

March–April  
2018

**St John's**  
United Reformed Church

# Record

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

*From the Minister*

## Climate Change: a unique and unprecedented challenge

**A**t the time of writing, I have led one Lent Discussion Group using material produced by *Operation Noah* called 'Climate Change and the Purposes of God', and it has been very challenging! The nine people who met all seemed to be convinced that the climate is changing, and most believed that human activity was accelerating that change. We also agreed that as we are responsible to God for our stewardship of the Earth, we ought to do what we can to reduce a negative impact upon our environment. *Operation Noah* has the strapline: "Faith-motivated. Science-informed. Hope-inspired". This seems to be as good as any statement that I've seen in expressing a religious stance that has a chance of gaining credibility in today's world.

If the Church is to have credibility, especially with younger people, it cannot ignore the mounting evidence that our energy and material consumption is already despoiling the environment and affecting the climate. The poorest people and most marginal animal species are already being placed at risk. But we are also risking the the viability of future generations living in

*Continued on page 2*

## Contents

- 2 Act in Haste - Repent at Leisure
- 3 Trussell Trust at Church House  
Holy Week
- 4 Obituary, Helen Howorth
- 5 Film Night: Bruce Almighty  
Recycling cartridges
- 6 Calendar March
- 7 Calendar March, April
- 8 Who or What are "Green Christians"?
- 10 Barbados - again!
- 11 Fellowship: Blood Sweat & Gears
- 12 Mainly Music  
Time for Jesus

**Website:** [www.stjohnsnewbarnet.org.uk](http://www.stjohnsnewbarnet.org.uk) **Record Editor:** Laura Templeton, [laura@templeton.me](mailto:laura@templeton.me).uk  
**Minister:** Julian Templeton, Tel: 020 8441 0499. Email: [juliantempleton@btinternet.com](mailto:juliantempleton@btinternet.com)  
**Secretary:** Tony Alderman, Tel: 020 8441 4807. Email: [aldermantony@aol.com](mailto:aldermantony@aol.com)  
**Administrator:** Alison Cousins, Tel: 07816 115 817. Email: [acousins.sjnb@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:acousins.sjnb@hotmail.co.uk)



or near the coast if the sea level continues to rise. How can the Church begin to change its patterns of consumption and offer a practical and hopeful vision inspired by its trust in God in the midst of fear and denial about climate change?

The nine of us identified the defeatism and hopelessness that often follows the belief that any small changes that each of us might make to our lifestyle will hardly make any difference at all to a global challenge like climate change. However, we also identified that if two billion Christians were *all* to make the same small changes, this could have a proportionately large effect.

The Bible is full of stories about individuals who initially make a small change: they place their trust in God. In every case, God uses these individuals to do far greater things than they could have imagined. When it comes to the environment, perhaps the most relevant example of a person who makes a change with massive consequences is Noah. Noah obeys God. Noah, when God asks him to build an ark, does so. To me it does not matter whether one regards Noah and his story as real or mythical; what matters is the point of the story. Noah obeys God when the climate changes radically, and through Noah's obedient trust in God the human and animal world is saved.

The film *Evan Almighty* gives the story of Noah and the Ark a contemporary twist. Congressman Evan Baxter wants to "change the world" and as a result God commands him to build an ark. Despite Evan's attempts to avoid obeying this command, God keeps reminding him of his obligation until Evan relents and begins building the ark. However, in the process, his wife, Joan, and three sons leave him. But Joan encounters God in a diner as a waiter, and Joan, who previously prayed to God to "make our family closer", shares her despair about her husband who seems to be intent on being a modern-day 'Noah'.

God responds to Joan:

I love that story. You know, a lot of people miss the point of that story, they think it's all about God's anger and wrath...I think it's a love story, about believing in each other. The animals showed up in pairs, they stood by each other, side by side, just like Noah and his family. Everybody entered the ark side by side...If someone prays for patience, do you think God gives them patience; or does he give them opportunities to be patient? If someone prays for courage, does God give them courage; or does he give them opportunities to be courageous? If someone prays for a family to be closer, do you think God zaps them with warm, fuzzy feelings; or does he gives them opportunities to love each other?

Joan responds to this encounter by returning to Evan and helping him to build an ark. She takes the opportunity God gives her to love Evan, and as a result her family becomes closer. Her prayer is answered.

I suspect that because most of us regard climate change as an overwhelming challenge, few of us dare to pray about it. However, we may pray about wars and conflicts, some of which are fought over control of natural resources, and climate change will likely make those natural resources such as water and food more scarce. One of the participants in our Lent group said that we are in a unique situation today with an unprecedented responsibility: we have available to us the evidence about climate change *and* we have the opportunity to do something about it before it's too late. Let us grasp the opportunity God is giving us, and be courageous.

**Julian Templeton**

(*Evan Almighty* will be screened at St John's Church, Saturday 14th April, 7:30 pm).

.....  
**Act in Haste - Repent at Leisure**

As most readers will be aware, I was involved in a road traffic accident which was entirely my fault, in Barnet High Street on Monday 19 Feb. After three days in hospital during which the medics ascertained that I had broken several bones in my foot and more in my ankle, I am now at home recovering.

Marion & I have received lots of cards, emails and phone calls offering sympathy, best wishes and prayers for all of which we are very thankful.

I am told that full recovery is going to be a long process, but so far I feel that I am making good process.

A big THANK YOU to everyone who has been thinking of us, praying for us &/or has sent a card, an email or has phoned. Also a big THANK YOU to Marion who has had metaphorically and almost literally to pick up the pieces and has been wonderful.

**Ray Hopwood**

# Foodbank champion **The Trussell Trust** moves into **Church House**

**M**embers of Britain's largest food bank network have moved into the United Reformed Church's London office.

The Trussell Trust's external affairs team moved into Church House in early January, and will continue to carry out its vital work.

The charity, which is based on Christian principles, gave 1,182,954 three-day emergency food supplies to people in crisis, across the UK, from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 compared to 1,109,309 the previous year. Of this number, 436,938 went to children.

Garry Lemon, Head of External Affairs, said: 'We're so excited that the external affairs team of the Trussell Trust will be working out of the [United Reformed Church's] beautiful Church House building. Our mission is to end hunger in the UK and we'll be working hard to challenge injustice alongside Greenbelt and the other organisations within the building.'

Jane Baird, the URC's Deputy General Secretary (Administration and Resources), added: 'We are delighted to have the Trussell Trust in Church House. The trust does invaluable work to address inequality and deprivation through foodbanks. Many URC congregations support this organisation and its work in their communities. Having the team working close represents a strengthening of existing relationships.'

The charity works with people of all faiths and none, and is inspired by Jesus' words as in Matthew 25:35-36:

'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

The Trussell Trust joins Greenbelt – the arts, faith and justice festival – which moved into the building in September, as Church House's top floor residents.



<b>Sunday 25th</b>	11:00am	<b>Palm Sunday</b>
<b>Monday 26th</b>	11:00am	Lent Discussion Group,
<b>Wednesday 28th</b>	7:45pm	Lent Discussion Group,
<b>Thursday 29th</b>	8:00pm	<b>Maundy Thursday Communion</b> Service, led by Ray Thomas, Chesterfield Road URC
<b>Friday 30th</b>	2:00pm	<b>Good Friday Service</b> led by Julian Templeton
<b>Sunday April 1</b>	11:00am	<b>Easter Day Celebration Service</b> with the Lord's Supper led by Julian Templeton and <b>Easter Egg Hunt</b>



# Obituary Helen Barbara Howorth

## 20.03.1936 – 06.01.2018

**W**ith sadness we report the death of Helen Howorth, whose funeral service was held on the 19th of January at St John's Church. Helen was born in Edinburgh into a prominent legal family. She was educated in Edinburgh and Perthshire. She excelled in sports and went on to train as a PE teacher in Aberdeen, after which she spent several years teaching. She then re-trained as a Secretary and moved to London in search of work. It was through mutual friends that Helen met David in 1965. They married in 1967 and settled in Barnet in 1969 when they moved into a maisonette on the corner of Mowbray and Station Roads, soon after which Helen's association with St John's Church began. When, in the 1970's, Claire and Stephen were born, Helen made what became enduring friendships with other

parents at St John's Church, among them, Ann Kirby. Helen became a full time mother and homemaker and supporter of David, a BBC journalist. When the children became independent, Helen decided to go back to education and gained a BA. She was a regular volunteer with a charity based in Finchley that supported blind and partially sighted people. She was also a regular volunteer at 'Little Johns', a parent and toddler group based at St John's Church. She was a member, and sometime secretary, of St John's Church Choir, and a member of Barnet Choral Society.

Helen developed Parkinsons Disease in later years. Despite the progressive limitations the disease caused, Helen never complained. She soldiered on as best she could and continued to be the kind, caring, thoughtful, brave, cheerful and humorous person that she always was. Helen never made a fuss; she saw what was needed and did it. Although naturally reserved, in a quiet way she simply got on with helping others and demonstrating the love of God in Christ Jesus in her actions. In the light of that witness, we commend her with confidence to God, and pray that God will comfort David, Claire, Stephen and families in their loss.



And when great souls die,  
after a period peace blooms,  
slowly and always  
irregularly. Spaces fill  
with a kind of  
soothing electric vibration.  
Our senses, restored, never  
to be the same, whisper to us.  
They existed. They existed.  
We can be. Be and be  
better. For they existed.

**Maya Angelou**, from *"When Great Trees Fall"*,  
read at the Funeral Service by Claire Edwards

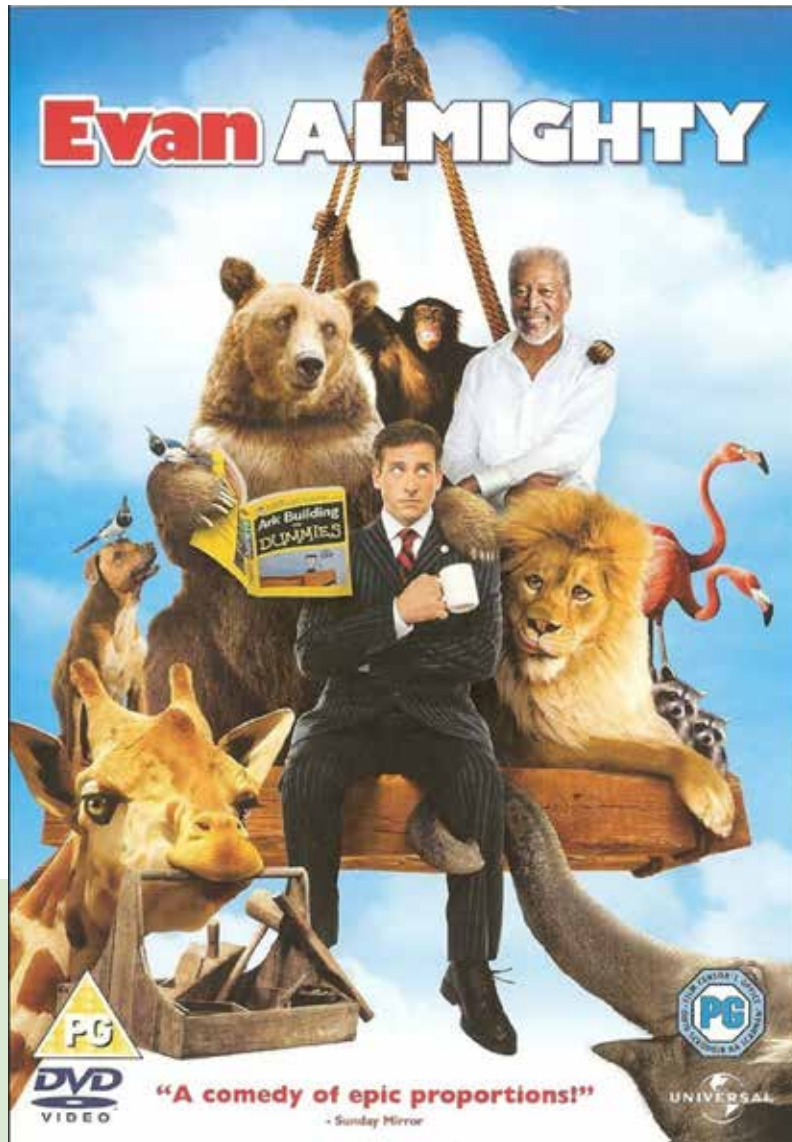
Obituary by Julian Templeton (with thanks to David Howorth for permission to draw substantially from his Tribute, and to the family for permission to reproduce the photograph)

# Film Night: Evan Almighty

Saturday 14th April, 7:30 pm

John's Church

Invite a friend or family member to come to a free screening of **Evan Almighty**.



*Evan Almighty* gives the story of Noah and the Ark a contemporary twist. Steve Carell plays Congressman Evan Baxter, whose prayer to "change the world" is heard by none other than God (played by Morgan Freeman, reprising his role in *Bruce Almighty*). When God appears with the perplexing request to build an ark, Evan is sure he is losing it. But soon mysterious deliveries of wood and tools are being dropped on his doorstep, animals of every shape and size are flocking to him two by two, and his self-absorbed life goes from overnight success to almighty mess! Will Evan ignore God and offer his support to a Congress Bill that could have devastating environmental effects? Or does God have ways of encouraging Evan and his family to risk the ridicule of their colleagues and friends in order to play a unique part in God's plan to save his creatures?



If you have any used inkjet printer cartridges, and would like to recycle them whilst donating to a charity at the same time, I would be very grateful if you could continue to put your empty inkjet or laser toner cartridges in the RSPB box in the entrance lobby of the church.

The RSPB prefers Canon or HP inkjet cartridges, but I can send others to additional charities, including The

British Red Cross and NSPCC.

The RSPB is paid between £0.13p - £2.13p per cartridge, depending on the specific item being recycled.

Thank you for helping to recycle used cartridges, whilst at the same time, raising money for charity.



**Malcolm Bond**

# Calendar

## March 2018

MARCH	Sunday 4th	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room	MARCH
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting	
		11:00am	Lent 3 Worship + Lord's Supper Led by Julian Templeton	
	Monday 5th	11:00am	Lent Discussion Group, 'Climate Change and the Purposes of God', 11 The Fairway	
	Wednesday 7th	4:00 pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
		7:45pm	Lent Discussion Group, 'Climate Change and the Purposes of God', 79 Greenhill Park	
	Sunday 11th	11:00am	Lent 4, Worship for Mothering Sunday led by Roz Douglas	
	Monday 12th	11:00am	Lent Discussion Group, 'Climate Change and the Purposes of God', 11 The Fairway	
	Tuesday 13th	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting, Vestry	
	Wednesday 14th	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
		7:45pm	Lent Discussion Group, 'Climate Change and the Purposes of God', 79 Greenhill Park	
	Friday 16th	4:00pm	Messy Church, Large Hall	
	Saturday 17th		Synod Meeting, Trinity Church, Harrow	
	Saturday 17th	10:30am	Coffee Morning, Large Hall	
		7:00pm	Life and Mission Choir- Time for Jesus Easter Musical	
	Sunday 18th	11:00am	Lent 5, Worship led by Pennie Bongomin, followed by <b>Shared Lunch</b> in Large Hall, and <b>Church AGM</b> in Sanctuary at 2:00 pm	
	Monday 19th	11:00am	Lent Discussion Group, 'Climate Change and the Purposes of God', 11 The Fairway	
		7:45pm	Lent Discussion Group, 'Climate Change and the Purposes of God', 79 Greenhill Park	
	Tuesday 20th	8:00pm	Prayer and Discussion Group, 37 Greenhill Park	
	Wednesday 21st	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
		8:00pm	Fellowship, Stained Glass Windows Old and New, Michael Peryer	
	Thursday 22nd	8:00pm	Men's Group Curry Evening, Railway Bell, East Barnet Road	
	Friday 23rd	2:30pm	Community Café	
	Sunday 25th	10:00am	Singing Practice	
		11:00am	Lent 6, <b>Palm Sunday</b> Worship led by Julian Templeton	
		3:00pm	Causeway	
	Monday 26th	11:00am	Lent Discussion Group, 'Climate Change and the Purposes of God', 11 The Fairway	
		2:00pm	Lyonsdown School Spring Concert	

# Calendar

## March/April 2018

<b>MARCH</b>	Tuesday 27th	2:00pm	Dementia Club	<b>MARCH</b>
		8:00pm	Justice and Peace Group Meeting	
	Wed 28th	7:45pm	Lent Discussion Group, 'Climate Change and the Purposes of God', 79 Greenhill Park	
	Thursday 29th	8:00pm	<b>Maundy Thursday Communion Service</b> , Chesterfield Road URC	
	Friday 30th	2:00pm	<b>Good Friday Service</b> led by Julian Templeton	
<b>APRIL</b>	Sunday 1st	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room	<b>APRIL</b>
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting	
		11:00am	<b>Easter Day Celebration Service</b> with the Lord's Supper led by Julian Templeton and Easter Egg Hunt	
	Sunday 8th	11:00am	Worship led by Paul Elsdon	
	Tuesday 10th	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting, Vestry	
	Wednesday 11th	8:00pm	Junior Church Leaders', 11 The Fairway	
	Saturday 14th	7:30pm	Film Night: <b>Evan Almighty</b>	
	Sunday 15th	10:00am	Singing Practice	
		11:00am	Worship led by Julian Templeton	
	Tuesday 17th	8:00pm	Prayer & Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park	
	Wednesday 18th	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
		8:00pm	Fellowship, Lionel Bart and his Music, Geoff Bowden	
	Friday 20th	4:00pm	Messy Church, Large Hall	
			Copy Deadline for next edition of Church Record	
	Sunday 22nd	11:00am	Worship led by Julian Templeton	
	Tuesday 24th	2:00pm	Dementia Club	
		8:00pm	Justice and Peace Group Meeting	
	Wednesday 25th	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
		8:30pm	Men's Group – Railway Bell, East Barnet Road	
	Friday 27th	2:30pm	Community Café	
Sunday 29th	11:00am	St John's Anniversary Worship led Richard Harvey and David Paul		
	3:00pm	Causeway		
<b>MAY</b>	Wednesday 2nd	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	<b>MAY</b>
	Sunday 6th	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room	
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting	
	11:00am	Worship + Lord's Supper Led by Tony Alderman		



# Who or What Are “Green Christians”?



Ordinary Christians,  
extraordinary times

**Y**our four intrepid explorers set out to get some answers. This is an initial report from Andrew Mills, Paul Elsdon and Tony Shepherd. (A personal view from David Porter appears separately.)

In fact, the four of us made the journey to the Euston area of London to track the Green Christians down on a wet and windy Saturday, 3rd. February. We located them meeting together in St. Aloysius Church near to the station. The theme of this, their first Regional Day, was 'On the Road Together', which sounded inviting. The pre-meeting coffees helped as well.

They appeared innocent enough - about 50 or so ordinary people looking forward to dealing with a big "agenda" (it seemed to some of your reporters).

The day was opened by Chris Walton, the chaplain, who spoke of an old song, "On Tiptoe", by a group, The Fisherfolk. One line: "And all creation straining on tiptoe" was highlighted with the thought that we are all responsible for maintaining God's creation.

This was getting interesting and had a sense of fun as we struggled to sing; this was not a group used to singing "off the cuff" and more practice was needed.

We got into groups of four and discussed four topics, which included. How can we:

- Pray for the Earth in hope & not fear;
- Learn to live gently on the Earth;
- Consider new areas of public witness
- Think about our own commitment.

Views were shared from personal perspectives as well as hearing how individual churches were working on these issues. We told how St John's Community Garden has been linked to the 'Incredible Edible' Project. Discussions followed as to how other churches could do the same and some there were surprised that anyone passing can help themselves to the produce. "And not just for Church members?" was one comment.

We enjoyed our a healthy shared lunch which was most welcome after a busy morning. At the start of the afternoon, there were three options: a play rehearsal; an account of a cycle ride; and a time of Reflection. The Reflection time included some readings, prayer and quiet meditation. It was good to have the opportunity to sit and follow these approaches. Even

the sounds of the Underground trains running nearby did not spoil the situation.

We were also treated to a short play: "When Luther meets Pope Francis----with Money present as well." This was thought-provoking having been written "in house". The actors wore appropriate costume and in the audience were placed some of the hoi polloi joining in loudly at times. Most of the words spoken had actually been said originally by Luther or the Pope.

This was followed by a Café Conversation which was an introduction to "Joy is Enough" - a project being developed to explore issues concerning how we could live within our limited natural resources. Choices have to be made and priorities agreed. Relying on market-forces alone will not met the needs of our poorer people and those who are disadvantaged.

## What we learnt from the Day:

- The Green Christian movement affirms that our ecological crisis is a spiritual crisis, not just a material one.
- They have local groups meeting across the UK with the aim of supporting Christians from all backgrounds and traditions.
- For those who want to participate more fully, there is an option to join the Green Christian Way of Life Community with a commitment to Prayer, Living Gently, Public Witness and Encouragement. This additional support is purely optional.
- Some of us would like to start a local Green Christian group here in Barnet, Watch this space.

Your reporters enjoyed this event: it was very worthwhile being there. It was challenging and inspiring so that we have to think harder, to use our imaginations more and to get on with it! Oh yes: we were asked to "Please bring your own mug or cup". Definitely a sign of the times.

We would like to remember fondly here our former friend and elder, Joyce Cooper who was a member of the Christian Ecology Link. This was the precursor to today's Group. Joyce would definitely have been there in Euston on that wet and windy Saturday.

**Tony Shepherd**



### David Porter adds his own comments here:-

THIS SESSION met one objective: bringing like-minded people together to swap "green" ideas. In the Small Group which I attended, Terry from Chester told us that he and others had started on a journey to get plastic straws banned in the locality. The cathedral has taken up the cause, he said, by removing straws from its stocks in the café.

Peter from Ilford is involved with a "Green Fair" that aims to alert the community to improve or preserve their lush environment. Another initiative is in Barnes, London, where scout groups are involved in recycling used printer cartridges in local schools.

We heard of three cyclists setting off from Truro cathedral to raise awareness of Climate Vision, a pressure group urging everyone to commit to pledges to reduce carbon emissions. Pledge one: to ring your electricity supplier to see if you can switch to green energy; Pledge 2 – to buy local seasonal produce as much as possible starting with at least two meals a week. The cyclists' destination was Bonn to attend the United Nations Climate Change conference (COP21).

I was pleased to tell this group about the "Incredible Edible" project at St John's even though I have not been involved in it at all. Some found this fascinating as I pointed out that within three months ground to the side of the church had been transformed into a crop producing our "Garden of Eden." Folk from the community have joined in. It is a tiny project but one that has generated big outcomes. It demonstrates what is possible on a small scale.

That is how I perceive how we will change the environment for the better. Minute projects undertaken everywhere. Not necessarily going for the major initiatives

that may not be achievable.

Little triumphs rather than reaching for the sky and ending up with no tangible change.

Last night I had that sense of a minor triumph. My attempt to reduce litter in a small area of Ickenham has been taken seriously. A week ago I picked up some rubbish carelessly dropped by pedestrians coming out of the local tube station only to be told off by one elderly guy that I was taking someone's job away by doing it. I engaged with the gentleman – he turned out to be 90 – and commented that we all have to take responsibility for doing something, anything, rather than nothing. He ended up agreeing with me. I told him I had been in touch with my local councillor on the issue. The outcome of that was a meeting on site with my local political representative. He was sympathetic and then raised the matter with council officials. This has already been followed by action – a street cleansing team being sent in and extra bins being considered. Already the area looks tidier. It is not the end of the tale but at least action is underway. Change happens slowly in small steps. Doing what is possible rather than being too ambitious and attempting too much.

My grouse with Green Christian is that it may scatter efforts too widely rather than focus on something small and building from that. By all means talk but tackle a small issue to make the world a better place. I know we want to preserve the planet's beauty but let's start with something achievable and do-able.

I have focused on litter. On this what we really need is a public awareness campaign and a re-education programme in schools. Failing that, let's see what we can do to clear up – each of us individually.



## Sponsored Walk

led by local author and Camden Guide, Bob Boyton, 13 St Johns members and friends, participated in a guided on a walk entitled 'The Women of Bloomsbury.'

Despite the weather being very cold, a magnificent total £281.55 was raised (including £43.75 of Gift Aid) by the participants and other supporters which will be used to further the work of the St John's Winter Shelter.

A Big 'Thank You' to all of those who took part in the Walk and donated in other ways. And, a Big 'Thank You' to Bob who we hope will lead us on other Walks at a later date... watch this space.

Helen Snider

## Barbados – again!

Ray and I enjoyed our third visit to this beautiful island. This time we visited a new area on the N.West coast for our first week, and stayed at Colleton Great House, an old plantation house.

The original owner fled to Barbados after Charles 1st was executed in 1649. Sugar planting first began in 1640 and by 1645 there were 6,000 blacks and 40,000 whites in Barbados. The house had its early beginnings then and its present form was constructed during the 1700's. The estate prospered with the fortunes of Barbados, subject always to natural disasters and European wars.

The present owner, an Australian, inherited the house three years ago, with its antique furniture, paintings, china and glass, from a distant relative and now runs it as a B & B. All the huge bedrooms had four poster beds – difficult to get into if you have short legs! We had breakfast with the other guests either in the majestic dining room or on a patio watching monkeys in the garden. The slave house in the grounds was in ruins, but the stables had been restored to house the previous owner's collection of carvings collected in Papua New Guinea.

The house was built at the top of a narrow gully so we needed a car to drive the short distance to the sea and coast road. One day, sadly, there was a serious house fire just off this road and the family lost everything, including their car. We were told it was unlikely that they would have insurance but as the Government buys up or takes over empty properties, the family would be re-housed immediately.

On the first Sunday we found a church not far away from Colleton, the Living Waters Tabernacle on Harrison's Plantation in Six Men's Village. We were unable to find



out the start time and arrived late at 10.30 a.m. The Pastor was a woman, as were the Elders and most of the choir. I had been hoping for a lively service with, perhaps choruses or singing. As we arrived the congregation were singing a four line chorus, their hands were raised in praise and this same chorus went on for 15 minutes and a second chorus for 10 minutes! The strange thing was that neither Ray nor I could remember what they were apart from the words "I want you to know..." The Pastor gave the sermon with quotes from Ephesians 5 displayed on a screen. She frequently asked the congregation to repeat the last quote to check that they were paying attention. This lasted from 11 – 12.30 pm at which stage we crept out!

We were not enthusiastic to find another church for the middle Sunday, but back at the hotel on the South Coast where we have stayed previously, we thought we would return to the Assembly Church near Oistins which we attended two years ago. This time we sat hopefully in the padded seats near the small communion table but were politely asked to move to the wooden benches that we thought were for children and the un-baptised. The service commenced, as previously, with unaccompanied hymns (some were familiar) and only the men leading prayers and readings. There were few children this time but a pretty young girl who was sitting in front of us kindly helped us by checking we knew the hymn numbers. As it happened, she was the same girl who helped us two years ago.

After just over an hour, the service ended and many came over to shake hands and welcome us. I asked why we could not receive Communion and discovered that they were Exclusive Brethren and we needed a reference from our local Brethren at home. I told them that in our church anyone who believes and loves the Lord Jesus Christ is welcome to take part. I felt very sad about their attitude despite their warmth and friendliness.

These experiences do make us appreciate our lovely friends at St. Johns.

Marion Hopwood



Lounge



# St John's Fellowship

United Reformed Church

## Blood Sweat & Gears Paul Elsdon

As Paul set out describing the time he rode his bike from London to Edinburgh and back to London again, in less than five days, the fellowship members were beginning to fear for his sanity. But by the end of his story, we were full of admiration and feeling rather lazy and very unfit!

Paul is a member of the Century Road Cycling Club, which specialises in cycling events known as Audax rides, in which riders have to cover a pre-set course within a specified time. Keen cyclists have been undertaking this type of competition for over one hundred years. Paul's adventure started in Loughton Essex and saw him, along with 1500 other keen riders from over fifty countries, waiting for their allotted start time. Their route took them up and down the east side of the UK.

Each rider is allowed a small bag with the essentials for the journey, in Paul's case the contents were just various layers of brightly coloured cycling apparel, and a big jar of "saddle cream", he left us to work out how that was used, but did emphasise that it was essential to his success. The organisers would deliver the bags to a rest point specified by the rider, for Paul this would only be 407 Km away!

The riders faced a number of challenges, apart from just riding non-stop. They had to navigate so they would arrive within their time window and they had to deal with mechanical breakdowns, this was not like the Tour to France, there would be no support vehicles, the riders were on their own! At night they had to ensure their lights were charged up and would allow them to keep riding through the night.

Paul amused us with various anecdotes, for example, at one point near Castle Howard he was not sure of the route but he spotted another rider who turned out to be a newly ordained minister who knew the area. Paul was able to share some thoughts about one of his chosen passages from Philippians 4 – a prayer for strength and perseverance! Paul's first "sleep stop" (the organisers clearly had a sense of humour) was at Moffat, where he arrived at 2 am. This



Route



Paul at the end of the ride

air mattresses a few feet apart, no bedding, no privacy and heavy snoring all around. Paul did not manage to sleep and was on the road again by 5 am.

Later that day he made it to the turning point, just south of Edinburgh, where following a quick meal, he set off south again. On the way back he dropped in to see Heather's sister, who gave him a big can of rice pudding, Paul said at that point it was the most delicious thing he had ever eaten. At Alton he managed a few hours sleep, then set off across the moors at 6am, without breakfast. To his amazement, in the middle of the moor, he came across a van serving mugs of hot sweet tea and large portions of flapjack, free to the riders. Paul discovered his saviour had completed the Paris – Brest – Paris Audax ride some decades earlier and thought the riders would be in need of the flapjack to get across the moors! Paul said this was a great example of the support and kindness he experienced throughout the ride.

Paul's route back took him across the Humber Bridge, where he felt "empty", all energy gone, down through Cambridge, which was full of tourists and across the Fens, fighting a strong headwind. Paul showed us a picture of his last sleep stop, it looked like a disaster zone, with people asleep in corridors, on benches, collapsed on the floor, in chairs. All finally succumbing to exhaustion.

Paul arrived back at the start, 110.5 hours after leaving Loughton. His target time was 120 hours, so he was very happy. Of the 1500 riders that set off, only 800 completed the ride, so a huge achievement for Paul.

Paul was asked if he would do it again to try to improve his time, Paul just smiled enigmatically, but Heather was shaking her head!

Ron Mobbs



Sleep stop

# Mainly Music

**O**n Wednesday 21st February Eileen and Valerie went to Wembley Christian Centre to observe a session of Mainly Music. Mainly Music started in New Zealand in 1990 and is for pre-school children and their parents and carers.

Each session starts with thirty minutes of singing and saying rhymes with some accompanied with percussion instruments and puppets. One or two Christian songs are included and the words of the songs are projected onto a screen. This part is followed by some healthy snacks and drinks for the children and once they are fed, toys are brought out for them to play with. Once the children are settled the adults are served with tea and coffee and have a chance to chat to each other and to the helpers.

The purpose of Mainly Music is to give the children a chance to learn new songs and make friends. The adults also have the opportunity to meet other parents and to get to know the helpers and learn more about the Christian faith.

We have been thinking about starting a Mainly Music group at St John's especially now that we have the new facilities in the Church Sanctuary. This would

be an outreach to parents and small children in the community and we would hold this on a Thursday morning from 9.30 to 11am in school term-time.

In order for us to do this we would need to have a team of helpers with different skills. Someone to welcome families as they arrive, someone to make the drinks and refreshments, someone to operate the AV equipment and people to chat to the parents and carers. The group at Wembley had four helpers there each week but there was a rota of helpers so this is not something that you would be committed to attending every week.

If you think that you would be interested in helping with this very worthwhile outreach work and are free on a Thursday morning please speak to Valerie Mills. If you are not free at this time but would like to be involved we do need people to pray for the work and there would be jobs to do such as washing and mending toys.

Valerie Mills



## The Life and Mission Choir Present...

Script  
JOHN COX

Music and Lyrics  
PAUL WARDROP-DAY

# TIME FOR JESUS

*THE EASTER MUSICAL 2018 TOUR*

SATURDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

7pm

ST JOHN'S CHURCH

Somerset Road, New Barnet

EN5 1RH

"...the most moving and emotional musical passion play..."

"...vibrant music and lyrics..."

ADMISSION  
FREE