

# MOTTINGHAM METHODIST CHURCH MESSENGER November 2020



WE WILL  
REMEMBER  
THEM



THE CHURCH  
IN THE MIDDLE OF  
THE VILLAGE!



## WE WILL REMEMBER - 80 YEARS ON

This year we've been remembering the Battle of Britain, described by Winston Churchill in August 1940 as *'one of the decisive battles of the war... never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.'* It was a dramatic turning point in the history of the Second World War. The occasions for Remembrance this month will provide us times of gratitude for what was achieved in the darkest moments of war.

However, this year we are very aware of our own struggles with the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic. We face an unseen enemy, but the effects on our lives and society are almost as devastating as world war.

Remembering is not just about focusing on past events. It is also about making present past events, as we give thanks for all that took place. The Battle of Britain was fought by the Few and won in the skies over the Channel. In our battle with the virus, we can call to mind the victory of Jesus: *'Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David.'* (2 Timothy 2:8). Jesus secured the victory of death by His cross and resurrection, so that we don't need to fear death, but trust in His loving purposes for our lives.

Currently we can't see clearly what the future holds for us; it may be very different from what we might expect. However, we can pray for God's will to be done and that we will play our part, just as each of those airmen did so many years ago.

***'They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them.'***

*Paul Hardingham*



## THE SOLDIER'S PRAYER

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve,  
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to  
obey.

I asked for health, that I might do greater  
things,

I was given infirmity, that I might do better  
things.

I asked for riches, that I might be happy,

I was given poverty, that I might be wise.

I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,

I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.

I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life,

I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.

I got nothing that I asked for -

But everything that I had hoped for,

Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.

I am among all men most richly blessed.

*Soldier in American Civil War*



## POPPY APPEAL 2020

Look out for the Poppy Appeal  
again this year, but not so much via  
street collections. Instead, the

Royal British Legion will focus on contactless donations, as a safer  
way forward during the pandemic.

One such method will be 'point of sale donations'. This means  
that when you shop at your supermarket and reach the till or online,  
you may be invited to round up your total to the nearest pound to  
help the Poppy Appeal.

Or make a donation by phoning on **0845 845 1945**

## THE DESTRUCTION AND REBUILDING OF COVENTRY

*Tim Lenton looks back on a night of terror...*

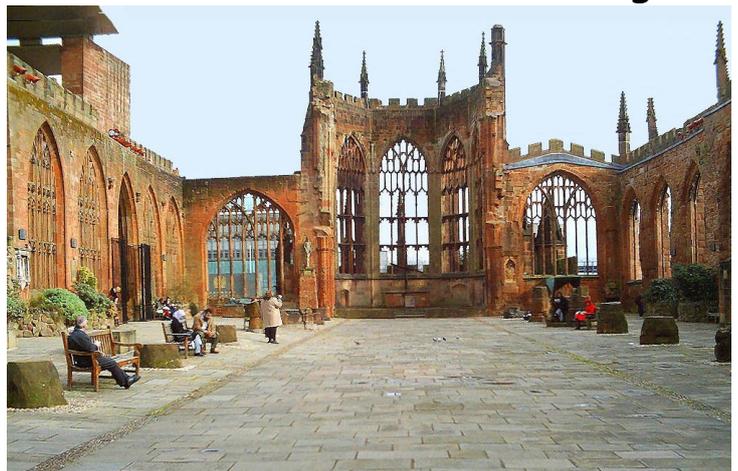
German Luftwaffe bombers virtually destroyed the city of Coventry - including its medieval cathedral - 80 years ago this month, on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1940.



Coventry was targeted by 'Operation Moonlight Sonata' as an industrial city, but more than 4300 homes were destroyed and about two-thirds of the city's buildings were damaged. There were many direct hits on the cathedral, and flames spread quickly. More than 550 people were killed and over 850 badly injured, with nearly 400 sustaining lesser injuries.

There would have been more casualties, but many citizens left at night to sleep in nearby towns or villages after earlier air raids. Rumours that Churchill knew of the raid in advance but declined to take precautions to prevent the Germans knowing their code had been broken were later shown to be misguided. Joseph Goebbels later used the term *coventriert* ('coventried') to describe high levels of destruction in other towns.

The cathedral was left as a ruin, still standing today as a reminder of the bombing. A new cathedral was built close alongside in the 1950s, designed by the architect Basil Spence. The Queen laid its foundation stone in 1956. It was consecrated in 1962, and Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* was composed to mark the occasion.





## WHEN WILL OUR CHURCH BE OPEN AGAIN FOR WORSHIP? ...NOT YET!

Under Lockdown starting on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November it will not be possible to hold services in churches. But please join the 500 who meet together on line for worship each week on <http://www.orpchiscircuit.org.uk/> (Videos), or access the printable Sunday worship service from the website.

And Join Maureen Spinks' Zoom Bible Study at 7.45 pm on Mondays by phone or internet! Subject: The last 12 books of the Old Testament - the Minor Prophets.

Phone 01689 821956 or E-mail [mdospinks@gmail.com](mailto:mdospinks@gmail.com) and Maureen will set you up.



The annual Act of Remembrance at Mottingham War Memorial will sadly not take place this year due to restrictions imposed to help control the spread of Covid-19. Our memorial poppy cross will be placed outside the church, and anyone wishing to put a poppy on it is welcome to do so.

### **HARVEST THANKSGIVING: Message from Rev Catherine:**

We are very grateful for your Harvest Thanksgiving donations to our St Ed's food bank. The doors are still open on Monday, Thursday, Friday, & Saturday from 9.30 to 1.00, & Wednesday 6.00 to 7.00.

Churches together in Mottingham is on Facebook;



<https://www.facebook.com/Churches-Together-in-Mottingham-104482874785693>



## GREETINGS FROM SUNNY AND HOT FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE.

After three months of rain and cool weather the thunderstorms are now at night. I feel sad that I have not been able to spend time with you this summer.

Since the summer of 2014, when I joined Mottingham Methodist Church during an extended stay in London following an Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, I have looked forward to joining during the summer months in Sunday worship services and Wednesday lunches.

I recall our anxiety when I had to return home in early 2015 several months before the end of the outbreak. You all showed concern and wanted me to keep in touch to ensure I was coping.

Now, on reflection, it was easier to deal with Ebola than it has been with Covid. With Ebola, the symptoms were obvious and one had to actually touch an infected person to be ill. Covid is so different - you don't know who has it and there are myriads of ways to get infected. It has been acknowledged that the washing of hands and wearing of face masks has helped us tremendously in reducing the spread.

It has been a stressful time for all of us but also more innovative. I have followed the church's activities through newsletters, listened to the circuit's worship services and had WhatsApp chats with some members.

I may not have been with you in person, but I have been with you in spirit and very much look forward to joining you again. Till then, ***"May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit"***. Romans 15:13

Best Wishes

Andrina



## LORD, PROP US UP!

There is a story of an old farmer who always prayed the same prayer at his church meeting. 'Lord, prop us up on our leanin' side'. After hearing this many times, his minister asked him one day quite what he meant.

The farmer replied: "Well, it's like this... I've got an old barn out in one of my fields. It's been there a long time, and gone through a lot of storms. One day a few years ago I noticed that it was leaning to one side a bit. So, I went and got some poles and propped it up on its leaning side, so it wouldn't fall. Then I got to thinking about how much I was like that old barn. I've been around a long time, and seen plenty of storms in life. I was still standing, but I was also leaning a bit. So, I decided to ask the Lord to prop me up, too, on my leaning side.

Our 'leaning side' is where we are weakest in ourselves. Sometimes we get to leaning toward anger, bitterness or bleakness in life. Then we too need to pray for God to prop us up, especially on that leaning side. He wants us to stand tall and free, in Him.



## WHY SHOULD YOU BOTHER TO PRAY?

The great preacher C.H. Spurgeon once said this of prayer: 'God says to His own son: "Ask of Me and I will give you the nation for your inheritance." (Psalm 2 verses 7-8). If the royal and divine Son cannot be exempt from the rule of asking that He may have, you and I cannot expect that rule to be relaxed in our favour. When there had been no rain, God blessed Elijah and sent rain - but only when Elijah had prayed for it.' In the same way God promises us that if we really seek Him, He will make sure that we find Him.



## THINKING ABOUT THE PSALMS – THE BIBLE'S POETRY BOOK

### Psalm 122 and Advent

*'I rejoiced with those who said to me,  
'Let us go to the house of the Lord. Our  
feet are standing in your gates, Jerusalem.'*

(Psalm 122 verses 1,2). These words from Psalm 122 inspired Hubert Parry's great Coronation Anthem 'I was Glad.' As a Song of Ascent (Psalms 120 verse 134), it was used by pilgrims going to the great festivals in Jerusalem. For the Jews this represented 'coming home' to worship at the Temple, the place of God's presence.

**Our Worship of God:** As God's people today, we are also called to worship in praise and thanksgiving: *'That is where the tribes go up - to praise the name of the Lord'* (verse 4). Of course, currently our coming together in church to sing our praise to God is greatly restricted. We are a *scattered* rather than a *gathered* community. However, as individuals, we can still offer God the worship of our lives using the resource of psalms like this one.

**Our prayer to God:** The psalm encourages the pilgrims to pray for the peace of Jerusalem: *'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May those who love you be secure.'* (verse 6). The peace referred to here is more than simply an absence of conflict. Peace speak of wholeness of life in every aspect. This must be our prayer as we continue to struggle with the effects of the pandemic and as we seek the prosperity of the wider community: *'I will seek your prosperity'* (verse 9).

This month sees the beginning of Advent, the season when we affirm the hope of Jesus' return. As we pray for peace, we know that it is fulfilled in the coming of God's kingdom in Jesus. Despite living with so much uncertainty, we have the assurance of God's future purposes for our lives, churches and the world.

*Paul Hardingham*



**WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN OUR CIRCUIT**  
No Churches in the Circuit will be open for worship services during lockdown.

## **WORSHIP AND PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES IN OUR MOTTINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER**

### **St Andrews and St Albans**

Sunday worship on Zoom at 10.00am on 8<sup>th</sup> November and subsequently at 10.30am.

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### **St Albans:**

Open for private prayer from noon-1 pm on Thursdays

### **St Andrews:**

Open for private prayer from 10am to 11am on Fridays

### **St Edwards:**

Open for private prayer daily from 10am to 1pm Monday to Saturday. There will be longer opening hours to 4pm on Sunday and Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November. Poppies or other tokens can be placed at the Remembrance display.

**NOTE: These arrangements may be subject to alteration.**

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### **CAUSE FOR REJOICING:**



Bible Society teams worldwide provided almost 3.7 million Scripture items for children last year. More than 1.1 million children's Scriptures were distributed in Egypt alone. This is the largest number for one nation in a place where ministry with young people is a top priority. Through festivals, competitions and quizzes, the Bible Society of Egypt engages with hundreds of thousands of children each year. We pray for these children.



## PRAYING FOR OUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

We may not be open, but all the people who are part of our church, churches and community families are still out there. They will have various needs and problems and need our prayers. Below is guidance for our prayers based on our normal activities and links.

**Sunday:** Worship and Messy Church - pray for ourselves our members and visitors.

**Monday:** Pray for our ministers - Duncan, Terry and Maureen.

**Tuesday:** Pray for the Good Companions and All Sorts Craft Group

**Wednesday:** Pray for those who normally go to the Community Lunch

**Thursday:** Pray for Churches Together in Mottingham - St Andrews, St Albans, St Edwards and Our Lady Help of Christians

**Friday:** Pray for the shop owners, library, Councilors and neighbours.

**Saturday:** Pray for those who normally go to The Youth Club



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT AT A TIME LIKE THIS

How often do you hear someone say 'Don't worry'? When I look at our world there are a lot of reasons why we might be worried. This year, we are faced with a lot of change and uncertainties. We do not know how the next 3 months will pan out, let alone the next year. Fear and anxiety is becoming as pandemic as Covid-19. Our concerns include what is happening in our schools and universities, whether we can take a holiday or not, approaching cold weather and flu season, climate change, antagonism between nations, Brexit, family issues and even the elections in the United States. We are uneasy and unsettled.

Some use the expression - 'I'm feeling hammered'. A hammer

can be used to build or to break things up. What a hammer does is dependent on the person using it. It is similar when we face problems and difficulties. The key is in how we face and deal with them. We can let situations crush us, making us depressed and unable to face the future and avoid thinking about God. On the other hand, they can cause us to fall back on God, and want to build our relationship with him and find the comfort we need.

Recently, we have been limited in how we go about practicing our faith as a religion. Church services are different. There are strict guidelines about what we must do and this is a struggle for some. However, we have realised that our relationships are the most important. Jesus taught us that there are two commandments to follow - to love God, and to love our neighbour. There has been considerable growth in these areas recently - locally, nationally and in many parts of the world.

There are 365 references in the Bible to not being afraid or not worrying - one for each day of the year. Therefore it must be possible for us to lay our anxieties and fears at Jesus' feet. Philippians 4 verse 6 says 'Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus'. The two words 'with thanksgiving' are part of the key to unlock that peace. A song by Hillsong can help us to worship God in this way.

*'I will bless the Lord forever and I will trust Him at all times  
He has delivered me from all fear and He has set my feet upon a  
rock*

*I will not be moved, and I'll say of the Lord 'You are my shield, my  
strength, my portion,*

*Deliverer, my shelter, strong tower*

*My very present help in time of need.'*

Ruth Calcott



## IN AND AROUND MOTTINGHAM AND BROMLEY

The library will be open on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November from 10am-2pm. It is likely it will then be closed for the duration of the lock down. Tel:020 8857 5406

You can continue to explore all that Bromley Libraries offer on: <https://www.facebook.com/BromleyLibraries>

Join Chris's Bite-sized London explorations:

The talks remain on Bromley's Facebook page for some time, so you don't need to watch at the broadcast time if this is inconvenient.



### 'KEEP CONNECTED! - serving the community'

This publication prepared by Bob Lawrie broadly cover aspects of life in Mottingham under headings such as, community, environment, church life, local activity and news in general, all interspersed with photos, humour and comment.

For information contact Bob Lawrie:

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TEL: 020 8857 0685

**Mottingham Festival Lights:** Donations can be sent to:

The Acting Treasurer, Hilltop House, London, SE9 4RT.

**Lidl planning application:** The application to convert the Porcupine Pub into a Lidl store has been rejected on the grounds of the road layout and traffic in Mottingham.

**Dorset Road Infant School:** The school has now been closed permanently..