

Emmanuel Life

Emmanuel
God With Us 

August 2023



EMMANUEL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
THE GROVE, WEST WICKHAM, KENT, BR4 9JS

www.godwithus.org.uk
0208 777 1007

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Gathered family worship (in-person) and also broadcast on Zoom. See opposite page for details.



MINISTER

Revd David Pickering

Church: 0208 777 0626 (Manse)

e-mail: minister@godwithus.org.uk

Vestry phone with answer machine 020 8777 1150 is checked at least weekly – the best number to call David is the manse phone.

Monday is the Minister's day off, please only contact in an emergency on a Monday.

The shared ministry of Emmanuel United Reformed Church, West Wickham and Elmers End Free Church, Elmers End.

More contact details can be found on page 35



August 2023 Services

6 th (see below)	11.00am	Gathered/broadcast worship led by Revd David Pickering
13 th	10.30am	Gathered/broadcast worship including Holy Communion led by Revd Bryn Thomas
20 th	10.30am	Gathered/broadcast worship led by Alan Kienlen
27 th	10.30am	Gathered/broadcast worship led by Revd David Pickering

September 2023

3 rd (see below)	10.00am	Messy Church led by Revd David Pickering and Pat Best
	11.00am	Gathered/broadcast worship led by Janet Godden

6th August: There is no Messy Church in August

3rd September: Janet Godden is a Lay Preacher from St John's URC Orpington

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God

(Matthew Chapter 5 verse 9)

Minister's Letter

Jesus, Bruce, Jan and me

Dear Friends,

Before you read further, pour yourself a cuppa (or something more spirit-filled!) and settle into a favourite comfortable chair, for this month's letter is less letter and more autobiographical epic!

Let me open with a question... can you think of people or influences that have formed a thread through your life, variously accompanying you, encouraging you and shaping you? If so, you may understand that what follows is a more personal insight into some threads in my life. Perhaps my thoughts and story may prompt you to reflect on threads that have woven their way through your life, too. So let me tell you of Jesus, Bruce, Jan and me.

I listed Jesus first, for of the above, he's the first that I encountered. I was baptised and brought up in the then Bromley Congregational Church, now URC in Widmore Road. My parents remember an occasion on a family holiday at Westgate when in my pushchair and passing some older people, I said rather too loudly, I think that they are going to see Jesus soon! Sixty plus years on and faith, with the person of Jesus central, has been a continuous thread through my life, enriching and bringing perspectives and outlooks without which I would be a lesser person

Next up in chronological order on my list is Bruce. Bruce who you may ask? Well, his surname is Springsteen, and is known affectionately as 'The Boss'. An American rock singer/songwriter, born in 1949 in New Jersey. He was raised in a working-class Catholic family and whilst his church engagement has changed, he has commented, 'once a Catholic, always a Catholic' and 'still playing for the team'. Springsteen is well known for his liberal/left of centre political views, including supporting Barack Obama. It is faith that has been a constant influence through his life.



From a young age Springsteen was hooked on the guitar, playing in a number of bands in his youth before forming the E Street Band in 1972. In the fifty plus subsequent years Springsteen has gained wide respect for his poetic lyrics with a cause, and his live shows which typically run for three hours of non-stop high-energy music.

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What about Bruce and me? Well, I got to know him in the mid-70s through his 'Born to Run' album, which also catapulted him into the rock big league. I first saw him play at the end of May 1981 at Wembley Arena.



I am not sure of the wisdom of the timing, being two nights before the first of my final degree exams, but I had a great night and went on to get the degree that I hoped for, phew! I went with two of my brothers and after the show we found ourselves by the gates, when, Bruce stopped by. He wound down the minibus window, said hello, shook my hand and signed my programme.

Wind forward four years to his 'Born in the USA' album tour and I again got tickets with some of my brothers, first to see him at St James's Park, Newcastle and then at Wembley Stadium. By the time the latter concert came round I was 'going out' with a girl named Janet Clarkson. You can imagine my delight when I discovered that she had a ticket to go with some of her Uni friends, it boded well for our relationship, and we went together.

As Bruce would say. 'She's the one' and a year or so later Janet Clarkson swapped her surname for Pickering. The last dance at our wedding evening reception was Springsteen's 'Dancing in the dark'. We still enjoy bopping to it (Dad dancing our children would say!), whenever we hear it played today!

Thus following Jesus and Bruce, Jan was added as a thread in my life.

For the next decade or two, whilst I (we actually) still listened to Bruce and his successive albums, life events, not least the arrival of first Rachel, and then Jamie and Anna in our lives meant that through the '90s and '00s, we were happily and well occupied as parents, restricting concert going.

But come the 2010s, Bruce, Jan and I renewed our acquaintance. First in 2012, when he played the Stadium of Light (Sunderland's football stadium) on a decidedly 'fog on the Tyne' night, the following year in Leeds, where we were living, when he was the first ever act to play at the then new Leeds Arena. Finally' for that decade in 2016 when we saw him at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester. Each concert was a great night out, with some new material and some favourite 'bangers'.

As the decades advanced, so did our ages! Come the mid-2010s, we were in our mid-50s and Bruce in his mid-60s. It was noticeable at his concerts that his loyal fans were growing old with him. Whilst some were younger than us, the majority felt our age or older. Good for them. Rock, which was in some ways was the *enfant terrible* of 50s/60s establishment, had truly come of age, with the middle aged (and older) comprising Bruce's loyal base.

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A conversation with those around us at a gig generally reveals that most have seen him far more times than Jan and I. And a conversation at Emmanuel revealed to us that one of our member's son and daughter-in-law plan their holidays based on where Bruce is playing, so they can attend another gig! (just ask Janet Knott!).

Six years on from last seeing him, between which the world succumbed to the scourge of Covid, Bruce announced a new tour. The tickets were released last July whilst Jan and I were on the high seas, but our son, Jamie, kindly did the online queueing honours, and we were thrilled that he succeeded in bagging us a pair for the British Summer Time Festival in Hyde Park, for Thursday 6th July. Elders, bless 'em were content to reschedule their monthly meeting, so Jan and I were good to go.



The day dawned bright, dry and warm but not too hot, perfect ☺. So after a Manager's meeting at Emmanuel, then lunch, we dressed for the occasion and headed to the venue early afternoon. Now a little insight and confession time...

It is *de rigueur* amongst his devoted following to wear a Bruce concert t-shirt to his gigs, so I looked out my now very worn one from his 1980/81 tour, illustrated. I've spared you seeing me sport it!

I only saw one other of the same vintage, actually worn by someone in their 20s/30s, so they definitely weren't alive at the time of that concert over 40 years ago!

After two support acts, the E Street Band and Bruce came onto the stage a moment or two after 7pm, and launched straight into the music. From this point, we had a solid 3 hours, uninterrupted concert, drawing on true favourites from some of his earlier albums, and some thoughtful and thought-provoking more recent material. It was fun, energy-filled and at times deeply moving.

Fronted by Bruce throughout, his vitality, vigour and verve belied his just short of 74 years. Jan and I agreed that it was one of the best, if not the best concert that we've been to through the years. Our experience is echoed in a review by BBC's Music Correspondent, Mark Savage – those reading this online can see it clicking here: [Bruce Springsteen settles an old score in Hyde Park - BBC News](#)

So Jesus, Bruce, Jan and me, so what's the reason for featuring this personal life-thread in our church magazine? Well, as I intimated at the start, Springsteen's lyrics are strongly influenced by the gospel.

His song, 'Jesus was an only son' reflects on Mary as she accompanied him to Calvary,

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*Well, Jesus was an only son
As he walked up Calvary Hill
His mother Mary walking beside him
In the path where his blood spilled*

Springsteen then imagines Mary reflecting to earlier times with her son,

*Jesus was an only son
In the hills of Nazareth
As he lay reading the Psalms of David
At his mother's feet*

And further back again, to Mary recalling his birth:
*A mother prays, "Sleep tight, my child, sleep well
For I'll be at your side
That no shadow, no darkness, no tolling bell
Shall pierce your dreams this night"*

The song, which is about loss of loved-ones, concludes with an exploration of faith and hope in Christ,

*Well, Jesus kissed his mother's hands
Whispered, "Mother, still your tears
For remember the soul of the universe
Willed a world and it appeared*

Commentator Dave Wild wrote of his tour promoting his 'Wrecking Ball' album,

'There's always been a bit of a preacher about Bruce in concert... his excellent Wrecking Ball album is truly a religious experience in a non-denominational yet very soulful way.'

Through his fifty years, Springsteen has tackled real life, gritty life with a realism but also with hope.

In the wake of 9/11, Springsteen wrote 'The Rising', a song which tells the story of a New York City Fire Department fire-fighter, climbing one of the World Trade Center towers in a surreal and desperate environment. The song reflects on a sense of calling, of carrying a cross and in his Easter Garden inspired words:

*I see you Mary in the garden, in the garden of a thousand sighs
There's holy pictures of our children, dancin' in a sky filled with light*

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Springsteen evokes a feeling of hope in the journey from Gethsemane to the Garden of the Resurrection, such that out of the depths of bleakness 'The Rising' speaks of hope even after the Good Friday despair of 9/11, a song of resurrection light and new life.

His song, 'City of Ruins' from the same album, reflecting on the rubble of 'Ground Zero', mourns with hope with words that would feel familiar in a traditional service:

*"Now with these hands... I pray Lord...
With these hands...I pray for the strength, Lord
I pray for the faith, Lord, we pray for your love,
Lord, we pray for the lost, Lord, we pray for this world,
Lord... Come on, rise up... Come on, rise up"*

On a more mundane level, in the ordinariness of recession gripped down-town life, with a young man down on his luck, Springsteen's 'Badlands' resonates with anyone who feels at the mercy of impersonal, spirit-crushing forces that can alienate individuals and fragment society. The song, written for his 1978 album, 'Darkness on the edge of town', remains a staple of his concert play list, for he sings with a relevance to austerity-sapped, foodbank Britain today. The song acknowledges that life can be a constant struggle, that there are casualties, broken hearts and lives destroyed, but it doesn't spiral down into despair, concluding in celebration of hope. Not the facile hope typified by 'I hope my number comes up in the lottery', but hope that is founded on keeping faith and honouring responsibilities, on doing beyond dreaming. Drawing on well-known words from Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth, Springsteen belted out:

*I believe in the **love** that you gave me
I believe in the **hope** that can save me
I believe in the **faith** and I pray that some day it may raise me above these Badlands*

His lyrics have a Psalm-like, eye-lifting quality, railing against the worst of society including the corruption of power and wealth, yet looking upwards and forwards to shaping a better day. As the crowd-filled park echoed to the lyrics, I was left wondering on the way that rock, coupled with spirit-filled lyrics, can feed hungry hearts with the gospel.



As the three hour mark approached, Bruce and the E Street Band played the sixth song of their encore, 'Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out'. This included a moving tribute, with images, to the two original band members, (listed on the rear of my t shirt) who've passed away since the band was formed. His larger-than-life saxophonist, Clarence Clemmons, now succeeded by his nephew, Jake Clemmons, and Danny Federici, who played the organ and accordion.

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As the last chords faded away to an empty stage, the crowd continued to cheer, a noise which grew to a crescendo as Bruce reappeared, this time alone bar his acoustic guitar. He paused, then moved into playing one final number, a thoughtful, haunting and hopeful moving song, penned following the tragic death of a friend and record promoter, Michael Solomon Gudinski, and includes the chorus. Entitled, 'I'll see you in my dreams', it has the chorus,

*I'll see you in my dreams when all our summers have come to an end
I'll see you in my dreams, we'll meet and live and laugh again
I'll see you in my dreams, yeah around the river bend
For death is not the end. And I'll see you in my dreams*

And thus, Springsteen closed his 2023 show, with a tribute to those who have passed and reflecting on the closing of life, with the affirmation, that death is not the end. So there you have it, some musings on Jesus, Bruce, Jan and me.

I hope that Bruce will return to London or that I'll have another opportunity to see him, sing along with him, and meanwhile, if not, I'll continue to listen to his music, which lifts heart, nurtures soul, draws on the reality of life in our flawed world and is filled with Gospel hope. I close with words from his 2014 song,

'This is your sword',
*"The times they are dark, darkness covers the earth,
but this world's filled with the beauty of God's work
Hold tight to your promise, stay righteous, stay strong,
for the days of miracles will come along
This is your sword, this is your shield, this is the power of love revealed"*

I am thankful for each of Jesus, Bruce and Jan in my life.

I wonder who may feature in the threads of your life and faith?

David



Secretary's Notes

MESSY CHURCH



is on a well-deserved break until September. However, games & fun are being offered in Sparrow's Den – **Tuesday 1st & Wednesday 23rd August**, 10am onwards. Details on page 26.

EMMANUEL FELLOWSHIP

Just a reminder that Fellowship is taking a break in August except on 8th August 2.15 for Tea & Cakes and will be back in September



GUEST WORSHIP LEADERS



Welcome to two of our own -
Bryn Thomas on 13th August
Alan Kienlen on 20th August
Janet Godden on 3rd September

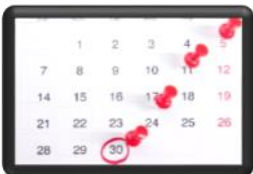
CHARITIES

We welcome ideas & nominations for Local and Overseas Charities for us to support in 2024. Please pass your nominations to any Elder by the end of September.



CHURCH MEETING DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

October – Sunday 8th
December – Sunday 10th – Election of Elders only
January – Sunday 23rd - AGM



Rosemary



Zimbabwe — Life is always better with a cup of tea!

The resurrection bush is a native plant that many farmers grow in Zimbabwe to make herbal tea.

Few plants can grow here under the baking sun.

It looks just like a bundle of red, dead twigs. Agnes, however, knows that with just a little water, it will soon spring back to life.



Agnes likens the resurrection bush to our lives. Sometimes life is difficult, and other times it is OK.

But during the times when it is difficult, do not lose hope. Anytime, life can become good again.

Like the Resurrection bush, Agnes has survived the hardest of times. A drought in her region, left her struggling to grow food, and what little she had left went to her son. She went from having three meals a day to just one! But Agnes did not give up hope. Christian Aid's BRAC programme helps farmers to support each other and stand strong against the changing climate. With the knowledge that she has gained she can now grow food and herbs that thrive even in the driest conditions. Together with women in her community, she uses a solar-powered pump to water beans and fresh tomatoes to sell.

Your support for Commitment for Life, means that Agnes can now support women who are fighting the same struggles she once did.

Our Harvest giving goes to Commitment for Life through Christian Aid. There will be envelopes and news of how to give directly.

Pat Best



News of the Church Family, URC and wider Church Community

The American author, Kent Nerburn wrote,

“Remember be gentle with yourself and others. None can say why some fields will blossom while others lay brown beneath the August sun, so be kind to those around you because even they don't know what might happen.”

Through this last of the true summer's month, remember those within Emmanuel's community who are experiencing the joys or heartaches of life, that they may experience the warmth of the love and light of Christ.

Remembering people receiving health care and caring for their loved ones

Please remember those who are poorly or have had or are having or recovering from some medical investigations, procedures, breaks, support or treatment, including:

- Freda Banks
- Marjorie George
- Julie Lord
- Jo McGee
- Will Patterson

those who are caring for loved ones, including elderly parents.

A Prayer for Healing

*Healing Lord, as four friends carried a sick person to Jesus,
so, I carry to Jesus in my prayer...*

(please add a name, or hold a picture, of someone in your thoughts).

*May your healing hand surround and support them,
in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Remembering people on the move

Nicky MacIntyre following the upheaval and stress of her house move, as she settles in her new home nearer to Emmanuel.

Preparing for Marriage

Gaby Stocker and her fiancé Iain Hann who are to be married at Emmanuel on Saturday 26th August. May they be blessed with a beautiful day and a long, loving and happy marriage.

Young People

In the season of exam results, please remember our young people, including from Messy Church and Guides, receiving news and making plans for the next steps in their lives.

If you know of someone who would appreciate the prayerful support of the church, or has a special anniversary or birthday, or any special news, please let David or an elder know.

David Pickering

Emmanuel Fellowship

Dear Friends,

We had a lovely time in July. It was a real treat to learn a bit more about our friends at the Fellowship, when we shared stories focussing on the letter 'j'. Mark Sedgewick gave us a grand performance of song – and dance: well you can hardly sit still when a charismatic personality like Mark takes to the stage! Our 'shopping trip' down memory lane with Gilly Halcrow was a delight. We sure learned a lot about those famous shops of yesteryear, and those still hanging on, like M&S and Waitrose.

August is holiday month for the Committee, but don't imagine we will all be resting. We're giving you a special treat on Tuesday 8th August, so come along and enjoy tea, cakes and some wonderful company. It's our way of saying 'thank you' for your support throughout the year.

You should have all received your Autumn Programme by now, but if you've somehow missed out, or would like a copy for a friend, do get in touch. (Sue Thomas 8462 5860)

We look forward to seeing you on August 8th, or if you can't make that date, September 5th, when our Minister David Pickering, will lead our opening worship, with, perhaps, some surprises in store.

Every blessing,

Sue Thomas and the Fellowship Committee

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

(Philippians Chapter 4 verses 6-7)

Nature ramblings - Off to Mull

Following our puffin-inspired foray to Lunga, off Mull, in last month's edition of nature ramblings, this month we journey to Ulva, another of Hebridean Mull's off isles.

Ulva sits between two of Mull's west coast sea lochs, Loch Tuath and Loch na Keall, and has the claim to fame of being the birthplace of David Livingstone's grandfather, in a cave! As an adult he left the isle in search of employment. Poverty has been a feature of island life through successive generations, but Ulva has recently been the subject of a community buy-out, bringing hope of a brighter future.



Ulva is accessed by a five minute passenger ferry, overlooked by Mull's Munro, majestic Ben Mor (left). From there we walked along the southern side; our destination being a recently refurbished bothy which had featured on the BBC 2's 'Designing the Hebrides' featuring Mull resident Banjo Beale.

Like Mull, Ulva is a wildlife haven. We saw an abundance of Spring flowers including yellow flag, ragged robin and the cuckoo flower, so named as it blooms in the season when cuckoos call. We were delighted to hear the insect-eating cuckoo's call echoing around the isle. It isn't music to the ears of Ulva's meadow pipit population, for their nests are targeted by the female cuckoos to lay eggs, leaving the pipit to raise her brood.



We also spotted two plants, which like the cuckoo, eat insects, the round-leaved sundew (left) and the common butterwort (right).



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The sundew has reddish leaves with tendrils tipped with a sticky dew-drop looking substance, which traps, wraps around then digests passing prey. The butterwort blooms from May to July with a purple flower, which rises above a rosette of leaves. These ooze a sticky substance which also trap passing insects, curl around and digest them.

A simple walk left us in awe of the beauty of creation, both the magnificence of the vistas and the small, intricate wonder of nature, lifting our step count and more significantly, lifting our souls.

David Pickering

Photo credits:

- * Photo on the front cover courtesy of Ben White on unsplash
- * Photos on pages 4 to 8 courtesy of DAP (page 4 taken of album cover)
- * Photos on page 10 courtesy of unsplash
- * Photo page 11 courtesy of Christian Aid
- * Photos on page 14 courtesy of DAP
- * Photo on page 16 courtesy of DAP
- * Photos on page 18 courtesy of Soarta
- * Photo on page 24 courtesy of Ian Moore
- * Diagrams on page 25 courtesy of Ian Moore

Personal Thanks & Announcements

Thank you Ann!

Wednesday 19th July saw the end of an era, as Ann Glover stepped down from running Emmanuel's Parent/Carer Toddler Group. Ann first came 32 years ago, and for the last 28 years has been running it. An amazing achievement as she saw a generation pass through Toddlers, and start over. Indeed, present on 19th July was Michelle, who first came as a toddler, then in later years as a child minder and now attends as Mum with her own toddler. Ann's dedicated service has enriched many lives, both youngsters setting out in their lives, enjoying a place in which they can play, run around and start the important process of making friends, to mums and carers, for whom life can sometimes feel isolating and which Toddlers has been a lifeline.



To mark Ann's amazing service, a presentation was arranged with two of our Elders, Sara and Pat giving a bunch of flowers and a gift voucher, and me (David) to say a word or two.

Ann wrote after saying,

*Dear David and all at the Emmanuel Church,
Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers and the gift voucher. Corza is one of my favourite restaurants in the High Street and I look forward to having a meal there. I shall think of you all when I do.*

Today was very emotional but this is not goodbye, I will be popping in to keep in touch. If there are any groups or events that need an extra pair of hands, please let me know.

Kind regards, Ann

Looking forward

Toddlers restarts after the school summer holidays on Wednesday 6th September, with two of Toddler's loyal attendees, Zoe Favata and Hannah Crew taking on the group's leadership. A new advert will run in the September edition of Emmanuel Life.

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Christian Aid

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Christian Aid are appealing for people to remember their charity in their will. Kerry McMenamin, who is Christian Aid's Faith Will Lead, writes: *Gifts in wills are a special way for Christians to give thanks to God's generosity in their lifetime. They enable churches and charities like Christian Aid, to flourish and transform lives long into the future. They allow our faith to live on for generations to come – in both local and global communities.*

To find out more information about leaving a bequest to Christian Aid, click in the online edition: [Faith Will faith - Christian Aid](#) or use a search engine entering, 'faith will Christian Aid', or call 01925 573 769 to find out more.

David



@

massive thank you to everyone who supported the annual Charity Fair in any way on the 2nd July, it was a huge success and we are delighted to let you know that we raised over £1,100 for Soarta.

Thank you from Jim/Sue and the Fair Committee



As part of our service before the fair we saw a series of slides that Asea had sent together with a voice over telling us about Soarta.

Here are Asea's words:

Soarta is a charity organisation in Moldova which is a country between Ukraine and Romania. During 21 years of activity Soarta focuses on education, and we run schools for the underprivileged children of village workers who every day give their best for a better future.

We run organisations that employ younger youths so they can live their dreams for themselves and for their families.

Soarta helps people in need and we developed programmes for children, youth, elderly people, women and invalids, offering them different kinds of assistances as medical, social, humanitarian, education, psychological and spiritual.

When Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022 we were inundated with refugees from across the border. Moldovan people opened their houses and their hearts to help them. We are doing everything we can to feed, clothe, house and educate the Ukrainian refugees and their children.



My name is Asea Railean and I am the director of Soarta Association. Commitment for Life has helped us with our important work. We are very grateful to congregations like yours in the United Reformed Church for all your help.



Thank you for your great help and God bless you.



FOOD BANK DONATIONS...PLEASE

When I was hungry, you gave me food...

As usual, please don't feel under any obligation to give in any way, but this is simply a little guidance for any of you who would like to give at the moment. We are short of the following items, and ask you to consider these in your donations:

- Jam
- Rice pudding
- Tinned fruit
- Desert of any kind that has a shelf life
- Crackers/savoury biscuits
- Juice (cordial)
- Milk
- Rice - dried in packets
- Tinned veg
- Tinned tomatoes
- Soup
- Washing up liquid/cleaning products
- Washing powder/pods
- Baby wipes
- Carrier bags (branded or unbranded—as long as it can hold a fair amount of items)

Items can be left in the church vestry or at Sainsbury's on the high street (not on Station Road), even if they are not bought in-store. Also note that there are two donation boxes but only one is for the Salvation Army. You are also welcome to donate to our JustGiving page:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/newaddingtonsalvationarmy>

Please note our donations delivery times; Tuesday evenings 7-8pm, and Saturday mornings 9-10am.

The Vine is located in Salcot Crescent New Addington CR0 0JJ. We are down a narrow driveway between houses 11 and 13, next to Tharreo House school.

MANY THANKS once again for all your help - we really couldn't manage without our public donations!

Flora

Photo albums update

Y

ou may remember that we have a set of photo albums so that we can make sure we can put a name to a face. These are presently kept in the vestry so they are not for the public to see but can be accessed any time the vestry is open. Perhaps it would be helpful to have them out at coffee time.

The albums were especially useful to David when he first came as we were then on Zoom or behind a face covering.

Since then we have been delighted to welcome some new folk. Also some of us have new hairstyles or none, and all of us are older.

So please come and find me on a Sunday or a Friday and I will take a photo. Or if you have a good one please send it or I can copy one for you.

Many thanks,

Pat Best

A Messy Miracle

Sunday 2nd July dawned bright and sunny, and with plans laid and preparations made by Team Emmanuel for our combined Messy Church/Parade Church/Tidy Church, then Annual Summer Charity Fair.

In the first hour of Messy Church the young people mixed and made 5 soda bread loaves, which following baking (thank you Ann for the use of your kitchen and oven 😊) were brought into church. Alongside the bread, Pat had baked fish fingers and arranged them in two giant fish shapes on the baking tray. With a theme of compassion, we told the story of the feeding of the 5000 using knitted figures, then enacted it as a whole congregation. The bread provided by the young people was blessed, and having sung, *Let us break bread together in the Lord*, the loaves and fish were distributed, with a miraculous 12 baskets of left-over bread collected once the congregation had taken their fill.

A number of people requested the recipe used, so here it is:

Soda Bread Recipe

Ingredients:

- 375g flour (based on strong white flour, you can use a proportion of rye flour up to 50:50)
- 50g oats (we used jumbo oats)
- 1 ¼ tsp salt,
- 1 ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tablespoon treacle
- 1 tablespoon honey
- Butter
- 375 ml buttermilk (we used a 300 ml buttermilk carton made up to 375ml with milk)

Equipment:

- Large mixing bowl
- Scales
- Tablespoons and table knife (to make slashes)
- Baking tray - greased

To make:

1. Add dry ingredients to bowl and mix well
2. Add wet ingredients, mix well
3. Dollop onto greased baking tray, then slash deeply twice to make a cross indentation
4. Bake for c. 36-40 minutes 180°C fan oven, or 200°C non fan/ Gas Mk 6, until hollow when tapped underneath
5. Remove from oven, place on a cooling tray, brush with butter
6. Once cool, cut and eat – great with more butter on!

Jan and David

Diary of a Mod Elect

Friends,

Another quiet couple of months travel-wise, but with General Assembly involved, there was still a lot to do!



First up, though, was the second Youth Exec meeting of the year, held at Westminster College Cambridge. This is one of the URC's ministerial training colleges, and alongside our meeting we got a tour of the college and had some freetime to explore Cambridge. The meeting covered a lot more Youth Assembly planning while also reflecting on the work of the task groups we set up in March. We also had Jo Harris join us to talk about her recent ecumenical trip to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. She discussed the brutal reality of the occupation for Palestinians, and told us the stories of some of the people she met, a lot of which involved young people enduring imprisonment or violence and potentially death either from speaking up or simply daring to be a child in the wrong place at the wrong time. She also talked about some things we can do as individuals, and petition for from local, national and international governments to stand alongside Palestinians.

After that, we were off to General Assembly, which as usual was preceded by What Do You Think? The youth meeting before General Assembly where we have an opportunity to discuss the papers and talk to some of the people who wrote them, as well as gaining wisdom from Fiona the Moderator and Lindsay her Chaplain, who was also part of the Church Life Review Group, which was a large focus of this year's General Assembly. It was a really invaluable two days getting to discuss the papers and discuss some of our concerns within a small group. This time also allows us to prepare things to go up and say during General Assembly, which is another great thing as it can be very daunting to go up to the podium to speak, so knowing what you are going to say helps empower people to go and have their voice heard.

General Assembly itself was very very busy. With the first year of proposals coming from the Church Life Review Group, the agenda was packed full. But rather than dive into the whole book of reports (you can go and read that for yourself if you want, its available on the URC website along with the minutes and a round-up from each day), I'm going to do what I did last year and provide a short list of resolutions passed that should and could impact the life of our church, or at least give us food for thought:

- A paper on the illegal migration bill that the UK government is currently pursuing, that states that General Assembly strongly objects to the bill,

Continued on next page

especially concerning its breach of basic human rights, and encourages people to write to their MP expressing their concern, especially with a general election on the horizon.

- The Church Life review papers and resolutions that reflect on the current state of the URC and has proposals for principles to follow and restructuring of some committees. While this is mostly general assembly level, the reflections on the current state of the URC are really interesting.
- The Children and Youth Work committee paper recognising children's youth and family work as a ministry and offering the opportunity for synods and the URC as a whole to explore a formal ministry/qualification to help support those who feel called to pursue this work both voluntarily and employed.
- A paper on working ecumenically.
- A paper on poverty calling both government and churches to better demonstrate their commitment to helping those experiencing poverty.
- A paper that approved anti-racism training that will be rolled out at varying levels across the next couple of years, building on the previous commitment to work to becoming an anti-racist church.
- A paper that affirms the human dignity of transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming people and discusses the church's role within this.

Looking forwards briefly the summer is usually pretty quiet, with holiday clubs and summer events being the only things running.

If you want to talk to me, especially surrounding the papers from General Assembly, I would love to hear from you at urcyamodelect@urc.org.uk

In Christ,

Heather

Eco Hints Round 7: August 2023

This month we have a single change that's simple and low cost, and that gets you and the planet a double win. Introducing.....

Water-saving shower heads

What do they do? A water-saving shower head uses less hot water than a conventional one. For example, the model in the photo uses a maximum of 9 litres of water pre minute, rather than 12 litres or more.

How do they work? Most models work by aerating the flow, that is, they mix the hot water flow with air, giving the flow the same “bulk” and “feel” but using less water.

How much does it cost? You can find the model in the photo (Hansgrohe Crommeta Eco Smart 1 Jet) online (Amazon) for around £20. There are a couple of different versions of this particular model, including one which only uses 6 litres per minute, while others have dual spray (rain or jet) features as well - so no loss of luxury! And obviously there are other brands and models on the market as well.



What's the double win? Obviously you use less water – good for the water bills if you are metered. ✓ But because you're using less hot water, you're also going to save on your energy bills. ✓✓

Can I fit it myself? Yes! If you have a flexible shower hose, you simply unscrew the existing shower head and screw on the new one in its place.

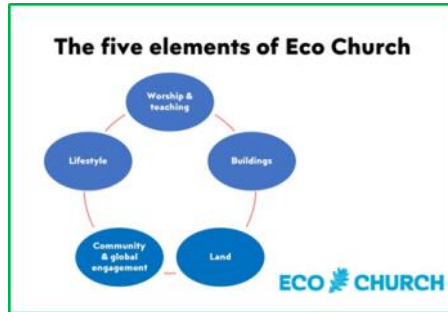
Anything else to consider? Various websites mention that these shower heads do not work as well if you have an electric instant-hot water shower. It's going to work best where you have a hot water feed off the central heating system.

Any other savings? Yes – try showering for less time – say only 5 minutes instead of 6 minutes, or 8 rather than 10, or whatever your habits are.

Ian Moore

Eco Church Network Bromley

The Eco Church Network Bromley was launched in spring this year and has now travelled to 4 different churches and welcomed attendees from 14 different congregations. The various speakers have covered all areas of the Eco Church programme – with deeper dives into bio-diversity, political hustings and energy efficiency in community buildings.



There are two more meetings scheduled for the rest of this year:

- **Tuesday 5th September** – at St Francis of Assisi, Petts Wood (BR5 1QW). Father Stephen Niechcial will be telling us more about the Repair Café they have launched.
- **Wednesday 22nd November** – at Beckenham Methodist (BR3 5JE). Simon Brown from A Rocha will tell us more about the wider work of A Rocha, all the things they do like the Wild Christian programme, their own eco plots, and working with other partners on threatened species and habitats.



As part of Eco Church Network Bromley, Emmanuel receives the bi-monthly Bromley Environment Newsletter published by Greener & Cleaner. We do print off a few copies, which are usually on the tables at Warm Welcome Fridays, but if you'd like to receive this directly by email please let me know and I'll forward it on to you each time.

Ian Moore

Notices

Emmanuel Fellowship 'gathering'

Tuesday 8th August at 2.15pm
in the Richmond Hall
Everyone welcome

Details on page 13

Baby & Toddler Group

Wednesdays at 9:30am

Details on page 29

Emmanuel Art Group

**Thursdays
1:00pm to 4:00pm**

Details on page 29

Warm Welcome

Fridays 10:00am to 4:00pm

This incorporates Drop-In Coffee mornings and a series of events

Details on page 28

SUMMER FELLOWSHIP & FUN

at Sparrows Den playing fields off Corkscrew Hill BR4 9BB.

**Tuesday 1st August and
Wednesday 23rd August**

Everyone is invited to a time for playing, relaxing and conversation. This is for Messy Church and anyone from Emmanuel and beyond.

We will meet from 12 noon onwards, hopefully near to the cafe and Enchanted Village Crazy Golf and Footgolf/Putting.

There will be stomp rockets, bat and ball games and the parachute. Please bring a game to share, picnic rug/chairs and your own food and drink, sunscreen, etc.

Friends are welcome, and an adult must accompany children.

Cancelled if wet.

Pat Best



Synod Prayer Days

Deployment Missions Future Outreach
Concerns Buildings Age profiles
Congregations Evangelism Decline

We talk a lot together, in Councils, Synod Area and Synod meetings

But do we listen?

Do we spend time listening to God?

This is an opportunity to listen to God together as Synod (Area)!



Synod Prayer Days Agenda

- 10:00 Arrivals
- 10:30 Opening Worship + Intro
- 10:45 General Prayers for Synod and Synod Area
- 11:15 Prayer Sessions
 - Individual Prayers
 - Lectio Divina
 - Centring Prayer
 - Craft & Writing
 - Prayer Walks
 - Labyrinth
 - 1:1 prayers
- Group prayer activity at 11:30
 - Lectio Divina or Listening Prayer
- 12:30 Lunch
- 13:15 Gathering Worship
- 13:30 Prayer Sessions
 - Same as in the morning
 - Group prayer activity at 13:45
- 15:15 Plenary session to bring what we heard together
- 16:00 Close

These days are an opportunity to listen to God together!



CSUA Sat 9 Sep Emmanuel United Church, Eastbourne
All days start at 10am for 10:30 finishing at 4pm

God is calling you

Lay Preaching Course 2024

Will you answer the call?

Remind Me [Message](#)

Contact Andy Twilley to find out more.

training@urcsouthern.org.uk

URBAN THEOLOGY UNION

Announcing the 23-24 Certificate in Theology & Discipleship for Mission

Session Dates: 9 & 23 October, 6 & 20 November, 4 December, 15 & 29 January, 12 & 26 February, 11 March, 29 April, 13 May, 3 & 17 June, 1 July

Join our 23-24 Cohort for the CTDM to participate in:

- scholarly readings of Mark's Jesus movement led by the founder of UTU, Rev'd Dr. John Vincent
- sharing of stories in faith journey, evolution, change and discovery
- perspective building through liberation theologians, including Black liberation and Indigenous theologians.
- gain insight from guest speakers who are embedded in mission provide practical insight into what works, how to adapt, and how to flourish as a Kingdom Community.
- Our 15 warriors culminate in student led plans for local mission.

0114 2709907 office@utushelfield.org.uk
utushelfield.org.uk Urban Theology Union, Victoria Hall Methodist Church, Norfolk Street, Sheffield, S1 2JB

Training in **pastoral care**

Sunday 20th August
TIME: 14.00 – 18.30

Two seminars:
Introduction to Pastoral Care
Listening Skills

VENUE: Christ Church URC,
High St, Tonbridge TN9 1BG

EVERYONE WELCOME

For more details or to book your place, contact Andy Twilley:
training@urcsouthern.org.uk



Sunday 24th September

Following the morning parade service

All the details about purchasing a ticket will be in the September Emmanuel Life

Janet Pickering

A poster for 'GROWING TOGETHER COMMUNITY GARDEN'. The title is in large, green, block letters with 'COMMUNITY GARDEN' in smaller red letters below it. The central illustration features a large pink flower shape containing a central potted plant, a sun, a watering can, a trowel, and a pair of green gloves with a red heart. Below the flower, the text 'COME AND JOIN US' is written in a green arc. At the bottom, event details and contact information are provided in red and green text.

GROWING TOGETHER
COMMUNITY GARDEN

COME AND JOIN US

THURSDAYS 10AM | 1 PM
ST FRANCIS CHURCH
86 RAVERSWOOD AVENUE
BR4 0PW

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

FOR FURTHER INFO CONTACT - 0333 335 5209

Sports classes for walkers to 7 years



Fri & Sat weekly classes
9.30am - Midday

Teeny Athletes - Walkers to 2 years

Didee Athletes - 2 - 3.5 years

Little Athletes - 3.5 to 5 years

Mini Athletes - 5 to 7 years

To book go to www.miniathletics.com

Location: Richmond Sports Hall, Emmanuel Church
Contact details: Lara Doherty on ldoherty@miniathletics.com

*Kaleidoscope Domestic Abuse
Support Group West Wickham*

*Free confidential support and
advice on all types of Domestic
Abuse*



*Last Saturday of the month
1-3pm*

*The Emmanuel Church, The Grove,
West Wickham, br49js*

*Contact Maxine on 07399718153
for further details*

Coffee Mornings



FRIDAY COFFEE

*Where—The Hewitt Room

When—**11am to 12 noon** every Friday morning

Sunday Coffee

No coffee service on the first Sunday of the month, however, Messy Church would be pleased to welcome you at 10am for a cuppa.

On the other three Sundays in the month we will be looking forward to welcoming you in the Hewitt Room, after the service for coffee, biscuits and fellowship.

We can remain at tables or spill into the vestibule, the sanctuary or outside, so there will be plenty of space.

Janet Pickering and Pat Best

Warm Welcome at Emmanuel

will continue into the summer with a 'lite bite' lunch

Fridays
10am till 4pm
All welcome

EMMANUEL ART GROUP

The Emmanuel Art Group usually meets on Thursday afternoons, 1pm to 4pm at Emmanuel URC Church, The Grove, West Wickham, BR4 9JS.

A friendly group, new members always welcome.

Please contact us before coming so that we can discuss what you would like to do and how we can help you.

- Sheila 02086882707 or
- John 07708194093 john.band3@gmail.com

Community Baby & Toddler Group



Where: Emmanuel Church, The Grove, West Wickham

When: Wednesdays 9.30am - 11.30am, term time

Fee: £3.00 per family

Contact: Zoe Favata

Email: zoe_04@hotmail.co.uk

Mobile: 07852 153115

We meet each week in the Richmond Hall, which is a large safe place. Mums, dads, grandparents and carers have a chance to catch up while watching their children play, build friendships and develop alongside their peers. There are many toys and resources allowing the children to play freely, as well as structured activities, story time and songs with actions.

Come along to our friendly inclusive group and try us out.



Foster for Bromley

Can you help change a child's life?



We offer
competitive
rates

Visit www.bromley.gov.uk/fostering
or call our team on 020 8461 7701





Church Diary for August

Friday	4th	10.00am —4.00pm	Warm Welcome, incorporates Drop-In coffee mornings (details on page 31)
Sunday	6th	11.00am	Gathered/broadcast worship led by Revd David Pickering
Tuesday	8th	2.15pm	Emmanuel Fellowship 'gathering' in the Richmond Hall (details on page 13)
Friday	11th	10.00am —4.00pm	Warm Welcome, incorporates Drop-In coffee mornings (details on page 31)
Sunday	13th	10.30am	Gathered/broadcast worship including Holy Communion led by Revd Bryn Thomas
Friday	18th	10.00am —4.00pm	Warm Welcome, incorporates Drop-In coffee mornings (details on page 31)
Sunday	20th	10.30am	Gathered/broadcast worship led by Alan Kienlen
Friday	25th	10.00am —4.00pm	Warm Welcome, incorporates Drop-In coffee mornings (details on page 31)
			<i>Last day for Emmanuel Life items</i>
Sunday	27th	10.30am	Gathered/broadcast worship led by Revd David Pickering

Church Diary for the start of September

Friday	1st	10.00am —4.00pm	Warm Welcome, incorporates Drop-In coffee mornings (details on page 31)
Sunday	3rd	10.00am	Messy Church led by Revd David Pickering and Pat Best
		11.00am	Gathered/broadcast worship led by Janet Godden

Emmanuel Church Contacts



Sponge Kitchens

Established 1938

Beckenham 020 8650 0062

Hayes 020 8462 1352

Downham 020 86978843

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- Cakes and patisseries
- Platters for any occasion
- Sandwich bar

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Our staff will always try to make you welcome and answer any questions you may have.

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www.jrkillick.co.uk (FULL FEE LIST SHOWN)

