

HEATH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

May - July 2019



Newsletter 1048

LETTER FROM THE MINISTER

Not so much a letter this time as a recently finished poem. It's a translation of a Christian hymn with an interesting dual heritage. The text is by the Finnish Lutheran missionary pioneer, Martti Rautanen, who wrote it in Ndongan (a dialect of Ovambo spoken in parts of Namibia and Angola). It came to my attention a few years ago when the song was newly set by Sakari Löytty.

Sakari Löytty is himself a Finnish missionary, but also a drummer and ethnomusicologist. When he wanted to record the song with its new melody, Löytty managed to persuade his sister-in-law, Kaija Pispá, to

translate it into Finnish. Since I don't speak Ndongan I've used Pispá's wonderful Finnish translations in my attempt to put the song, and some others like it, into English.

I've long wondered whether it's the unusual genesis of these texts that gives them the freshness I love.

Over the course of an album, these songs manage to tell the gospel story with remarkable directness.

I felt that it was the sincerity of the text I was working with that made it so moving. Consequently, my challenge as a translator was to capture as much of that as I could - not the easiest task!

O LORD MY GOD, MY SAVIOUR

O lord my God and saviour,
with you I have no fear.
In all my trials and troubles
your help is ever near;
come happiness or sorrow,
whatever time brings forth,
I know your hand will lead me
safe down my darkest path.

O God my heavenly father,
your never-changing love
can turn the tempter's arrow,
and shield me from above;
I run to you, my father,
and find within your arms
a sure and certain shelter,



a refuge from all harm.

Lord Jesus, by your spirit
my hope is purified;
and fading faith grows stronger
when you are at my side;
be with me now and always,
my pearl beyond all price,
my one and only treasure,
kind master, Jesus Christ.

With love,
Ewan

TREASURER'S NOTE

This is always a great time of year for me as the frantic business of finalising the 2018 accounts and having them examined by an independent accountant is over and done with. Even better, the Church meeting on 31 March agreed them, and the report on our activities in the church in 2018. The final report will be on the website soon but if you want a printed copy please let me know.

The year turned out satisfactorily in financial terms (though what Treasurer wouldn't want to see it looking stronger?) and I want to thank all those regular worshippers

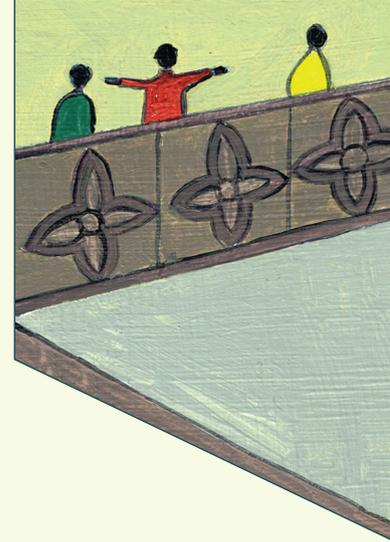
at the Church and occasional users of our services who make financial contributions towards our routine costs. Our estimated day to day running costs in 2019, quite apart from regular and emergency maintenance and improvements, are around 250 pounds per day, and every pound donated (especially when the giver lets us add Gift Aid) is hugely valued.

On top of this, several people have been immensely generous in supporting our new Refugee Welfare Fund - huge thanks for this. If you want to know more please ask me or Wilf, our Church Secretary.

We will be asking, too, for support for Christian Aid Week, which runs from 12 to 18 May with the title "No mums should die in childbirth". We will have offering envelopes at the services on 12 and 19 May. I also have a some copies of a 7-day devotional booklet, with stories and ideas for reflection and prayer on the problems facing women in countries where health clinics are few, health training and hygiene can be limited and the experience of childbirth therefore often frightening and associated with illness and bereavement. The booklet offers Christian Aid's positive responses to these challenges. Let me know if you would like to have a copy.

There is a group going from Heath Street to Stratford (E15, not Warwickshire) on the afternoon of 6 July for a performance of Benjamin Britten's hugely enjoyable Noyes's Fludde. We still have some tickets at 32 pounds each. Let me know if you are interested.

With love and best wishes,
Gaynor





*The Kingdom
of heaven is already
within you.*

WILF MERTTENS

I am writing still in the warm afterglow of this year's Passion Play, although the lower hall is now cleared of the cardboard Jerusalem that was constructed in it last week. Once again we worked with a wonderful mission team from Vienna, and once again the children of our church played a leading role devising a theatrical production to share with our whole community. The lower hall was all industrious cutting and sticking and constructing, and over the first days temples, houses and inns shot up to be painted by the younger participants. Having built our Jerusalem we then worked on acting out the Jesus story with puppets. Puppets is a loose word, for some them were objects such as whisks and bottles of hand sanitiser. Luckily one of our guests was a *professional puppeteer* no less, and was able to teach us all enough to start bringing these objects alive and investing them with the spirit of the characters we sought to portray.

Theologically we sought to highlight the

way that Jesus' message arose during a fierce debate regarding the nature of Judean sovereignty and cultural authenticity. Was it better to cosy up to the Romans, reject them, or fight them? Rather than join in the argument on this side or that, Jesus challenged his followers to look beyond their immediately apparent political choices and transform their relationship with God and with one another. Us Christians like to see ourselves as the disciples: imperfectly but nevertheless devotedly following Jesus. But certainly we are often more like the squabbling factions of Roman era Jerusalem: wilfully obfuscating the kingdom of God with petty debates and discrimination. Jesus is an alternative to this. Our play reflected on his childlike faith that the law should have a purpose and a fulfilment, his startling ability to see through hypocrisy, and the liberating teaching that it is better to honestly assess the state of one's own heart rather than labour to falsely present oneself as morally pure.

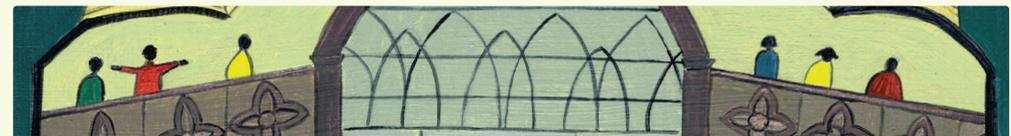
We presented all this dramatically by packing a 'best of' of Jesus' conflicts with the authorities (as found in Matthew) into the trial scene that precedes his imprisonment. Despite Jesus' heartfelt diatribe against the self-serving posturing of his ostentatiously religious accusers, they find him guilty of course. Our play ended with the crucifixion read from the Gospel (accompanied by some gruesome sound effects from the children) and then, to represent the resurrection, all the puppeteers ripping through a paper doorway and joining the crowd, bearing snacks and drinks. Fans of John 21 will know that our last scene was most biblical, and a fitting finale to a play that sought to follow Jesus in his practice of letting the natural togetherness that humans are capable of overflow the barriers that we place between us - including the "fourth wall".

CAST

CAIAPHAS: COCO
SADDUCEE: ANNE
PHARISEE: CHRISTIAN
ZEALOT: CHARLOTTE
JESUS: KATHERINE
MARY: PJ
JUDAS: FRIDA
PETER: ANSELM
DISCIPLES 1 - 4: COLE, ISABEL, JOACHIM, PJ
WITNESSES 1 - 3: COLE, NATHANIA, DEBORA
STORYTELLER: WILF
ANGEL: FIONA

CREW

LUKAS
LAURA
TOM
JOSH
THADDEUS
ALI
ELYA
LEILA
JANE
MAISY
EWAN - MUSIC
MATT - MUSIC
JOHN



READINGS

MAY 5TH - 11TH ACTS 3.12-19
5th Nomsa Ndebele
6th Isabel Somers
7th Monsignor Phelim Rowland
8th Joachim King
9th Lydia Baker
10th Ali Ghasempour

MAY 12TH - 18TH ACTS 4.5-12
12th Wilf Merittens
13th Nathalia Bell
14th Heini King
15th Josh Somers
16th Susan Le Quesne
17th Paul Conrad
18th Selena Barrera

MAY 19TH -25TH ACTS 8.26-40
19th For our worshipping congregation
20th Rebecca McLeod
21st Frida King
22nd Rhona MacEachan
23rd Michael Bloxham
24th Tom Somers
25th Thomas Roy

MAY 26TH - JUNE 1ST ACTS 10.44-48
26th Miriam M
27th Bala Kapi
28th Beauty Kunene
29th For our deacons

Ascension Day

30TH BIRGIT LEUPPERT ACTS 1.1-11
31st Tom and Susan Brandt
June1st Elya Ghasempour

JUNE 2ND -8TH ACTS 1.15-17, 21-26
3rd Hildegard Williams

4th Sarah Harper
5th Nesa Thorne
6th Laura Somers
7th Leo Patterson

JUNE 9TH -15TH PSALM 48
(Pentecost)
9th Joachim King
10th Beryl Dowsett
11th Mysie Johnson
12th Susan Le Quesne
13th Andrea MacEachan
14th For the bereaved
15th Anselm King

JUNE 16TH -22ND PSALMS 97, 98
16th For AM
17th Eleanor Patterson
18th Laila Ghasempour
19th Victoria Trijimuye
20th Annie Fang
21st For the life and ministry of St. Mary's, Hampstead
22nd Julian Cairns

JUNE 23RD -29TH 1 SAMUEL 17.1A, 4-11, 19-23, 32-49
23rd John Walsh
24th Coco Ellenbogen
25th For the children who attend Storymakers
26th John Baker
27th For the World Baptist Alliance
28th Eleanor Neil
29th Thaddeus King

JUNE 30TH - JULY 6TH 2 SAMUEL 1.1, 17-27
30th For all who help at the Contact Club
July1st Jan Cowen
2nd Jen Finamore
3rd Gaynor Humphreys
4th Gabrielle Falardeau
5th Robin Thorne
6th For Kasai province, DRC



Some of the cast of the Passion Play, including our Austrian friends

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES



For requests regarding church membership, Baptism or opportunities for Christian ministry in the church please contact the minister.

For questions regarding space use and room hire please contact the minister.

Copy for the next newsletter should reach Eleanor Patterson not later than
Wednesday 19th June

Sundays	11am-12 noon 7.30-9.30pm	Divine Worship (inc Sunday Club for children) Contact Club
Mondays	7pm 8pm	Swing Patrol (Swing dancing) Swing Patrol: improvers class (level 1.5)
Tuesdays	10-11am 1-2pm	Oldtime Nursery Lunchtime recital
2nd Tuesdays	7:30-9:30pm	Sacred Harp hymn singing
Wednesdays	4:30 pm	Storymakers Club
Thursdays	10:30am 7:30-9pm	Oldtime Nursery Heath Street Choir

Full information about all our weekly activities is available on our church website.

www.heathstreet.org

HEATH STREET BAPTIST



Minister Ewan King
Heath St Baptist Church
84 Heath st, Hampstead, NW3 1DN, London | ewan_king@mac.com
www.heathstreet.org | 020 7431 0511