

**Jul-Aug
2023**

St John's
United Reformed Church

Record

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

Svitavy comes to Barnet ...



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Trusting God by:

- Walking the way of Jesus
- Putting faith into practice
- Valuing all people equally

... finally!

In 2020, the planned trip to Barnet by our previous minister Filip Keller, his family, and members of his congregation, had to be cancelled at the last moment due to COVID. Finally, it happened!

On Saturday July 1st the guests from our twinned church in Svitavy, The Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren, ECCB, arrived at St. John's by coach after a journey of more than 24 hours, via Calais, Dover and Canterbury. The coach was driven by a member of the congregation and by her brother in law; the third driver had driven them across the Czech Republic and stayed there. As Filip pointed out, it's very useful to have access to a coach company within your congregation! Even so, they arrived in Mowbray Road with just 15 minutes to spare, any longer and the drivers would have had to take a nine hour break ...



There were thirty-five adults and children on the coach; three more arrived by a different route on Sunday night. Some guests had accommodation arranged locally but the majority slept in the church halls, and they cooked and ate together there.



In spite of the long coach journey they were still willing to explore Barnet after unloading their bags. A walk which took in our own manse (home to the Keller family in 2008/9), then through Oak Hill Park to visit St. Mary's Church. Roger Melling, the Church Warden, gave a brief account of the church's history while Filip translated. This church is the oldest building in Barnet, part of which dates back to 1080, and is a most interesting and attractive place to visit. The children enjoyed some bell ringing, and Richard played a short extract from Bach's Toccata in D minor on the organ to the delight of all.



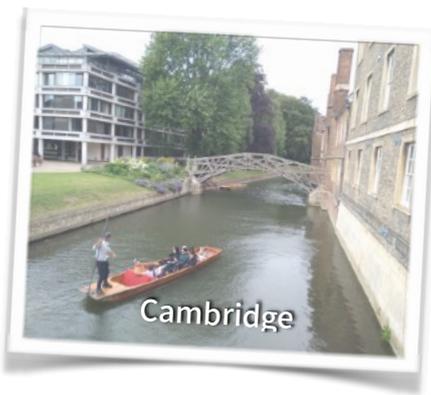
On Sunday we were delighted to welcome the guests to our morning service, which was led by Valerie, Andrew, and Filip. The texts and hymns were displayed in both English and Czech, we sang hymns and said the Lord's Prayer in both languages simultaneously, and Filip translated everything else on the spot. It was a moving event, followed by a wonderful Shared Lunch.



Thank you to all who provided double their usual offering, it made a splendid spread which was much enjoyed by all.

Later that afternoon our guests visited the Sky Garden and other London landmarks, as they began a hectic few days of sightseeing.

Due to the weather forecast for Tuesday the trip to Cambridge and the coast was brought forward to Monday. At Cambridge, the group split to visit different parts of Cambridge, trying to get a peak into the various college grounds.



It was then off to Frinton-on-Sea. The weather was not ideal for going to the beach, but this did not deter a number taking to the water for a swim. Czech Republic, being land locked a trip to the seaside was something not to be missed. The group were intrigued by the large number of beach huts and were delighted when they had the opportunity to look inside one of the beach huts.





Tuesday saw visits to Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly, Soho, China Town and Covent Garden, British Museum and Tate Modern. For some the journey back to High Barnet was via the Number 390 Bus from Goodge Street to Archway, obviously sitting upstairs at the front, and then onto the Tube to High Barnet.



On Wednesday, some of the group went to Lumen Church, a visit that Julian Templeton had arranged. Along with Julian; George Watt our Moderator for Thames North and Eddie Boon the Synod Discipleship Enabler were ready to greet the group. The visit included talks explaining the United Reformed Church, the Lumen Building and also a tour. Before the group left they sang a Taizé song. The evening saw a visit to the Mitre Pub in High Barnet - a 17th century, Grade II listed building. This was a chance to sample some English beers.

Thursday saw some go to Greenwich, travelling via River Boat from the London Eye Pier and some went off to High Barnet to visit as many charity shops as possible.

Of course, all good things come to an end. On Thursday, after final excursions for sightseeing and shopping, the Svitavy party packed up their belongings and a number of St John's members joined them for a final meal of take away pizza (purchased with the proceeds of the recent fund raising film night) and an informal act of worship with contributions from both churches. After a final photograph on the steps of St John's (helpfully taken by one of our Mainly Music mums, who happened to be passing!) those from St John's waved goodbye to our friends as their coach left Barnet for the long journey home. They arrived safely the following day and you will read elsewhere of their appreciation of the hospitality experienced over a very special week.



It was a wonderful opportunity for St John's to share this time with our twinned church.

Paul Elsdon/Editors

THANKS!

A number of people played key roles in the preparation for this visit, and during the six days our guests were with us. Huge thanks to all those who prepared the premises, borrowed mattresses, offered accommodation, made Czech "Welcome!" signs, showed the children where the raspberries were growing, offered showers, made tea and coffee, prepared food, bought provisions, collected pizza, washed up, assisted with planning trips and events, prepared children's activities, and managed technology. You know who you are.....! Thank you. And most of all, thanks to Paul Elsdon, without whose patience, efficiency and communication, this visit would not have been the success it clearly was. Thank you, Paul!

Editors

From Filip Keller:

It has been a great pleasure and blessing to see you all and be with you all. Thank you very much for the opportunity to use St John's facilities for our stay. We had a great time there. Thank you also for sharing your experiences, it has been a good inspiration for our church and I believe we will try to learn more.

*I believe that seeing involvement of all St John's elders (as well as others) in so many activities you do is a challenge to us all.
We will keep you in our prayers, so that you will soon find at least part time minister.*

We also believe we will find ways to keep and widen the bonds between our two churches.

Pavel plans to make a photo memory, an album which is yet to be done. In the meantime, we have a bit assorted shared album here, if you would like to share some picture: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/7EHhjr3EEoFBcnJ66>

*With many warm greetings and God's blessing to all at St. John's,
Filip*

ADVANCE NOTICE

Everyone is welcome to a special service at St John's Church at 7:30pm on Wednesday 13th September when Tony Alderman will be marking sixty years since his first preaching engagement, which took place at the enrolment service of 13th Boys Brigade on 13th September 1963 at St Aidans Presbyterian Church, W13.





Christian Aid supporters on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral at the start of Christian Aid week, 14-20 May. Alison, Helen and Malcolm are near the centre back.

THANK YOU to everyone who supported Christian Aid Week once again this year. We were very grateful to Paul and Heather Elsdon for leading our worship at the beginning of the week and telling the stories of people like Esther in Malawi who are trying to get a fair price for their pigeon pea crop in order to support their families. After the service there was an opportunity to try some food from Malawi and other parts of Africa such as Nthochi, Mbatata, Nhopi and African Pound Cake - thanks to all those who made these recipes with some unusual ingredients. Three of us joined many other Christian Aid supporters on the 10km London Freedom Walk on 13 May, visiting eleven churches, beginning at St James, Piccadilly, and finishing in time for Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral. Guides were on hand to tell us about all the interesting features in each church and to help direct us to find the answer to the quiz questions; highlights included the impressive Damien Hirst statue of St Bartholomew and the Henry Moore circular altar. All of this inspired you to give generously to this year's appeal.

- Our online church e-Envelope, raised £1,136.
- Some preferred to give using a Christian Aid Week envelope and this raised £375.
- So, our total this year was £1,511 - and with Gift Aid this figure rose to £1,809.75.

This message from Christian Aid reminds us why our support is still so desperately needed: *We celebrate the blessing of our supporters and volunteers alongside everyone who has given, prayed and campaigned with us this Christian Aid Week. Driven by your desire to stand with the poorest and most vulnerable communities around the world, you have come together to help bring transformation to the lives of our global neighbours and we are so grateful for your support. Thank you to every single one of you. Christian Aid Week happens because of you. Your support has helped people like Esther plant better seeds, secure a fairer price for their crops, and build happier futures for their children. With every gift, every prayer, every action, you bring more people the chance to live full lives, free from poverty.*



So, thank you to everyone for your very generous support which will make a huge difference to many lives.

Alison Bond

Commitment for Life



ON 28 MAY 2023, our service for Pentecost was led by our Elder, Roz Douglas, but also included an illustrated talk given by Revd Dr Kevin Snyman, who is the Programme Officer for Commitment for Life, which is the world development programme of the United Reformed Church working in partnership with Christian Aid and Global Justice Now. A portion of our regular giving at St John's is sent to support this important work every year, and we particularly focus on the work of partner organisations in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (IOPT).

As well as giving a general introduction to the work of Commitment for Life, Kevin also talked about his own background and how this had influenced him during his recent visit to IOPT with the Council for Christians and Jews:

I was born in Walvis Bay, Namibia, to a family, church, and community that supported the philosophy and practice of Apartheid, not to mention the enormous benefits accrued to White people. My schools (boarding school in Middelburg, High School in Benoni) were all White institutions. I cannot recall ever competing in a sporting event, sharing a meal, or studying with a Black person until I got to university - insane - but this intentional drive towards separation is not terribly unlike IOPT; like different laws for different groups of people or like signs near Palestinian borders warning of impending death. It was only as I began my theological studies that I began the slow journey out of that mindset - which while necessary, is not an easy one, to be sure. I was later ordained in the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, a partner church through CWM (Council for World Mission).

He spoke about the many the conversations he had shared with people from both the Israeli and Palestinian communities and had clearly come to a much greater understanding of the perspectives of each side. One of the slides he showed towards the end of the talk had the following caption: Peace connects through our common humanity. He stressed the importance of prayer for the work of Commitment for Life through Christian Aid and Global Justice Now, and left a number of leaflets, key rings and note pads for us to use as prompts for those prayers.

Alison Bond

St John's URC Fellowship Outing to Benington Lordship Flower Festival

ON SATURDAY 24TH JUNE, twenty-four of us went on the St John's Fellowship annual outing to the village of Benington Lordship, near Stevenage. The flower festival was held in the Parish Church, Benington Lordship Gardens estate and individual gardens of houses along the three to four mile stretch of road joining the village. Twelve members and friends went in three cars and twelve were transported by mini bus.

The flowers were lovely and the village was set in a rural area with wild flowers evident, so even though some visitors may not have seen every aspect of the flower festival, there were many lovely things to see.

We were lucky with the weather as it was kinder than forecast with a temperature of 30 degrees and a slight breeze. We took our time and ambled along, taking in the flowers and the countryside. Also, we all enjoyed freshly made sandwiches and home-made cakes plus a welcome cup of tea or glass of cool squash at the village hall or at houses within the village.

Marjorie O'Connor/editors

Farewell to Eileen

EILEEN MCCAFFREY has been our Children's Worker for nearly ten years. During this time, she has been busy with various weekday activities for children and families in our local area, and has been encouraging and enabling our own Junior Church team in many ways.

For a number of years, she and Valerie planned and ran our Kids Club every Wednesday after school, for the children attending dance classes at St John's, and their siblings. They offered worthwhile and enjoyable activities to children before or after a dance class and developed rewarding relationships with many children, parents and carers, some of whom joined other activities such as Mainly Music and Messy Church.

Eileen has been the organiser of each Messy Church event, planning the activities, preparing the resources, communicating with the volunteers, setting up the hall on the day and leading the worship element with singing and a story.

She has also been a faithful member of the Mainly Music team, where her role has been in welcoming and encouraging the families. On occasion a parent or carer has been in special need of a listening ear or someone to pray with, and Eileen has been there for them.

Now Eileen and her husband Pete are getting ready to move away from Barnet, nearer to two of their daughters, and in the service on Sunday 25th June we said goodbye and a heartfelt thank you. We wish Eileen every blessing but will miss her very much.

Janet Harvey

Church flowers

We are grateful to the following people who provided the church flowers in May and June:

Pauline Wishart - May 7th
 Marjorie O'Connor - May 28th
 Hugh Martin - June 4th
 Valerie Mills - June 25th



Coronation Sunday arrangement - 7th May

If you enjoy seeing the flowers in church, and knowing that they are given or delivered to a member or friend at the end of the Sunday service, would you consider giving them, one week in the year, yourself? There are two ways of contributing - some people pay for the flowers on a particular date (some members like to give the flowers on a birthday or anniversary, or in memory of a loved one) and some people like to obtain and arrange the flowers that have been paid for by someone else. Some people do both! If you are interested, do speak to Valerie Mills, who will be happy to answer any questions, and if you would like to have a go at arranging but have never done it before, a little assistance can be arranged.

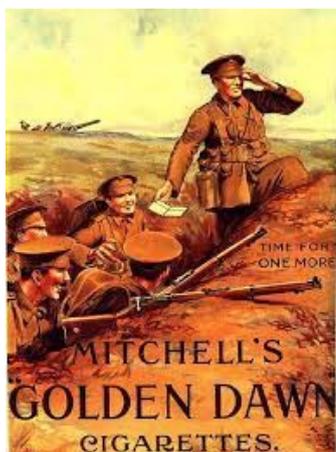
Editors

Fellowship meetings:

All over by Christmas — World War One in Barnet (1914-1918)

IN APRIL, David Berger, Chair of Friern Barnet Local History Society, gave a most interesting lecture on how Barnet was affected by the First World War. He drew on information found in old Barnet Press articles, and was able to read letters written at the time, which gave a wonderful insight into local life.

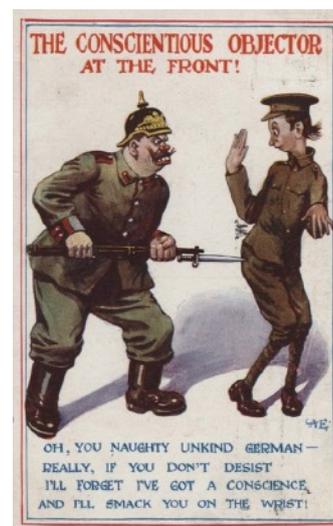
David explained that WW1 started when Germany invaded Belgium as a path to France. The British-French Alliance had asked Germany to respect Belgium's neutrality, when this was ignored, war was declared. Many Belgians fled to Britain to escape the encroaching German army who were known for their atrocities to local people. Around 38,000 Belgians were housed in Alexandra Palace to be later dispersed across London to make room for prisoners of war.



Parliament quickly passed an Act, requisitioning buildings and horses. Men aged 17-30 and over 5'2" were asked to volunteer. Other measures included the banning of kite flying, and trading with Germany was forbidden. There was no social media or television, so posters were the main source of advertising. The famous slogan "Lord Kitchener wants YOU" was widely displayed across the country. The government introduced all kinds of propaganda to influence the nation in the fight against Germany including anti-German dolls and on cigarette packets. There was much hostility towards Germany. Local newspapers, including the Barnet Press, urged people to send the letters they received from their folk on the front line so they could give this as news from the war.

By March 1915 men at home in England were striking for more pay whilst others were dying in their thousands on the battlefields of Flanders. Life changed for women who took on roles vacated by the men who were on the battlefields, including working in factories, the Post Office and driving buses (when the buses were required for moving troops, they drove lorries in their place.) These changes for women ultimately helped them to get the vote. Wealthy households were unable to keep their maids so they had to learn cooking and housekeeping. Before the war sixty percent of food was imported, so rationing was introduced by the Ministry of Food. Prices for everything doubled.

In 1916 Bank Holidays were abolished and public house opening times reduced as it was thought consumption of alcohol was 'prejudicious to victory.' Alarmingly the Germans started air raids. A Zeppelin came down at Potters Bar. The cost to the country was enormous, rising from £2.1 million per day in 1915 to £7 million per day in 1917, and war bonds were introduced to raise money as few people paid tax at that time.



Jean Davies and Michèle Bubb

Desert Island Discs with Hugh Martin



MAY FELLOWSHIP MEETING took the form of a Desert Island Discs with Hugh Martin, a longstanding member of St John's, in conversation with David Porter, choosing loved music that reflected various stages of his long life.

Hugh was born in 1932 and his early years were spent in Muswell Hill. He attended Coldfall Primary School. The family listened to the Radio for war news and, of course, music. His 1st disc was '*Knightsbridge March*' by *Eric Coates* which introduced the well-loved BBC programme 'In Town Tonight'.

In 1939, war with Germany broke out. Hugh recalls hearing Air Raid warnings. He was briefly evacuated to an aunt in Bournemouth but following bombing there he returned to Muswell Hill where there was now an Anderson Shelter in the garden. His 2nd disc was '*We'll meet again*' sung by *Vera Lynn*. During this period, he won a scholarship to Tollington Grammar School, where some of the masters still wore mortar boards & gowns. Hugh was not so good at sport but excelled in languages and gained an interest in classical music. His 3rd choice was '*For unto us a Child is Born*' from *Handel's Messiah*. The family were members of the local Congregational Church. Hugh attended two services on a Sunday as well as being involved in the Youth Club, and in amateur plays staged at Tetherdown Hall. He enjoyed going to West End Theatres where for 6d you could sit on a stool queuing for tickets. One such Musical was 'Oklahoma' which brightened up the London stage after the war and his 4th choice was from that musical '*O what a Beautiful Morning*'.



Hugh left school at 16, working at Shell as an office boy at £160 per annum. His duties included collecting the evening newspapers and plotting oil wells on maps! He met his future wife Joan and they married in 1956, initially living in Crouch End. He started working for Shell Chemicals in Distribution, becoming an expert in transportation. In 1957 they moved to Barnet, where trolley buses still operated up Barnet Hill. He used the tube to get to work, hence a song from *Flanders & Swann - Slow Train* was his 5th choice. He was now well established in the chemical industry and on various transport committees representing the UK. He and Joan now had two children and enjoyed attending the Proms and other concerts. For his 6th Choice we listened to the *Adagio from Mozart's Clarinet Concerto*.

He and his family attended New Barnet Congregational Church (ultimately St. John's URC). When his beloved wife Joan died suddenly, he found great strength and support in his faith and the church. Disc No 7 was '*Any Dream will Do*' from *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which was the first of a number of musicals performed at St Johns. Hugh enjoyed, once again, operating stage lights for performances, as he had done in his youth at Tetherdown.

Hugh took early retirement from Shell and ran training courses on marine safety until he was 65 after which he and Joan travelled widely. His final choice was *Toccata in D minor* by *Bach*. His book choice was *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.Tolkien and his luxury chocolate (and a fridge to put it in...)

Jean Davies and Michèle Bubb

Calendar of Events

JULY

Sunday 16	11:00am	Worship led by Sarah Beaumont
Wednesday 19	8:00pm	Fellowship: Magician's Show - Leon Thompson. Note: no Zoom.
Saturday 22	10:00am	Community Garden
Sunday 23	11:00am	Worship led by Tony Alderman
Monday 24	11:00am	Women's Group at Vibe Café, Greenhill Parade
	8:30pm	Joint Men & Women's Group at The Railway Bell
Tuesday 25	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting
Sunday 30	11:00am	Worship led by Rev Roger Orme

AUGUST

Sunday 6	11:00am	Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Sarah Beaumont
Saturday 12	10:00am	Community Garden
Sunday 13	11:00am	Worship led by Alison Bond
	1:30pm	Fellowship Garden Party at 37 Northiam, N12 7ET
Sunday 20	11:00am	Worship led by Roz Douglas
Thursday 24	8:30pm	Men's Group at Ye Olde Mitre Inn
Saturday 26	10:00am	Community Garden
Sunday 27	11:00am	Worship led by the Elders
Tuesday 29	11:00am	Women's Group at Agust Café, Whetstone (opp. Boots)

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 3	11:00am	Worship with the Lord's Supper led by the Moderator of North Thames Synod, Rev George Watt
Thursday 7	9:30am	Mainly Music
Sunday 10	11:00am	Worship led by Tony Shepherd
Tuesday 12	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting
Wednesday 13	7:30pm	A special service to mark 60 years since Tony Alderman's first preaching engagement

Copy for the September/October edition of *Church Record* to be with the editors by Friday 1st September.

churchrecord2023@gmail.com

St John's URC Women's Group

THIS NEW GROUP, organised by Marjorie O'Connor, had its first meeting on Wednesday 28th June. On this occasion the venue was the Open Door Café, in St Albans Road; seven ladies from St John's met and had coffee together, with four of them staying on for lunch. They had a most enjoyable time!

The plan is for this to be a regular event, usually in the last week of the month but the day and the venue will vary, and there will be occasions when men will also be invited (possibly a Christmas meal towards the end of November).

See below for the programme of dates and venues scheduled from July to January 2024. Marjorie has a more detailed list which includes public transport routes and parking. She will be delighted to give any interested lady a copy, or to give further details to anyone interested.

Mon 24th July 11am	Vibe Café, 6 Greenhill Parade, EN5 1ES
Tues 29th Aug. 11am	Agust Café, 1289 High Road, N20 9HS
Wed 27th Sept. 11am	Vibe Café, 6 Greenhill Parade, EN5 1ES
Mon 23rd Oct. 11am	Rise & Shine Café, 2 Exchange Buildings, High Street, EN5 5SY
Wed 29th Nov. 12.30pm (tbc)	Queens Arms (tbc), Great North Rd., EN5 1AB Christmas Lunch - details later. <u>MEN ALSO INVITED</u>
Fri 29th Dec. 11am	Whetstone Café, 1367 High Rd, N20 9HH
Tues 30th Jan. 2024 11am	Open Door Café, Christ Church, St Albans Rd., EN5 4LA

Marjorie O'Connor (0208 445 6580 or 07515 910514)
marjorie.oconnor@btinternet.com



ST JOHN'S FELLOWSHIP GARDEN PARTY

SUNDAY 13TH AUGUST

**At the home of Marjorie and Joe O'Connor
37 Northiam, Woodside Park, N12 7ET**

**Tickets £10 each, which includes lunch, soft drinks
and live musical entertainment.**

Feel free to bring your own wine or beer.

Tickets from Marjorie O'Connor

Northiam is on the 326 bus route.
Ask for Chiddingfold stop.
Parking available on street.

Marjorie: 07515 910514
marjorie.oconnor@btinternet.com