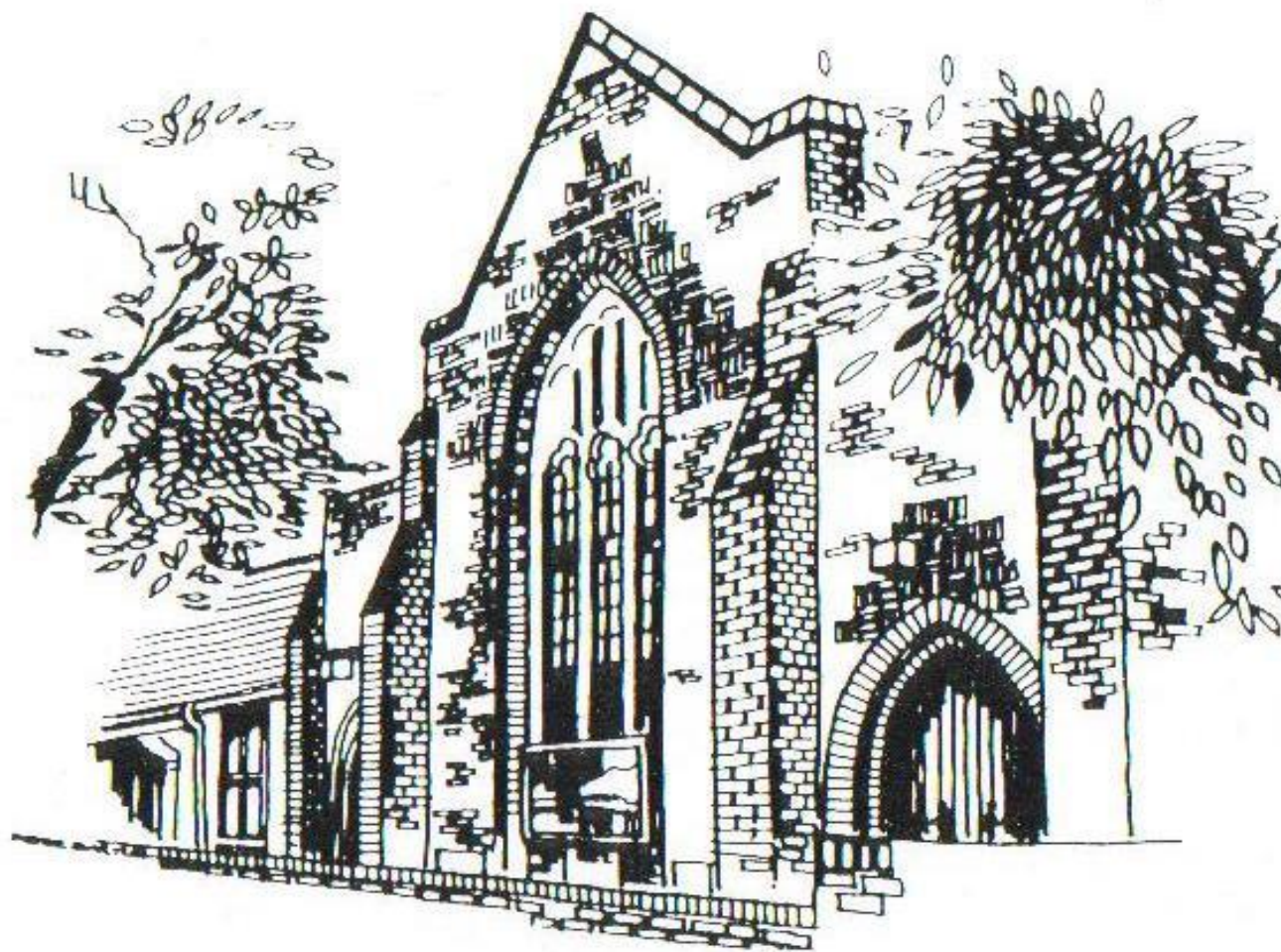




The Magazine
of
**Highams Park Baptist
Church**

Cavendish Road, E.4.



APRIL / MAY 2021

CHURCH PROGRAMME

Sunday Services

As current restrictions ease it is planned to open for Morning Worship on Sunday 18th April. More information will be available later.

For any further information please contact the Church Minister or Secretary.

Monday

Gathered Prayer 11.00 – 12.00 am at the home of Margaret Norris.

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)
combined with

Juniors (For boys and girls in school years 4-6)
6.30 - 8:00 pm
Company Section 6. 30 - 8.30pm.

Cell Groups: The cell groups are small groups of people that meet together for friendship, support, Bible study / application. It would be great if you wanted to try one of the groups.

Friday 'Praise, Prayer and Worship'
Monthly 7.00 -8.00pm at the Church.
Contact Muneyi Antoniou or Peter Burke for details.

Tuesdays, weekly at 8.00 pm
at Sarah and Paul Raymond's House.

The deadline for items for the next edition is Sunday 23rd May 2021
Editors: Dave & Jacquie Lyus, 020 8527 1505 Email: magazine@hpbc.co.uk



Cavendish Road, London E4 9NG

April / May 2021

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Jerusalem was preparing for the feast of the Passover. The city was already busy with visitors when Jesus and his band of followers made their entrance. Transport had been found for the travelling teacher. Seated on a donkey, the man who had become well known as a healer and miracle worker rode into the city to the sound of cheering crowds. Some perhaps recognised the symbolism associated with his choice of mount from an old prophecy. Waving palm branches, they welcomed the arrival of the party from Galilee.

From that moment on, the chief priests and the teachers of the law were in no doubt about the threat that Jesus posed. There were already concerns about the popular appeal of this man who rode roughshod over their traditions. Now there was real anxiety over the threat he posed to their status in the community. To preserve the status quo, this man would have to die.

Palm Sunday, as it came to be known, is a turning point. From this moment on there is no turning back for Jesus, for the disciples, or for the religious authorities of the time. For later generations of Christians, there is also a shift in focus as the move from Lent into Holy Week begins. From today the familiar story of the events of the following week will be retold. On this Sunday, as Jesus rides into Jerusalem, we know that the road to Calvary becomes inevitable. The Triumphal Entry leads to the 'Via Dolorosa' that Jesus will walk carrying his cross. The path to eternal life for all was the 'way of suffering'. There was no other way for the mission of Jesus to be completed.

Palm Sunday this year feels like something of a turning point. Here in England, further changes to COVID restrictions are expected to begin on Monday 29th March with more planned for early April. Holy Week begins in 2021 with what it is hoped will be a return to greater freedom. As many churches prepare to gather for worship for the first time in three months this Easter Sunday, there is a real sense of a new beginning.

The first Easter Sunday must have been a bittersweet experience for Jesus and the disciples.

The joy of the resurrection was reached by the way of suffering, not just for Jesus but also for his anguished followers.

As we approach Easter this year, perhaps we can identify with their experience. We look ahead in hope but cannot, and should not, forget the suffering that has brought us to this point.

The death and resurrection of Jesus changed everything. The Via Dolorosa led to new life. Moving forward in faith, we trust that the 'way of suffering' the world has walked in the past year will bring us in time to new life, new hope, and a new beginning in a future yet to be revealed. *Rosemary*

Taken from 'Thought for the Week': Palm Sunday 28th March 2021

Cavendish Circular

*Holy God, our only hope is in You.
We thank you for the past,
trust you for today and believe for the future;
that all Your promises will come to pass
so we can rest forever in your love. Amen.*



With the coming of Spring, longer evenings and warmer days, our spirits rise to meet the burgeoning signs of nature all around us. After our long Winter of life-restricting rules and necessary isolation we cautiously welcome a brighter future, in the hope that the vaccination programme and medical advances will aid the recovery of our world, while remembering all those who grieve or whose lives have changed irrevocably through the pandemic. We have been supported by the many instances of kindness, compassion, practical and spiritual help which we have experienced in these long months and give thanks for all the blessings we have received.

While our Church building, along with others, has remained closed, our fellowship has continued to care and spiritually uplift us and we give thanks to all who have supported HPBC during this period. By the time you read this it is hoped that the live streaming of a short service (with no congregation) of reflections, readings and prayers for Good Friday will have been made available at 10.00am and which can be accessed via the Church website with a recording available shortly afterwards. We also plan to hold an outdoor service on Easter Sunday in the garden at 10.00am. It is planned to reopen for Sunday Morning Worship on Sunday 18th April which will also be streamed and more information will be available nearer the time.

Our congratulations go to Jan (nee Smithers) and Allan Webb who married in New Zealand earlier this year. We include some pictures of the happy event and look forward to hearing from Jan in the near future. We send them our loving best wishes for every happiness and blessing in their life together.



We are pleased to hear that our friend Jean Owen is recovering remarkably well from her stroke some weeks ago. We understand that she is gaining strength daily and has even managed to go for short walks recently. We extend our love and best wishes for her continuing recovery and remember daughter Sharon and her husband Stan as they care for Jean while experiencing considerable health concerns themselves.

Our member Wendy Slaney has been suffering a great deal of pain and immobility recently due to an episode of fibromyalgia which has necessitated continual bed rest. We do pray that she will soon be free of pain and able to become mobile once again and we continue to remember Phil as he cares for Wendy while undergoing regular health checks himself.

As we go to press: we learn that Margaret Norris has suffered a fall necessitating hospital checks. We send her our love and hope that her recovery is swift.

We have also just learned from Doreen Chandler's niece, Anne, that, sadly, Doreen passed away peacefully on 31st March. Anne writes: "Could you please let anybody at the church who may remember her know. HPBC was a large part of her life for many years and holds many memories for us as a family. I remember helping her do a print run of the church magazine on an old Gestetner printer which was quite an experience. It is a sad time for us all but we are comforted by the fact that she had a long and fulfilled life and is now at peace after the struggles of the last few months. Thank you for keeping her in touch with Church via your magazine. I know she appreciated the contact with her younger life."

Ed's note: Many of you will remember Doreen with great affection as a faithful and committed member of our Fellowship over many years. She took on several roles, most notably as a Deacon and Elder and contributed significantly to the growth and development of HPBC. We hope to pay a fuller tribute to her life in our next issue and send our loving condolences to her family.

Jacquie



With every gift, we help people like Rose and stop this climate crisis

In Kenya, extreme weather is making it harder and harder to survive. For communities fighting the climate crisis, every last drop matters and every last one of us can help them thrive. The coronavirus pandemic has only

increased the urgent need for families to access a reliable source of water. The devastating climate crisis robs people of the water and food they need to live.



Rose walks for six hours to fetch water for her grandchildren. She tries hard to give them the kind of life she remembers from when she was a girl: when the rivers flowed with water and the crops bore fruit.

Rose and her grandchildren shouldn't have to go hungry. A simple earth dam, built with the help of Christian Aid's partners and your donations, could completely change her life. This Christian Aid Week, you can be one of the hundreds of thousands of our supporters who give, act and pray to stop this climate crisis driving people like Rose to hunger.

From envelope collections to walking 300,000 steps in May, Christian Aid Week brings people together as one community against global poverty and injustice.

This Christian Aid Week (10-16 May), please:

- **Give** generously to help ensure people like Rose fight this climate crisis.
- **Act** as we call on the UK Prime Minister to lead the world with ambitious climate action that will also address inequality.
- **Pray** for a radical change of heart for politicians, and that as a global community we will care for our common home and for people living in poverty.

Together we stop this climate crisis. Join us at caweek.org

When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.

Psalm 56: 3

As many of you know, we are regular attenders of the Tuesday zoom group and are very thankful that we can stay in touch with our HPB friends. We recently gave a talk at one of the meetings and have written it up to share with everyone in the magazine.

Through this lockdown period, we try to support each other by sharing something that is joyous and positive. It is important and necessary. But as we also know, it is not always easy to feel uplifted and we all have, and are experiencing, good and bad days.

For us, living in the Netherlands, lockdown started on December 15th and there was no “let up” at Christmas time. In January, the limitations became more strict with the introduction of a curfew (9pm until 04.30am) and only one visitor a day allowed. As in the UK, only essential shops remain open.

It all felt quite dismal during those dark, cold winter days. Like many others we were missing seeing family and friends. I also miss seeing my students and having colleagues to talk to and well, just to be there. So, at that particular time, when we had volunteered to contribute to a session, I was feeling low. I wasn't feeling very joyful – nor very inspirational.

BUT one morning, (after rabbit feeding!) and before another day in front of a screen for online teaching, Michael pointed out a snowdrop in the garden. We had planted many bulbs in October and here was the first sign of something appearing. A glimmer of white, peeping through. The sight of that one small and seemingly delicate flower had an immediate uplifting impact. This seemed to be happenchance, as the date of the next meeting when we were to give our talk, was Feb 2nd which is Candlemas day. This celebrates the first appearance of the snowdrop. It is even noted in a poem from the Middle Ages:

'The snowdrop, in purest white arraie,

First rears her hedde on Candlemas daie.

The snowdrop's alternative names include “Fair Maid of February”, “Snow Princess”, “White Queen” as well as “Candlemas Bells” and Mary's Tapers. The Snowdrop's botanical name is *Galanthus nivalis*, *Galanthus* being derived from the Greek words for ‘milk’ (*gala*) and ‘flower’ (*anthos*), and *nivalis* being the Latin for ‘snowy’; these associations are echoed in a few German names for the snowdrop: *Milchblume* (“Milk Flower”) and *Schneedurchstecher* (“Snow-Piercer”). As for the ‘drop’ part of the snowdrop's common name, this may refer to an old-fashioned earring or pendant – a subtle reference to the flower's understated decorativeness.

February 2nd then is Candlemas Day, a Christian Church festival, also known as the Feast of the Purification. This commemorates both the presentation of the infant Jesus to Simeon at the Temple and the Virgin Mary's purification. As the name ‘Candlemas’ suggests, candles are traditionally lit at the mass or service that marks these events, Candlemas celebrates Christ as the light of the world, and the Virgin Mary is also closely associated with this Christian festival, with white's symbolic significance as the hue denoting purity.

To this day, images of the Virgin Mary in Lady chapels may be either replaced by, or embellished with, snowdrops on Candlemas Day.

It is often found in churchyards and for this reason has sometimes been associated with death, but in fact it prepares the way for new beginnings in the natural cycle, and regeneration and renewal remain the snowdrop's most important message to us.

The Victorians followed this ancient convention in stating, in the language of flowers for which they developed a passion, that the snowdrop conveys a message of hope,

The language of flowers is also a subject favoured by Louise Glück – an American poet and writer, who won the Nobel prize for literature in 2020. I found "Snowdrops" in her book *The Wild Iris*, a collection of poems which take place in a garden where flowers have intelligent, emotive voices. She uses the voices of flowers to challenge human melancholy:

Snowdrops
by Louise Glück

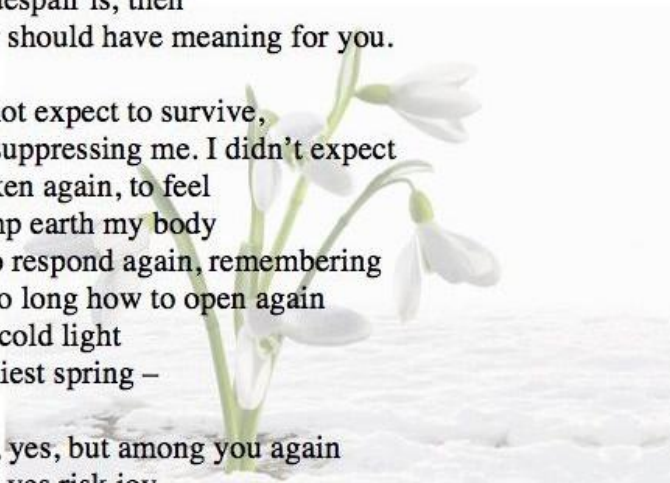
Do you know what I was, how I lived? You know
what despair is; then
winter should have meaning for you.

I did not expect to survive,
earth suppressing me. I didn't expect
to waken again, to feel
in damp earth my body
able to respond again, remembering
after so long how to open again
in the cold light
of earliest spring –

afraid, yes, but among you again
crying yes risk joy

in the raw wind of the world.

In



"Snowdrops," the flower tells how it "did not expect to survive, / earth suppressing me," and so through its survival it was "afraid, yes, but among you again / crying yes risk joy." The snowdrop persists despite the potential bleakness of the earth, and then of "crying yes risk joy" reflects its sheer exuberance of emotion; it cannot help but break the ground through its existence. The snowdrop has been buried all through the winterthen it is pushed upward and onward to emerge still into the cold, into the dark, but bringing with it hope. The hope of new life.

It again made me think of the situation we are in now. We are now surfacing from those dark winter days. We can see and know that things will improve, spring is coming, days are growing longer. And with increasing numbers of people being vaccinated, we know there is a way forward.

But we also remain a little afraid.....our world has changed, all those things we once took for granted, we do not now. There is still much uncertainty and still much that we do not know. This period will leave its mark on many of us – in one way or another. So, while we do “cry yes”, we also “risk joy”, we shall move ahead and we will be moved onwards. And we will be with each other – “among you again” – among and with each other.

But back to our snowdrop.....it was just the one snowdrop appearing that prompted these thoughts. But you very rarely see just one snowdrop. They come in clumps, in handfuls.

However we feel about coming out of this period and finding our way again, we are not on our own. Though we may feel alone – as Christians, our faith “clumps” us together (perhaps “binds” is a better word to use) and we can and do support each other through prayer and our shared belief. We have the reassurance as in Phillipians 4. 6 – 7:

'Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus'.



Resurrection Light

*Risen Christ, when darkness overwhelms us
may your dawn beckon.*

*When fear paralyses us
may your touch release us.*

*When grief torments us
may your peace enfold us.*

*When memories haunt us
may your presence heal us.*

*When justice fails us
may your anger ignite us.*

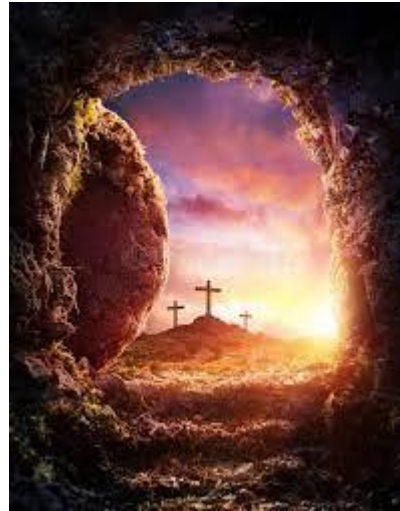
*When apathy stagnates us
may your challenge renew us.*

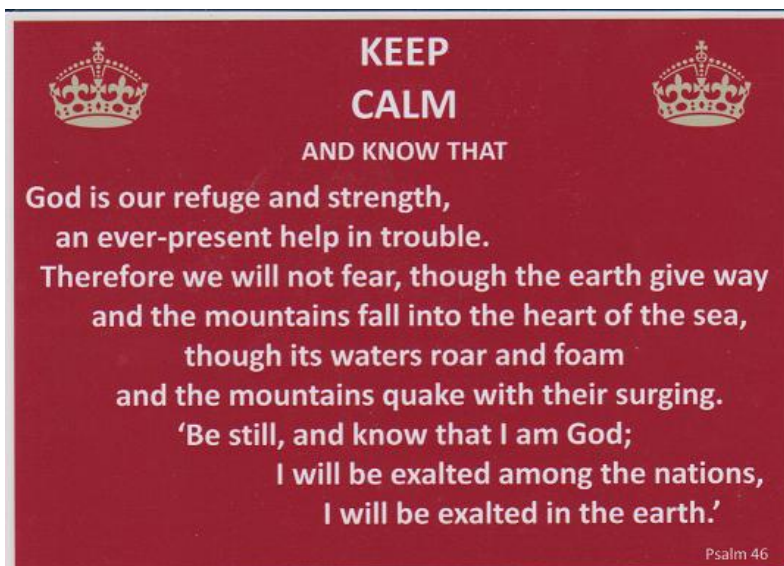
*When courage leaves us
may your spirit inspire us.*

*When despair grips us
may your hope restore us.*

*And when death threatens us
may your resurrection light lead us.*

Amen.





Our new Church Text

Where did the time go?

Did you miss that hour? Yes, the clocks have sprung forward again as they do every year - but why?



The idea of moving clocks back or forwards is a relatively recent idea. It was not until 1880 that time was even standardised throughout the country - the need to create meaningful railway timetables was a great mover towards this. The idea was put forward by several people including William Willett. He was a golfer

and wanted the clocks moved so that he could play until later in the day... Nothing official happened until 1916 when Parliament passed the Summer Time Act. The idea was that work could go on later in the day and energy costs would be lessened. It sounds great until you realise that the Germans had already put this into practice! In the Second World War Britain moved to Double Summer Time - again to lengthen the working day.

Double Summer Time means that the clocks go back two hours to give even more light in the evenings. Britain reverted to normal one hour movement in 1947 and this stayed until 1968 when a three year experiment with Double Summer Time was tried. It did not prove popular, especially as it was dark for longer in the mornings - not good for children going to school.

The European Union has theoretically scrapped the clock moving back and forward but has left it up to the individual governments to decide if they will implement it! They will have the option whether to remain on Winter or Summer timing. This, again in theory, could mean a time zone difference in Ireland. We await their decisions...

However, you have not really lost that hour at all - just view it as postponing the hour - it will return on 31st October when the clocks fall back again.



The Highams Park Society

As you are no doubt aware the Saturday Afternoon Cinema (an offshoot of the Society) presents interesting films at HPBC. Naturally this has had to stop during lockdown but they have announced that (restrictions allowing) they will be continuing their programme in the coming months. The complete Society programme is as follows:

- April 17th A Historical Walk Around Waltham Forest - meet at 10.00am, on Hale End Green.
- May 8th Beating of the Bounds Walk - a historical walk to mark the boundary of the Parish of All Saints Highams Park - meet at 10.00am at the far end of Cavendish Road.
- May 22nd Saturday Afternoon Cinema - 'Make me an Offer' (1954) 1.30pm for 2.00pm at HPBC.
- May 23rd Highams Park Parade (late St. George's Day) 11.00am Details of march to be confirmed.
- June 5th A Walk Around Well Street (Hackney). Meet at Millennium Clock at 10.00am.
- June 19th HPS Summer Talk: 'Highams Park 1910 to the Present Day' - Details to be confirmed.
- June 26th Saturday Afternoon Cinema - 'I Live in Grosvenor Square (1944) 1.30pm for 2.00pm at HPBC. + lunch.
- July 9th 'To Bourne and Hollingsworth and Back' - hidden London 10.00am. Full details to be confirmed.
- July 17th Saturday Afternoon Cinema - 'The Artist' (2010). 1.30pm for 2.00pm at HPBC. and afternoon tea to follow



If you wish to book a place on a walk, please contact Sandeep Christian. 07414 810013 or sd.christian19@gmail.com

To book seats for the Saturday Afternoon Cinema please contact Jenny Cove 07773 024822

What's going on in Highams Park?

I suppose the real answer to this at the moment is not a huge amount in terms of events - however to find out more information we seem to be well served by social media. As an entity social media sometimes gets a bad press but it does have some real benefits in certain areas.

In Highams Park there are a number of groups which provide news of what IS going on and which provide much useful information...



Readers will, I am sure, be aware of **the Highams Park Society** -

www.highamparksociety.co.uk

- they usually hold film meetings at the Church and are also (among many other things) responsible for keeping the Station so neat and tidy

Then we have '**It's a Highams Park Thing**' which can be accessed via Facebook. Their 'mission statement' is: '*Celebrating the brilliance of Highams Park, and giving people a means of communicating all that goes on there.*'



Also we have '**The Highams Park Planning Group** : www.highamparkplan.org
The Highams Park Planning Group ("HPPG") is a group of local people. It was established at a Launch Event on 16th November 2013. The Launch Event was attended by hundreds of residents from the Highams Park area and nearly 1,000 residents have now joined as members. HPPG was formally constituted by its members on 17th January 2014. HPPG's aim is to create a Community Plan ("The Highams Park Plan") for the Highams Park Area. The Plan will be created by local residents, for local residents, using decision making powers granted to local communities under the Localism Act of 2011.

These groups may have varied interests but all are doing what they can to keep Highams Park residents informed and entertained - for this they must be applauded.

*Ed's note: I had thought that this was a comprehensive listing but recently found the **Highams Residents' Association** They can be found on www.highamsra.org. I contacted their Chair and he has kindly agreed that we can use some of the information on their website:*

The Highams Residents' Association (HRA). was founded specifically for residents in The Highams Estate; Crealock Grove, Henry's Avenue, Keynsham Avenue, Lichfield Road, Marion Grove, Mason Road, Montalt Road, Nesta Road, Tamworth Avenue and The Charter Road. We are the oldest Residents' Association in the Borough. Located in the leafy suburb of Woodford Green, Essex within the London Borough of Waltham Forest.

In 1955 several concerned neighbours got together and formed the Higham's Residents Association. Following the war, developments were taking place to rebuild communities and facilities. It was felt by the residents that the Highams Estate was worth protecting from indiscriminate development and this has generally been the ethos of the Association since then.

The Highams Park was purchased by the Council in 1937 for use as a Park. Before World War II the Warner Estate staff played cricket in the park on Saturday afternoons. The Council had to obtain a waiver from Sir Henry Warner to allow the development of the prefab estate. When the prefabs were due to be demolished HRA lobbied the Council to re-instate the site as a public park

In 1983 Sir Henry Warner gifted to the Association the 2ft strip of land that lies along the perimeter of Woodford Girls' High School and adjacent to The Charter Road and also the strip of land between the Rugby Club grounds and the bottom end of Nesta Road. These are known as the Ransom strips. This gives the Association some control over access to what are two large undeveloped green areas and, as a result, some security against unsuitable development. The three Trustees of these Ransom strips are HRA Members. Some of their successes in restricting development are shown below:

It was proposed in the early 1960s to erect a thirteen-story block of flats on the corner of Chingford Lane and Montalt Road. HRA made strong objections to the proposal, graphically demonstrating from what distance the flats could be seen and the proposal was dropped.

About every 10 years the Council reviews all its land use policies, deciding what is appropriate for every area of the Borough. The HRA encouraged the Council to recognise the area as an 'Area of Special Character', this has served the estates well, protecting it from division of properties into flats, the practice of in fill properties and high-density development proposals.

The Association's website is headed by some very interesting pictures which show the building of some of the houses within the area covered by them. Two of these are shown under:



8 and 10 Charter Road



Little Timbers, Crealock Grove in 1930

*I had really thought that this was the final list - but no - I have details of a group whose aim is in its name - **Rewild the Ching**:-*

A new group dedicated to making the River Ching a better habitat for both people and wildlife. Recently, Rewild The Ching teamed up with Stonebridge Lock Coalition to do some serious litter picking along the Low Hall stretch of the Ching Brook. Whilst there is still much work to be done, we managed to clear a total of 38 bags of rubbish along with:

233 plastic bottles

309 glass bottles

327 cans

1 mannequin leg

1 moped



We were cheered to see that the moped had found its way back to the riverside after hauling it out to a pre-agreed collection point with the council. It now seems to be missing the back wheel as well as both front wheels. Heroic effort by whoever managed that!

If you'd like to help with our next efforts, get in touch on Facebook or email us at rewildtheching@gmail.com. Sign up to our mailing list at the following link: <http://eepurl.com/gU05L9>.

This seems a very worthwhile cause, especially as the Ching flows past not just the Church but our back garden as well. When I was many decades younger than I am now the Ching was known to flood across Winchester Road where the road dips as the river crosses it. It seems likely that the cause was a build up of rubbish further along the river close to where it passed near the Walthamstow dog track where there was a grid to stop the rubbish passing under the roadway. This problem seems to have been dealt with as no further flooding has been noticed!

Another memory was during my time at Selwyn School when one day we were tidily marched past the end of the school playing fields to see where the river was in the process of creating an oxbow lake (where the river cuts across a bend in its course and eventually joins up further along leaving the original path as a lake) - I never did find out if it was successful...

DL

In the last issue we highlighted the number of groups that use our buildings - there was one omission - The **Saturday Afternoon Cinema**. This has been presenting films and fellowship (and refreshments) for some considerable time. It is an offshoot of the Highams Park Society which do much to promote interest in the history of our 'village'

In the latest issue of their newssheet '**The Park**', there is an excellent picture of The Parade (the row of shops on the left of Hale End Road leading to the level crossing). There is also a potted history of how the area grew, courtesy of a local builder named Oscar Watling. He was obviously a man of foresight as he purchased part of The Beech Hall Farm and built a number of houses which came to be called 'The Beech Hall Estate' situated in (strangely) Beech Hall Road.



He continued to expand what he saw as a potential area of growth by building this parade of shops in 1906. It is known that the picture was taken prior to 1911 as there is no sign of 'The Electric Theatre' (better known as 'The Regal' which he also built.) We obviously owe much to Oscar's vision...

This set me thinking that the idea of a 'village' suits Highams Park quite well in terms of the shops that are present. Up until relatively recently we have had few national chains - admittedly the Co-op had a large presence in Winchester Road but apart from a funeral directors they disappeared a long time ago. We do, of course, now have Tesco's and in the same area companies like Magnet and Screwfix, but this still leaves most of our shops as independents.

In a way of thinking, we could allow that our Churches are part of national chains and, in some ways, they have changed little over many years. However, within living memory (dependent on your age!) we had more Churches than now. All Saints in Selwyn Avenue was demolished to provide room for Helwys Court. We then lost the Methodist Church in Handsworth Avenue and lastly Malvern Avenue Congregational (later URC) Church. Let us hope that all those left can continue for many years.

DL

Fellowship

This reflection is taken from a recent zoom session led by Dave and myself. We hope that those who have already heard it will forgive us repeating it for a wider group!

While compiling the Cavendish Circular for the Magazine I usually start by making a list of recent prayer requests, together with any fellowship news. In "normal times" I report on Church activities, meetings or special events that have either taken place or are planned for the future. However, during the last year, while our Church has - for the most part - remained closed, these have been rather thin on the ground! What *has* become ever more clear to me is that, while Services are not being held at present, the life of the Church has continued, albeit in different ways and at unfamiliar times. Whereas before we met on a Sunday morning to worship, and enjoy a time of fellowship afterwards over refreshments, where we could catch up with friends or get to know others better, now we can access worship at any time via the internet or printed versions delivered to our homes, in the form of the Sunday Supplement, Rosemary's blogs, and the Lenten reflections. We have also enjoyed a wide range of worship and spiritual reflection via the Zoom sessions which have brought great comfort and enjoyment and for which we thank our hosts, Sarah and Paul, and which help to bring us closer together while we are separated by distance. As I wrote in the last Magazine: while writing the Cavendish Circular the words of the familiar hymn '**Blest Be The Tie That Binds**' kept playing in my mind. This is an old hymn, perhaps not often sung these days except in times of sorrow or parting. However, I feel that it encapsulates the love and concern shown by the fellowship at HPBC for each other and the wider community, especially over this last extraordinary year, and perfectly reflects the love that God has for each and every one of us, especially in times of need and despair.



This hymn was written by John Fawcett, a Baptist clergyman who lived from 1739 to 1817. Fawcett was no stranger to hardship and poverty, having been orphaned at twelve years old and then becoming an indentured servant to a tailor in Bradford where he worked for fourteen hours each day. He taught himself to read at night and mastered John Bunyan's devotional classic: 'Pilgrim's Progress'. At fifteen years old he was converted under the powerful preaching of the evangelist George Whitefield and set his mind on becoming a clergyman. In 1765 he and his wife, Mary, went to serve the fellowship at Wainsgate, in Yorkshire, described as a straggling group of houses on top of a barren hill. The congregation was made up mainly of farmers and shepherds, good hearted and hard-working people, but very poor and mainly illiterate. Nor was there a Parsonage; instead, Fawcett, his wife and young family were passed from one parishioner's home to the next every few months with no place to call their own and sharing each family's meagre supplies. With four children and a very modest salary, supplemented by the parishioner's donations of wool and potatoes, the living was barely adequate, especially during the long, harsh winters and life was very hard. However by engaging families house to house, he gradually grew the congregation so much that the modest meeting house had to be extended...

One day in 1772, after seven years of pastoring in Yorkshire, and gaining a reputation as a theologian , inspiring preacher and serious scholar, a prestigious London parish with far more financial and sophisticated resources extended a call to him, offering a life of comfort, intellectual stimulation and altogether brighter prospects for the family and a vastly improved standard of living. After much heart-searching and agonizing John and Mary decided to accept the call. The announcement was made to the congregation, the farewell sermon was preached, their furniture and some books were sold and the day of departure arrived. As the wagon came for the rest of their meagre belongings, the congregation gathered together to say farewell. They were all distraught and in tears as the family prepared to depart. However, so heart-wrenching proved the parting that John and Mary realized they couldn't leave. "We will unload the wagon" he told the congregation, "we've changed our minds, we are going to stay!" and the crowd broke out in joyful acclamations.

John remained in Wainsgate for fifty four years. He developed a school for the children in the area, and became known as an educator and fine preacher. He published devotional commentaries on the Scriptures and was honoured with a Doctor of Divinity degree. He wrote one hundred and sixty hymns and this is his most famous. We don't know if it was written because of his decision to stay with his beloved fellowship but its language connects well with congregations, identifying with the struggles and changes in life and our unity in Christ, and became a favourite for Christians facing separation, and an affirmation that friendship and community are true measures of wealth.

From the letters Dave and I have received recently we know that those members and friends who have moved away still retain a very warm affection for HPBC, and have happy memories of times spent there in great fellowship. Doris Sparkes, widow of Douglas, who acted with great wisdom and grace as our Moderator, recently wrote: *"If Douglas was here I know he would join me in saying how much we both appreciated the friendship and fellowship of HPBC. Warmest greetings to you all"*. Another wrote: *"Although years have passed and the names changed, I still retain a keen interest in your activities and rejoice in the love and care shown to us by your fellowship in the past"*.

So, while we cannot join together at present for worship and service at HPBC our fellowship is alive and well, thanks to all those who minister, visit, phone, write, provide delicious food, garden, shop, relay news and devotional material, maintain the Church buildings and grounds, organise the groups who still use them, keep a watchful eye on finance and continue to do God's work in a changed and unfamiliar world.



" A new command I give you. Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

John 13: 34 – 35



In the last issue of the magazine I wrote about some of the words that the current pandemic has put into popular usage. I feel that I should write about numbers to bring balance to the situation...

We have probably got used to being inundated by figures relating to the current pandemic - amount of new cases, numbers of people in hospital, numbers who have sadly died and delighted with the number who have had their 'jab'. (I do wonder if those people who have expressed a wish not to have the vaccination have been put off by the idea of somebody 'jabbing' at them?). And then, of course, we enter the realms of millions, billions and trillions - for monies paid out or items of personal protection equipment. Probably a sign of advancing age but I seem to remember a time when a million was an unimaginable figure but then our youngest grandson uses the term 'googolplex' to describe something of great importance (a googolplex is the number 10 raised to the power of 100 i.e. 10 times 10 times 10 up to 100 times).

The numbers that we use are usually referred to as 'Arabic numbers' since they seem to have been developed in the Maghreb (North West Africa) in the tenth century - they were brought to Europe by Arab scholars and thence to us. By using these 10 digits we can create numbers of any length. This compares to the 26 letters in our Alphabet which gives us a finite (if very large) amount of words - you would not, for example use a word made up of same letters - Bbbbbb does not make any sense!

Of course, dates are made up of numbers and currently these are beginning to take on new meaning with the 'road map' out of the lockdown situation being dependent on dates (if the data allows) being so important to our well being!

Numbers can be written in letters - twenty is the same as 20, but the reverse is not true (unless you are using a numeric code!). But numbers do play an ever increasing part of normal life compared to not too many years ago - we have to remember pin numbers, passwords and telephone numbers. Somehow Larkwood 6905 was a lot easier to call to mind than 0208 527 6905 and mobile telephone numbers are even worse with eleven digits to use with only the initial 07 being general...

Of course, numbers play a large part in the Bible - there is after all a complete section in the Old Testament. The book is called Numbers because at the start God ordered a counting of the people (a census) in the twelve tribes of Israel. ...

As a result of their bad behaviour God punished them by making the Israelites travel forty years before they could settle in Israel, the promised land.

For those with long memories they may remember a record by Wink Martindale called 'Deck of Cards' In this he related the tale of a soldier who had no prayer book but used a deck of cards as a memory aid :-

The Ace is the one God, the two represents the Old and New Testaments, the three is the Holy Trinity and the four relates to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John - and so on. Then there is the 'feeding of the five thousand'. the 'Ten Commandments', and the 'forty days in the wilderness' not to forget Psalm 23 (plus all the others as well...)

Interestingly, the number of words in the Bible depends on which of the several most popular you are referring to:

The King James Bible : 783,137 words.

New King James Bible : 770,430 words.

The New International Bible (NIV): 727,969 words.

English Standard Version (ESV): 757,439 words.

New American Standard Bible (NASB): 782,815 words.

The King James Bible contains 80 books: 39 in its Old Testament, and 27 in its New Testament. There are seven books in the Catholic Bible — Baruch, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Sirach, Tobit and Wisdom — that are not included in the Protestant version of the Old Testament. These books are referred to as the deuterocanonical books.

There are 929 chapters in the Old Testament. There are 260 chapters in the New Testament. This gives a total of 1,189 chapters (on average, 18 per book). Mark has the least chapters (16) of the four Gospels but the most verses are in Luke (1151). In the Old Testament there is no competition - Psalms has the greatest number of chapters (150 and the most verses (2461).

When I defined some of the words that had become connected to the pandemic I forgot at least one more - it is:

Furlough

A furlough is a temporary leave of employees due to special needs of a company or employer, which may be due to economic conditions of a specific employer ...

or:

a period of time that a soldier, worker, or prisoner is allowed to be absent, especially to return temporarily to their own home:

Its derivation seems to come from the Dutch *verlof* and the German *Verlaub* both of which translate as '*permission given as a sign of trust*'. Our word 'leave' comes from a related Old English word '*leaf*'.

DL

What's in a Title?



The National press rarely finds column inches to write news about religion except when a particular Church is having problems - I am sure we have all read of 'difficulties' between ministers and choirs or bell ringers!

However, one Saturday in early February, my attention was drawn to a half page article in The Times. It was headed 'Clergy eased out as church puts its faith in managers'. This sounded interesting...

This was a story about the Church of England attempting to cut back on numbers of vicars in order to save money. We are all aware that, in common with many 'businesses' all churches are seeing dwindling incomes since churches have either been closed for long periods or only been allowed very reduced congregations - so economies could be reasonably expected. All fine and good until you read further to find that a rank of 'middle management' is looking to be created. They are charged with an oversight role and many have 'interesting' titles and salaries to match!

So would you want to see the job descriptions that go with the following posts?

'Mission and Transition Enabler', a 'Vision Programme Manager', a 'Director of Church Revitalisation', or 'A Growth Enabler' and perhaps the longest title is that of 'A Part Time Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Office Co-ordinator'. (as far as I know the integrity of creation is not really to be questioned!).

As one person noted that they never saw such people in these jobs - the person you see (and want to see) is the vicar. Without the vicar there is no viable church. What is the use of a growth enabler if there is nothing to grow? People writing to the Letters Page point out that most of these jobs are undertaken (and unpaid) by their vicar!

Of course such grand titles come with commensurate salaries - many of the posts attract twice the amount paid to the local clergy. This seems to have raised a ground swell of antagonism amongst the parishioners. They say that the Church of England already has access to 2,870 unpaid clergy, 7,370 retired clergy who continue to officiate and 7,830 lay readers. These could soon be joined by redundant clergy who still feel commitment to their flocks. However, it also seems very likely that if you take away the vicar you also take away the collection plate and people are already threatening to remove their standing orders in favour of the church.

I think everybody understands that 'normality' may take some time to resume but it does not really take 'A Vision Programme Manager' to see that the ability to come to church for a service is only a part of the experience - the fellowship is sometimes equally sought. It is to be hoped that such headlines are not seen about other Church faiths and that we may soon be able to worship as we want...

DL

Ladies Who Take Tea



More items from the collection of memories entitled 'Bits and Pieces'. These were created in 1990 from the random thoughts of six ladies during afternoon tea. They were: Frances Bowler, Joan Hewett, Kathleen Hewitt, Kathleen Howell, Mary Rampton and Ivy Reynolds - not 'Ladies who lunch' but 'Ladies who take tea'. Here are some more of their ruminations in no particular order;

Highams Park Lake was where we used to play. There was a tea house and you could get refreshments and buy ice cream there. It used to be a pretty lake, with swans and water lilies... and then the boats came and we rather objected to them, but I must say I went on them once or twice, and the water was lovely and clear.

Then the sailing club took it over and they built that boat. They were very good. They had an instructor and the Duke of Gloucester or somebody came down for the formal opening. The instructor did it all voluntarily. They made their own sailing boats as well, Their instructor was a glazier really, and then he had this mission to make his own sailing boat, and it was a cracker, and the boys lived on it day and night because somebody would have vandalised it. They took it up to Brightlingsea, but then the club folded.

They only have canoes now. They built a beautiful club room up at the top. Everything was given to them and the parents helped. They had a kitchen and they put carpet squares down and made a patchwork carpet. Then it got burned.

There were several tramps around - notably 'Peggy Wooden Leg' who was reputed to have lost his leg in the Boer War. Others were unable to find work or settle down after the 1914 - 1918 War. They all seemed harmless. A stone shelter by the lake gave them some protection from the weather. The rocks nearby were supposed to have been part of the original London Bridge. Children played safely in the woods and the lake gave endless pleasure.

DL