

Jan – Feb  
2017

# St John's Record

United Reformed Church

Somerset & Mowbray Roads, New Barnet, Herts, EN5 1RH

From the Minister

## Christ Alone

'Christ alone' is our confession,  
Jesus: Prophet, Priest and King.  
He alone is Mediator,  
Reconciler of all things.  
Other lords and helpers fall;  
Christ alone is Lord of all.

Whenever we affirm that Jesus Christ alone makes us right with God, we affirm a Reformation principle. "Christians should be exhorted to seek earnestly to follow Christ, their Head, through penalties, deaths, and hells." This was the 94th of 95 theses (arguments) that Martin Luther, Augustinian Monk and Doctor of Sacred Theology, set forth in Wittenberg, Saxony, in 1517. At the time this was revolutionary. It would cut a swathe through the burdensome system of merits, indulgences, penance, and priestly prerogative.

Church leaders across Europe would develop this same principle, including Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531) who exercised a ministry in Zurich. He argued that Christ is the one Mediator between God and us. Zwingli's reform of the Church in Zurich was the model for many of the other churches that would identify with the name 'Reformed'. The writings of his successor, Heinrich Bullinger (1504-75), exercised

*Continued on page 2*

## Contents

- 2 Shared Lunch & Discussion about Children & St John's Church
- 3 Winter Morphs into Spring Shelter SHOEBOXES
- 4 Fellowship Talk – My Spiritual Adventures in Laos
- 5 A Post EU Referendum Prayer Save Your Stamps
- 6 Calendar – JANUARY
- 7 Calendar – FEBRUARY
- 8 Past Case Review
- 9 Men's Group meetings in 2017 Advent Pulpit Fall
- 10 Christmas Carol Premiere by Gwen Williams & Richard Harvey Kathy Shepherd & Betty McKie RIP
- 11 Alan Doncaster Obituary
- 12 Tea Dance Poster Women's World Day of Prayer Annual Service

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considerable influence in the early British Reformation. Bullinger, in the Second Helvetic Confession, urges "...give all glory to Christ, believe in him, rest in him..."

It is difficult for most of us today—who probably do not agonise over whether we have salvation in this life and whether we shall avoid punishment in the next life—to put ourselves in the situation of the contemporaries of Luther, Zwingli, and Bullinger, and to imagine the sense of liberation that the sole sufficiency of Christ brought. But liberation it must have been to be relieved of the perpetual worry about whether one's merits outweighed one's sins, and to be relieved of the sense of foreboding about what punishments awaited one in purgatory and at the Last Judgement. The Heidelberg Catechism, 1563, puts the Reformation understanding of the assurance that Christ brings in personal terms:

...for the sake of Christ's reconciling work, God will no more remember my sins or the sinfulness with which I have to struggle all my life long; but he graciously imparts to me the righteousness of Christ, so that I may never come into condemnation.

What I find disquieting today is that some—and I'm thinking especially of the online anonymous 'trolls', but not only they—seem to believe they have the authority to condemn others whose political or other opinions they disagree with. They make, sometimes, vicious condemnations from what appears to be a position of unimpeachable self-righteousness.

If the principle of 'Christ alone' means anything today, I think it means that because of the action of Christ alone we understand ourselves as redeemed sinners. As such, we are no better than anyone else. By faith we are those for whom Christ is our Prophet who reveals the will of God; our Priest whose actions reconcile us to God and reconcile us to one another; and our King who governs and defends us. To trust Christ alone is to regard oneself and others as those for whom Christ died and was raised to life. When we begin to view self and others through the lens of Christ's representative humanity, finger pointing gives way to solidarity, superiority gives way to humility, hostility gives way to empathy, and anxiety gives way to assurance.

Julian Templeton

## Shared Lunch and Discussion about Children and St John's Church

### Sunday 5 February

**Y**ou are invited to bring food for a Shared Lunch after worship on Sunday 5 February. After the lunch, for those who wish to stay for it, there will be a discussion. One of St John's Church's challenges is that we seldom have any children at our Sunday morning service. The one Sunday activity in which we do have some children is once-per-month Messy Church. Because this meets downstairs, in parallel with morning worship upstairs, most adults do not get to mix with children. I sense that for some adults, perhaps for most, this lack of children in our worship is felt as a loss. Can we do anything to change this situation? I wish to lead a discussion, using the URC Children's Charter as starting-point, to begin thinking about what children and adults can give to and receive from one another. Could we, as a one-off experiment, try to integrate the different formats of Messy Church and Sunday Worship in such a way that preserves and enriches the respective integrities of each?



Julian Templeton

## Winter Shelter to Morph into a Spring Shelter

**M**any thanks to everyone who has contributed to the success of the Together in Barnet Winter Shelter during October, November and December. We have taken soundings about a possible Spring Shelter at St John's and St Peter's and the response has been very positive from both churches. So I'm pleased to say we have committed to providing the ten Saturday nights from 25 Feb – 29 April incl. We will decide which of the two churches will be used for which Saturday once we have produced the volunteers rota.

So we are now asking would-be volunteers to let us know which dates and which duties they would be prepared to do. We are likely to be most pressed for volunteers during the School Easter holiday ie the first three Saturday/Sundays in April. Overnighters and breakfast cooks/servers have proved to be the most difficult slots to fill so far.

### We work on a rota and the jobs needed are:

- Cooking a hearty meal for up to 15 guests and delivering it to St John's or St Peter's by 7.30 pm on the Saturday
- Similarly preparing an appetising pud

- Saturday evening meal servers who chat and often join our guests in board games or the like.
- Overnighters, sleeping on a mattress somewhere handy on the premises to deal with any issues which might arise (in practice, they very rarely do). This is often a fairly easy task!
- Breakfast cooks (in the church kitchen), servers and shelter clearer-uppers.
- Transporting bedding to the next venue. (A large car is handy!)
- Towel washing ready for the next week.

You can claim any expenses of course. If you would be new to the Shelter, we would make sure you were well briefed and that you would work alongside a seasoned volunteer.

If you are willing to join the volunteers team to enable this important and rewarding work to continue, do let me know

**Andrew Summers**  
[andrewjsummers@btinternet.com](mailto:andrewjsummers@btinternet.com)  
 020 8441 2479

## SHOEBOXES



**I** took 21 shoeboxes from St Johns, including five from the Brownies, to a collection point in North Finchley, from where they will have been taken on the next stage of their journey. News of the campaign, and in some cases the exact destination of a particular shoebox, will come later and will be shared in a future issue of Church Record.

Some of these children will never have received a gift before. I've never forgotten the story told by Operation Christmas Child, years ago, of a little girl who was presented with one of these Christmas shoeboxes. Her eyes lit up as she realised that it was just for her. She held it tight. She was so excited to have been given the gift, so full of joy. Then the person who had handed it to her realised that she didn't yet know that there were things inside the box...

**Janet Harvey**

St John's  
United Reformed Church

# Fellowship

## My Spiritual Adventures in Laos

by Rev Sarah Hayes 16th November



**T**he reading from Exodus Ch 14 v 5-14 set the scene for the Rev Sarah Hayes talk at the Fellowship on her Spiritual Adventures in Laos. Exodus describes the challenges overcome by Moses as he led the Israelites out of Egypt, and how they cried out to the Lord for help. Sarah captivated the Fellowship with her story of a journey she took last year.

Sarah is a great traveller and loves to spend her holidays in the far corners and isolated areas of the world. In April 2015 she set off with her travelling companion Keith, for a well earned holiday exploring Laos, a small, very poor country sandwiched between China, Thailand and Vietnam. The trip started well, they visited the largest temple in the world, Angkor Wat in Cambodia, but having crossed the border into Laos, Sarah's real adventure began.

At six pm on their second day there, Keith had a seizure and started convulsing violently. Sarah knew he needed an ambulance urgently, but with the hotel phone not working compounded by the language problems, this was a considerable challenge. Sarah finally managed to get someone to understand and Keith, now completely unconscious, was taken to a small local hospital, with just three doctors.

At this point Sarah realised that in Laos you had to pay cash for "everything", including emergency medical care. Sarah managed to get a call through to a friend at Keith's local church, telling him what had happened and asking for his church to pray for him. Then there was more bad news, the doctors in Laos concluded they could do nothing for Keith and sent him to a bigger hospital across the capital city.

By now Sarah was out of cash, completely exhausted, had no idea what to do now Keith was on life support. Sarah said that even as a minister of the church she was not sure she believed in "Angels", but at her lowest point a little lady came up to her and said "hello, I speak English and want to help you". This angel was a lady, named Loc, who was waitress in a café next to the first hospital. She had heard that a European was very ill and as one of the one percent of Christians in Laos, felt driven to track them down to help.

With Loc's involvement, from that point Keith and

Sarah's situation started to slowly improve. It was agreed that the "only" chance Keith had to survive was to move him to a hospital in Thailand. Sarah's angel somehow arranged for two ambulances, one from the hospital to the Thailand border and one from the border to the hospital in Thailand. Loc also gave Sarah money, as all these arrangements had to be paid for in advance. When they arrived at the border, a bridge over the Mekong River, it was closed and locked. Again, somehow Loc arranged for Sarah and Keith to be smuggled across the border.

Sarah felt that with all these daunting obstacles melting away under the guidance of a café waitress, that she was living through a miracle. Sarah's last view of Loc was of her climbing back into the ambulance in the early hours of the morning to return to the café. She has not been able to track her down to re-pay her.

With Keith stable in a Thailand hospital, Sarah started to worry about getting them both repatriated. Keith had a small growth diagnosed in his head some time before they left the UK, but without a clear diagnosis of his current condition, the travel insurance company could refuse any claim. Again Sarah asked Keith's church to pray really really hard for help in getting them home.

Sarah's initial contact with the insurance company was very concerning; they refused to pay the £30,000 to get them back to the UK, due to the pre-existing condition. Days of discussions resulted in Keith's X-Rays and scan results being sent back to the UK for the insurer's doctors to examine. Again Sarah asked Keith's church to keep praying. By now Keith was beginning to regain consciousness, completely oblivious of where he was and what Sarah had been through for the past week!

At last, another miracle. Against the view of the Thai doctors, the insurer's consultant decided he could not prove the problem was caused by Keith's pre-existing condition. His diagnosis was a "flash stroke" – a momentary interruption in the brain's activity.

Sarah remembers the email from the insurers confirming that they would pay for and arrange the repatriation, as one of the most momentous of her life. They would be sending out doctors, organising ambulances, arranging flights and sorting out the huge amount of paperwork!

*continued...*



*Fellowship article continued...*

However, Sarah was not yet in the clear, you may remember that Sarah and Keith had entered Thailand from Laos illegally! She had to return to the border and go through the correct exit and entry processes, a very stressful experience as she had no idea how the authorities would react. Again, Sarah's prayers were answered, the taxi driver, seeing her difficulty, stepped up to negotiate on her behalf and to placate the border guards, who eventually cleared all the endless paperwork. Without this they would not have been allowed to leave Thailand!

Sarah said the ten days in Thailand were very lonely, with much time spent in prayer. She reflected on the series

of fortunate coincidences that contributed to the final outcome. Keith's phone and lap top, with all the contacts she needed were unusually unlocked. The contact at Keith's church had recently been given Power of Attorney over Keith's affairs. The appearance of Loc, the waitress in Laos who just happened to hear about a very sick westerner and was convinced she had to help.

At Heathrow there was a large welcoming committee, relatives, church members who had spent two weeks praying for miracles and a medical team to take Keith to hospital. Even though Sarah has travelled around the world for years, never did getting her feet back on UK soil feel so good.

Eighteen months on, Keith is very well, with no long term consequences – except a deep debt of gratitude to all those who had spent two weeks praying for the miracles that kept him alive and allowed him to return safely to the UK.

For Sarah, she describes the whole experience as living through a miracle. Her faith strengthened, with a conviction that with prayer, anything can be achieved and God never fails us.

**Ron Mobbs**



## A Post EU Referendum Prayer from the Joint Public Issues Team (Baptist, Church of Scotland, Methodist, URC)

God of every nation and people,  
we pray for all who are affected by the decision that has been made.  
Whatever differences this has revealed within our own society,  
may they not eclipse what we have in common.  
Where the narratives of political debate have caused harm and division  
help us to reclaim the true values of our shared humanity.  
Where exaggeration and distortion have generated suspicion and fear  
may truth and honesty restore hope and goodness.  
We pray for all the nations of Europe  
that you will help us to find ways of living and working together  
to pursue the mercy and justice that you require.  
We recommit ourselves – together – to the values of your eternal Kingdom  
and pray that along with all people  
we might help your world become more as you intended.  
AMEN

## Save Your Stamps

**A**t Christmas we all enjoyed receiving proper post (as distinct from envelopes containing boring or unwelcome information). So if you still have the real stamps which came then (ordinary issues as well as the special Christmas issues and the foreign ones), please remember to **Save Your Stamps** for me and put them in my pigeonhole. They are divided between two charities: the RSPB and Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, who derive a significant income from their sale. Thank you in anticipation.

**Hugh Martin**

# Calendar

January 2017

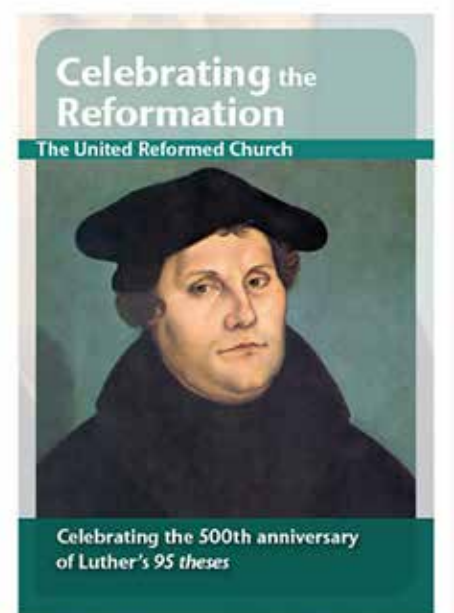
<b>JANUARY</b>	Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting
		11:00am	Worship + Holy Communion Led by Tony Alderman
	Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	11:00am	Worship - Led by Julian Templeton
	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup>	8:00pm	Junior Church Leaders meeting at 80 Manor Road
	Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	8:00pm	Elders' Meeting
	Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup>	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
	Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room
		10:30am	Messy Church
		11:00am	Worship - Led by Julian Templeton
	Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	12:45pm	A Memorial and Thanksgiving Service for Betty McKie, St John's Church
	Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup>	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
		8:00pm	Fellowship - 'Desert Island Discs' with Alison Bond interviewed by Patricia Picken
	Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup>	2:00pm	Finance and Management Meeting, Vestry
	Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	11:00am	Worship - Led by Julian Templeton
	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	8:30pm	Men's Group -at the Ye Olde Mitre Inne, High Barnet
	Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup>	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
	Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	11:00am	Worship - led by David Paul & Richard Harvey
		3:00pm	Causeway
	Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup>	8:00pm	Prayer & Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park

**JANUARY**

## Advance Notice of Lent Discussion Thursdays 9, 16, 23 March 3:00 pm The Manse

For those wanting to take part in a Lent Discussion Group, I will be hosting three sessions based on the 'Celebrating the Reformation' booklet (pictured). Copies of this booklet were made available some months ago and more will be ordered. The topics we will reflect on will include: the priesthood of all believers; the spirituality of secular calling; the simplicity of worship; the priority of faith; and the continuing relevance of the Reformation.

Julian Templeton



# Calendar

## February 2017

FEBRUARY	Sunday 5th	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room	FEBRUARY
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting	
		11:00am	Worship + Holy Communion Led by Julian Templeton	
		12:30pm	Shared Lunch and afterwards a discussion about children and the church	
	Monday 6th	7:00pm	North London Local Area Group Meeting at Trinity Church, North Finchley	
	Wednesday 8th	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
	Sunday 12th	11:00am	Worship – led by Alison Bond	
	Tuesday 14th	8:00pm	Elders' Meeting	
	Wednesday 15th	8:00pm	Fellowship – Hospital Radio – Past, Present & Future – Barry Wheaton-Mars	
	Thursday 16th	10:30am	Pastoral Team Meeting, Vestry	
	Saturday 18th	2:30pm	Fellowship Tea Dance in Large Hall (Doors open at 2:00pm). All welcome.	
	Sunday 19th	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room	
		10:30am	Messy Church	
		11:00am	Worship – led by Julian Templeton	
	Wednesday 22nd	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
	Thursday 23rd	8:30pm	Men's Group –at the Ye Olde Mitre Inne, High Barnet	
	Saturday 25th	All Day	European Reformation Roadmap Exhibition at Trafalgar Square	
		6:00pm	Spring Shelter – St. John's	
Sunday 26th	7:00am	Spring Shelter – Breakfast		
	11:00am	Worship – Led by Julian Templeton		
	3:00pm	Causeway		
Tuesday 28th	8:00pm	Prayer & Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park		
MARCH	Friday 3rd	2:30pm	Women's World Day of Prayer Annual Service – St.Peter's RC Church, Somerset Road, New Barnet. All welcome.	MARCH
	Saturday 4th	6:00pm	Spring Shelter – St. John's	
	Sunday 5th	7:00am	Spring Shelter – Breakfast	
		10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room	
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting	
	11:00am	Lent 1 Worship + Holy Communion Led by Julian Templeton		

**Save the date**  
**Sunday 2 April 6:30pm**

*Songs of Praise Evening Service*  
 Marking Richard Harvey's 40th Anniversary as Director of Music



## Past Case Review

The United Reformed Church  
86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT

**T**he Elders' Meeting and Church Meeting of St John's Church have agreed that information about the Past Case Review should be made available to current and previous members and friends. We trust that God will guide us and grant us wisdom, sensitivity and open minds as it progresses.

The United Reformed Church invites anyone with concerns about the behaviour or conduct of anyone affiliated with the URC since its formation in 1972 to raise them formally.

Some members and friends may feel a sense of shock or surprise that such a process is needed. Alongside existing safeguarding procedures in its local churches, the URC has decided to put in place a national structure and process for handling allegations of abuse in which alleged victims, alleged perpetrators, and churches can have confidence.

There will be no pressure on people to disclose, but should they want to, there is a clear process in place which has been authorised by General Assembly. If people have raised a concern in the past and have not been satisfied by how it was dealt with, if they wish to raise it again, the Assembly-authorized process will review it.

Should you wish to raise a concern, you will be invited first to share your basic contact details by secure phone, by secure email, or by a secure web form on the United Reformed Church website. You will be allocated a listener who will record your concern through either a telephone call or a face-to-face-meeting. At every step, you can let us know if you want to stop or continue.

When you are ready, your account will go through the Past Case Review team to an allegations panel of two people who will make the first assessment of your case. After that, your account will be reviewed either by an independent specialist or by the allegations reference group.

If you wish to speak to a member of the Past Case Review team, telephone 020 7916 8682 or email [pastcase.review@urc.org.uk](mailto:pastcase.review@urc.org.uk).

Further resources and information, including a secure web contact form, are available online at [www.urc.org.uk/past-case-review](http://www.urc.org.uk/past-case-review)

**Julian Templeton**

*Minister*

## A Prayer

God of truth and trust,  
in you we find a safe place, to name our wounds,  
in you we find a gentle place,  
where we can hope for healing,  
in you we find a place of strength,  
when our courage runs thin,  
in you we find an honest place,  
to tell of what was and what is.

So we pray that our Church would be a  
place of truth and trust,  
of safety to remember,  
of gentleness to tend,  
of courage to confront,  
and of honesty to respect what is spoken.

Where there has been pain,  
may its naming bring relief,  
where there has been guilt,  
may we not fear the light,  
where the past has been rotten,  
may we have the courage to say so,  
and if the future can be different,  
may we find wisdom to shape it.

For the sake of Jesus Christ,  
who suffered among us,  
who shares our sorrows,  
who seeks the truth with us and in us and for us,  
and who stirs us to change.

Amen

**John Proctor**  
*General Secretary*  
*United Reformed Church*



# St John's Men's Group meetings in 2017

St John's Men's Group meets at 8.30pm once a month at either The Black Horse, in Wood Street, High Barnet or at Ye Olde Mitre Inne, Barnet High Street. It provides an opportunity for all men with a local URC connection, to meet informally and in relaxing surroundings, to discuss anything topical.

We meet on different weekdays each month, to give everyone the chance to come along in case one particular weekday is not convenient due to other commitments.

The first meeting in 2017 will be on Monday 23 January at 8.30 pm at Ye Olde Mitre Inne, High Street Barnet. Here are the dates for all meetings in 2017.

**Please note in your diaries, and if you know of any anyone else who might be interested in joining us, please feel free to invite them along too.**

Malcolm Bond



Monday 23 January	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Thursday 23 February	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Wednesday 29 March	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Thursday 27 April	From 8.30pm	The Black Horse
Wednesday 31 May	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Tuesday 20 June	From 8.30pm	The Black Horse
Monday 31 July	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Thursday 31 August	From 8.30pm	The Black Horse
Tuesday 19 September	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Monday 30 October	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Wednesday 29 November	From 8.30pm	The Black Horse
Monday 18 December	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne

## Advent Pulpit Fall

Some have enquired as to the meanings of the various symbols on the Advent Tree Pulpit Fall. Former Church Secretary, the late Grace Orr, donated the Advent Tree to St John's Church, and her handwritten notes reveal that the symbols represent the titles of Jesus Christ, and each has an associated biblical reference. I must admit that I had to look up some of these references, as I was unaware of them. You might like to look them up too.

Julian Templeton

### Jesus is:

1. Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)
2. Light (John 8:12)
3. Living water (John 4:14)
4. Vine (John 15:5)
5. Morning Star (Revelation 22:16)
6. Bread of Life (John 6:35)
7. Good Shepherd (John 10:11)
8. Anchor (Hebrews 6:19)
9. Love (1 John 4:8)
10. Alpha and Omega (Revelation 1:8)
11. Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2)
12. Lamb of God (John 1:29)
13. King of Kings (1 Timothy 6:15)
14. One with God the Father and the Spirit (John 10:30, 14:26)
15. Saviour (Luke 2:11)
16. Way (John 14:6)
17. Word (John 1:1)
18. Door (John 10:9)
19. High Priest (Hebrews 7:19-21)
20. Resurrection and Life (John 11:25)
21. Lily (Song of Songs 2:1)
22. Judge (John 8:16)
23. Bridegroom (Matthew 25:6)
24. Rabbi/Teacher John 3:2
25. Jesus = he who saves people from their sins (Matthew 1:21)



# Premiere of Carol by Gwen Williams and Richard Harvey

18 December 2016

**T**hose who were able to come to the Carol Service on the Sunday before Christmas had the privilege of hearing a new Carol with text by Gwen Williams, set to music by Richard Harvey, sung by the Choir. We reproduce the text of Gwen's Carol below.

## Midnight

Stars paint ice-points in the sky,  
chill and dark the earth below,  
midnight; shepherds in the fields  
huddle close to fire's warm glow.

Darkness shatters into light,  
birdsong weaves with angels' song,  
midnight; shepherds chilled with fright  
hear the cry: "Rejoice! Rejoice!"

Light path leads to stable dim;  
centre of that light a child;  
Joseph, standing at the door  
welcomes all the world inside.

Warmth and love to all he brings,  
child, held close in mother's arms;  
hushed world hears the angels sing  
of Christ, world's Light, Redeemer, Lord.



Gwen Williams © 2016

## Kathleen Shepherd and Betty McKie RIP

**W**e record with sadness the death of Kathleen Shepherd. After enduring many years with Multiple Sclerosis, Kathy died of ovarian cancer before Christmas. A family funeral and committal was held at the New Southgate Crematorium Chapel on the 21st of December. There will be a Memorial and Thanksgiving for Kathy as part of Sunday morning worship, probably in February, and we will try to ensure that the date is publicised widely as possible when confirmed. Please remember Tony, Deborah and Anna and family in your prayers.

**W**e record with sadness the death of Betty McKie on 27 December, aged 98. Betty had for some years been a resident of the Beaumont Southgate Care Home where she was near to her niece, Stella Roberts. On Tuesday 17 January a short Funeral Committal will be held at New Southgate Crematorium Chapel at 12 noon, followed by Memorial and Thanksgiving Service at St John's Church, 12:45 pm.

# Alan Doncaster

## 1926 - 2016

**A**lan was born in Barnet on 21 Aug 1926 to Reginald & Gertrude Doncaster, and was later joined by his sister Hazel. He was a sporty and studious boy, to which the books with prize labels from Beaufort Lodge Prep School in Somerset Road testify. He went to Highgate School, although never actually on the Highgate site as the school was evacuated to Westward Ho! during the war. He had to return when he was 16 to start work at Lloyd's of London as an underwriter's assistant, as his parents could not fund any further education. As soon as he was 18 he volunteered for military service before being called up and joining the army 10 days after his 18th birthday.

He opted for Artillery and became a driver/operator on 25lb guns. Unfortunately he contracted pneumonia towards the end of his training on Salisbury Plain, so while his fellow recruits went off to India, Alan spent Christmas 1944 in a military hospital in Shaftesbury before being sent up to Durham. By the time he was deemed fit for active service the war was over so he went to the Suez region to facilitate the return of the Royal Horse Artillery from victory on Northern Italy. He then served in Palestine as part of the British peacekeeping mission. It is rumoured that he nearly caused a major British/Jewish/Arab diplomatic incident when he accidentally shot at a donkey while on nocturnal sentry duty! He never talked about the army or war and it was an experience and load he carried as a sense of duty, like many of his generation, never glorifying war. He returned to Lloyd's in early 1948 and remained there as a marine underwriter and a Lloyd's Name until he retired in 1988. One of his clients said of Alan, "He was a true gentleman who made the pesky business of claims rather fun."

Not only was Alan a keen sportsman throughout his life, playing badminton and hockey for many years, but also a thespian. He was a member of the Finlayson Players, playing many leading roles and even going to The Scala in London when the company reached the final of the National One Act Play Competition. In typical fashion, he rarely mentioned this and could never remember how they did in the competition! While at the Finlayson Players he met Margaret who was working on Props and they married in June 1957. Rosemary was born 13 months later, followed by Ian in 1961.



As well as being a devoted father who was the envy of Rosemary's and Ian's friends for his willingness to play games for hours on end – a favourite at parties was Alan racing around the garden with an assortment of children in the old fashioned perambulator which he then helped Ian to convert into a go-kart. Family always came first with Alan and when money was very short, he didn't buy any new clothes for 6 years in order to make sure the others in the family had what they needed. When Ian and Bernadette gave him two granddaughters, the role of doting and caring Grandpa was one he took up naturally.

He continued playing both hockey and badminton – and, as usual, would never say whether his team had won or lost, only: "it was a good game." Sadly Margaret died in 2000 after being nursed diligently by Alan for a year. After her passing, he threw himself into bowls which he had taken up some years earlier after the knocks of competitive hockey became too much and an Achilles injury put paid to his badminton playing. Unsurprisingly for such a natural sportsman with a great eye for a ball, he excelled at this too and became a regular winner of trophies at Barnet Bowls Club (although he never said when he had won anything, of course!). It was through this that he met Mary and they married in 2002.

Alan also became a regular driver for the Blind & Partially Sighted Bowls Club, ferrying the players around in a minibus until about 10 years ago, after which he still drove them, but in his car and was made President of the club. Sadly Mary developed dementia, and Alan cared for her for a number of years until she had to go into a home for specialised care.

Alan always kept busy and never drove anywhere that he could walk. He was a long-standing member of St Augustine's Church and then St John's Church, the oldest member of the Barnet branch of Proboscis, a regular at the Highgate Old Chomeleian gatherings. After he was diagnosed with cancer earlier this year he moved to a care home in Beaconsfield to be closer to Rosemary and his cousin Brenda in September. He died in November. Latterly Alan enjoyed worshipping with Brenda at St James's Church in Gerrards Cross. This was where his Memorial and Thanksgiving Service took place on the 8th of December, led by the Rector, with Julian Templeton leading prayers, attended by friends from St John's Church and Barnet. Alan was a private person who embodied values of courtesy, honesty, duty, loyalty, modesty and fair play. He is greatly missed and fondly remembered.

**Rosemary & Ian Doncaster**





St John's URC Fellowship invite You to a

# TEA DANCE

At St John's United Reformed Church in Large Hall, Mowbray Road entrance/Somerset Road, New Barnet, Herts. EN5 1RH.



**SATURDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2017**

2.30pm – 4.30pm (doors open 2.00pm)

Entrance £5 (entertainment, refreshments & raffle)

With popular, local musician, Chris Sausman on keyboards/vocal. Come enjoy music, don't have to dance. Have a cup of tea/coffee and cake.

**ALL WELCOME**

Proceeds: For St John's URC Building Funds

## **Women's World Day of Prayer Annual Service**

2.30pm  
Friday 3rd March 2017  
St Peter's RC Church

**63, Somerset Road  
New Barnet**



Followed by refreshments in parish centre.  
All welcome. You are invited by your WWDP Representatives:  
Patricia Picken and Marjorie O'Connor. Hope to see you.