a parable about a man who wanted to go on a journey. He summoned three servants together and gave one of them five talents (a unit of currency), another two and the third, just one, in the expectation that they would make a profit out of what he had entrusted to them. The ones who had five and two talents managed to double their investment. But the third was afraid of losing what he had, so he dug a hole and put it in the ground. When the master returned he called them all to account. Those who had put the talents to good use were commended and rewarded with larger responsibilities. But the one who had done nothing was rebuked as a 'wicked and lazy servant' and thrown into 'the outer darkness' (Matthew 25:14-30).

**The Idea of Stewardship** - This parable introduces us to the idea of stewardship. Everything we have has been given to us by God. We are not all given the same amount, and we do not all have the same ability. In that sense there is a diversity of gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4). But we are all equally expected to do something useful with what we have, however much or little. We are not to be lazy. In fact, not being bothered enough to do anything at all, is as much a form of sin as active wrongdoing. Human beings in general, and Christians in particular, are expected to make something out of their lives. We are stewards of what we have been given. In the fullness of time there is to be a reckoning and each person will be held to account for what they have made of themselves and what has been given to them. It would be good to have something to show for our lives.

Since Christians are conscious of living as those accountable to God and do so with a sense of profound gratitude, the idea of being stewards should shape our whole approach to the world, the church and our own lives and possessions. This can be worked out in various ways.



**The Earth is the Lord's** - The earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it, for he has founded it upon the seas, and established it on the rivers' (Psalm 24:1). The earth does not belong to human beings. It belongs, quite simply, to

God, and it does so because God is its originator and sustainer. God has created human beings as the most developed form of life and has made them in the divine image. An aspect of that image is that they resemble God in having dominion over the created sphere. They also have the right to draw their means of sustenance from the creation (Genesis 1:27-30). In that sense they are also dependent on the world about them. But 'dominion' is not the same as 'exploitation'. If the way humans exercise dominion is truly in the image of God, it will not exploit, but rather nurture and sustain the well-being of the whole created sphere, animal, vegetable and mineral.

It will respect and honour the integrity of creation at the same time as it draws from that creation to sustain and develop its own life. This is often called 'sustainable development'. It ought to be clear then that Christians should follow the Bible's teaching in seeing themselves as stewards of the creation realm. This is all the more so since the New Testament claims that the world has been created through Christ.

'All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being' (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-4). As the creation is Christ's, care for the creation is part of Christian discipleship, born of our desire to please him. Humans can use the creation, but not in a way that threatens the well-being and survival of the environment, Christians are called to be ecologically responsible. This is the duty they owe to God as stewards of what he has given us. But at the same time they have to make something out of the creation that has been entrusted to them, through the creation of wealth, the development of culture and the nurture of the environment, so that they can offer this back to God as an act of worship. This kind of stewardship is very much on the agenda in a world where human beings have acquired the ability to destroy their world and themselves with it.

**Stewardship of Gifts** - The word 'talent' has passed into the English language as a way of speaking of human gifts, skills and abilities. All humans are endowed with natural abilities and learn to shape these into talents that enrich the rest of us. We are all differently gifted, and some are more gifted than others. But we are called to be fruitful and to make good use of what is given. Likewise, the New Testament speaks of 'gifts of the Spirit'. There are at least three lists of spiritual gifts given in the New Testament, and none of them is identical. In Romans 12:6-8 the list includes prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing and leading, all gifts necessary to the community life of the church. In Ephesians 4:7-13 the gifts of Christ are seen as those of people who he calls to exercise leadership functions within the church: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. In 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 the gifts listed include the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, discernment of spirits, speaking in tongues and interpretation of tongues. These gifts range from experiences which are highly intuitive (speaking in tongues or prophecy), abilities which are largely rational (teaching, leading) and qualities which are partly circumstantial (for instance contributing — some people just have more money than others). What Paul is really trying to stress is that whatever form the activity of the Spirit takes, it is a gift and not something to boast about, It is also to be used for the common good of the church (1 Corinthians 12:7) and for 'building up' believers (1 Corinthians 14:26). The challenge to every church member is to decide which gifts they have been given and how they might be put to good use in the service of the church and of the world. Every human ability becomes a spiritual gift when it is offered up to God and used by God for the benefit of the church and its mission. For this reason no-one should say 'I don't have any gifts'. This would be to deny both the gifts given to us in creation, which can then be offered up to God, and the teaching that 'to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good' (1 Corinthians 12:7). God uses all those who have come to faith in Christ. Nobody should count themselves out for reasons of modesty or lack of self-esteem but should 'think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned' (Romans 12:3).

Above all, it is important to avoid the sin that Jesus identified in his parable, that of laziness. Discipleship means actively following after Jesus and counting ourselves to be his servants. We are called to be good stewards of the gifts we have been given and to make full use of them for the good of the church and its mission.

**Stewardship of Wealth** - How we use our money is a subject of great personal interest to all of us. It can also be one of the most exciting aspects of Christian discipleship. Jesus probably had more to say about the use and misuse of wealth than any other single topic. He warned, 'How hard it will be for those who have



wealth to enter the kingdom of God!' (Mark 10:23), and even, 'it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God' (Matthew 19:24). On one occasion he told a rich man to 'go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me'. In response we read, 'he was shocked and went away grieving for he had many possessions' (Mark 10:17-22). What we do with our wealth is no less an emotive issue today and one that every Christian needs to address directly. Jesus, who himself lived a simple life among the relatively poor, may not address the words 'sell what you own' to all of us, and chaos might ensue if we did. But he does require us to take a radical view of our own wealth. His words show that owning wealth carries dangers and temptations with it. Money is even described as an alien god, Mammon, and a choice has to be made about serving it or serving God (Matthew 6:4). In fact it is called 'unrighteous Mammon' (or 'dishonest wealth') (Luke 16:11), and this suggests that it inevitably pulls us in the wrong direction unless we resist it. The idea of stewardship helps here. We can resist the temptations of wealth by seeing it as something to use responsibly and for the good of God's kingdom. The following guidelines help at this point:

*\*Live simply but make reasonable provision* - All of us are inclined to want more rather than less, but we should be happy to settle for enough. The apostle Paul wrote, 'I have learned to be content with whatever I have' (Philippians 4:11). At the same time it is a duty to take care of ourselves and our families (1 Timothy 3:5, 5:8). Many people have found that by first of all deciding what should be given away and setting this aside, perhaps also arranging banking orders to do this, they have no difficulty in living on what is left.

*\*Give systematically and proportionately out of your income* - Paul commended the Corinthian Christians because 'they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means' (2 Corinthians 8:3). In the Old Testament the people of God were expected to give a tithe (a tenth) of their crops to God. No such precise commands are laid out in the New Testament, but out of gratitude to God we are encouraged to give a proportion of our income and a tenth or more is not a bad guide. The more we have the larger that proportion ought to be.

*\*Learn the joy of generosity* - Paul wrote, 'Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work' (2 Cor 9:7-8).

*\*Make your assets count* - This takes thought. There are ways of increasing income and so having more money to give. Money which is given to charities including churches can be gift-aided in order for them to recover tax paid. Considerable assets can be released on death by writing Christian and charitable causes into a will. We can continue to do good even after we have died.

*\*Take risks in giving* - It is good to give systematically. It is also good to give spontaneously as a way of affirming freedom from the 'love of money' that is a 'root of all kinds of evil' (1Timothy 6:10).

**The Joy of Giving** - The first call on our giving ought to be to the local congregation to which we belong. In particular there is a duty to support those we call to serve as ministers in the church (1 Tim 5:17-18) and the ministries to which we believe we are called to exercise in our community. The church should also have a policy about sending money to support the wider Baptist family. Part of the joy of giving is putting our money where our prayers are and knowing that we are playing a part in serving the kingdom of God throughout the world.

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## Who was the voluble personality rendered speechless?

*Phil writes:* I was leading a section of the Capital Ring Prayer Walk for the LBA on Monday 4th May and as we were waiting to start at Hendon Central Station Boris Johnson turned up and asked why we were there and I said we are praying for him and the election on Thursday. He didn't know what to say and then thanked us very much. Probably the first time Boris was lost for words!



## Highams Park will not flood!

Regular readers will know that we have been bringing reports on the progress of the dam at Highams Park Lake. The work is virtually ended and the following is the final report from Geoff Sinclair, the Head of Operations:

### Thank you!

Firstly my apologies for the delay in circulating this final update. Can I also give mine, and the wider, team's thanks for the huge support and goodwill we have had in implementing the work at Highams Park Dam. The positive response we received and the community support in implementing a number of volunteer tasks have helped us to progress some great work in the wider Park area.

### Completed Dam Safety Works

The completed dam safety works mean:



- The dam can now cope safely with overtopping should we ever experience a major flood event;
- For the first time we can reduce lake levels through opening the drawdown pipe;
- The Scout hut's future has been secured through the construction of a new flood wall.

### Path Surface

We had hoped for the works to be fully complete. However, we are unhappy about the path surface along the dam which is difficult to access by people with push and wheelchairs. Everyone involved acknowledges it is not right and we are working on the way forward to get it up to a suitable specification. Our apologies for this and we hope to have it remedied soon.

### Woodland Works

Volunteers and Epping Forest Staff have worked together to open up connecting views from the recreation ground through to the lake. The works are now largely done with some minor clearing and stump grinding to be completed. The newly opened areas will be maintained by annual cutting to control brambles and woody regrowth.

## New Planted Trees

Some new trees have been planted and you will notice that some have special watering bags on them. **We are looking for volunteers to help us keep them watered over the next few months to help them establish.** If this is something you can help with we would like to hear from you. Please contact Martin Whitfield our Volunteer Officer if you can help (Tel 020 8532 1010).

## Opening Event

We will hold a formal opening event once things green up and look good! We are not sure yet what form this will take, but would expect to invite those we have worked with over the life of the project.

## Future Management of the Dam

Following the completion of the works, the future management of the dam will involve:

- Weekly inspection of the dam;
- Monthly test of the new drawdown structure;
- Six monthly inspection by a specialist independent engineer;
- Grass cutting and general landscape maintenance of the dam

At present we have not made arrangements with the Scouts for their return to the site, but hopefully this will be agreed in time for the summer.



## A Church visited - a (very) occasional series

Over the years we have written about Churches we have been lucky enough to visit. These have mostly been Minsters, Cathedrals and the like. For this article the church visited could not be more different from these grand buildings but it has a charm of its own.



The church in question is All Saints', Hawton which is a village near Newark where we spend much of our time. We had often passed and admired the church which, like many such, seems to be built as far away from a congregation as possible. On one trip which passed the building we noticed a sign promising 'an open day with guided tours and refreshments' - we just had to take up the offer.

We arrived on the Saturday morning to be greeted by two members of the church and found one other person taking the tour. This was ideal as it meant that we could proceed at our own pace and enjoy the atmosphere. The guide was a London born man whose Australian wife was preparing for the next day's service and in charge of refreshments. Both were very welcoming and any script, had it existed, for the guided tour was soon forgotten as we chatted.

As is typical of many churches the building had been added to and amended over the years (centuries). Parts of the building date from the 13th century with a chancel built around 1320 and a tower and clerestory built in the 15th century. The church roof was raised later in the 15th century and the outline of the original can still be seen. The pews, whilst looking similar, can be seen to be of different ages with the older, probably medieval, being obviously hand made. There are the usual gargoyles and other carvings on the outside of the church. So far this is pretty standard for a parish church of this age. What sets this one apart is the internal carving and its Easter Sepulchre.

The carving is outstanding for such a church, and, although much was defaced during the Reformation, retains a crispness and beauty worthy of a more important religious building. The reason why this is so is not known - in fact much of the carving was only rediscovered under much plaster and paint when a restoration took place in 1843-4. There is a theory that the masons who undertook such work were those who also worked on Southwell Minster which is only a few miles away. This may be the reason that, for such a small parish, the church is quite large and may have been intended to be a collegiate foundation linked to Southwell. Virtually all of the carving is sited behind the wooden screen to the East of the church.

The Easter Sepulchre is beautifully carved and is a visual representation of the Easter story. At the base are the sleeping soldiers guarding the tomb. The centre shows Jesus risen from the dead with the wound in his side. He is joined by Mary who is weeping together with the two other Marys, holding boxes of ointment and spices to treat the body which is no longer there, as well as two angels. The 11 disciples and Mary are shown at the top - Mary is the only one wearing shoes and she is looking heavenwards. The use of such a Sepulchre was to hold the host (the bread for Communion) from Good Friday to Easter Monday in a locked recess at the rear. The Sepulchre was hidden behind the layers of plaster and whitewash until the 19th century restoration. Such was the quality that a plaster copy was made and exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851 at The Crystal Palace.

Our Saturday morning was well spent.....DL



The Sepulchre



The two guards sleeping



The wonderful quality of carving





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- *Esther's story is told in the book of Esther (Old Testament) - Where: Persian Empire*  
 - *Occupation: Xerxes' wife, Queen of Persia - Relatives: Mordecai (Cousin), Xerxes (Husband), Abihail (Father) - Lesson from her life: God has a purpose for the situations in which He places us.*



Spot the Difference - Can you spot 15 differences between the two pictures? Queen Esther is explaining to King Xerxes about Haman's plan to have all God's people killed. Esther's words to the King saves them.



## **CHURCH DIARY**

### **June**

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Morning Service led by Jonathan
	7 pm – 8 pm	'New Songs' Worship
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Morning Service with Communion led by Jonathan
	approx. 11:30 am	Church Members' Meeting
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup>	6 pm	Summer Evening Event
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	10 am	All Age Service with BBGA Parade led by Jonathan
	12:45 pm approx.	Church Picnic at Ridgeway Park
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Morning Service with Communion led by Jonathan

### **July**

Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	7:30 pm	Church Council Meeting at 21 Warboys Crescent
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Morning Service led by Jonathan
	7 pm – 8 pm	'New Songs' Worship
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Morning Service with Communion led by Jonathan
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	All Age Service with BBGA Parade led by Jonathan
	12:45 pm approx.	Church Picnic at Ridgeway Park
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Morning Service with Communion led by Bob

### **August**

Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10 am	Morning Service led by Jonathan
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Morning Service with Communion led by Paul

*Refreshments are served after the Morning Service every Sunday.*