



**DOWNING PLACE  
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH  
CAMBRIDGE**

## **PLACE MATTERS**



**ISSUE 29  
MARCH 2021**

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## **ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

We will begin moving into Downing Place during week beginning 8 March; and we will be on site the previous week for training on the various new systems which have been implemented. During March, emails will be responded to more slowly, as we spend time away from computers unpacking and organising - please bear with us!

### **Phones**

We expect the phone and IT set-up to be completed by 12 March. The telephone number 01223 312814 is at the time of writing being transferred to the new site and is unavailable. We hope this will be up and running as soon as possible.

### **Post**

Mail may be sent to 4 Downing Place, Cambridge CB2 3EL from March.

## FROM THE MINISTER

*The LORD will keep  
your going out and your coming in  
from this time on and for evermore.'*

Psalm 121.8

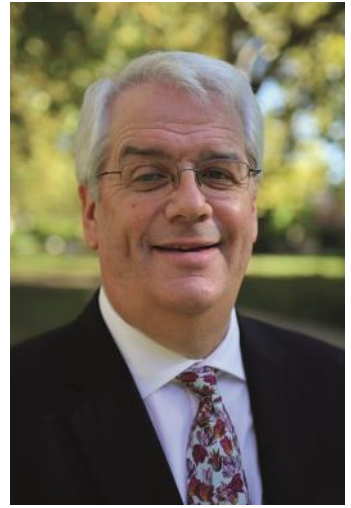
March 2021 is quite a month for Downing Place Church. All things being as equal as they are the day I am writing, we will take possession again of our building. We left it all but two years ago, and for eighteen months Arch:angel architects and Coulsons Building Group have been working with us to refashion it for a new era of worship and witness.

We shall receive the gift of buildings that have been remodelled to make access into it easier and movement round it freer, to make the carbon footprint more sustainable and the facilities more flexible. Great care has been taken both to preserve something of the heritage of both our previous homes whilst embracing the opportunities of twenty-first century technology and the requirements of contemporary society. Some things will look very different, as befits a faith community that is evolving for the times. But much will look as it did, symbolising how we stand on the shoulders of those Congregationalists and Presbyterians who were in this part of Cambridge centuries before us. As we learn to inhabit our place – some of us again, some as we haven't before – my prayer is that we will treasure it as a suite of rooms where we can rejoice in God's grace faithfully and live out God's love fruitfully.

*To this temple where we call thee,  
come, O Lord, of hosts, today;  
with thy wonted loving-kindness  
hear thy people as they pray;  
and thy fullest benediction  
shed within its walls for aye.*

Latin 7th century, tr J. M. Neale

But ... yes, there's often a but. Few of you will be unaware of the axiom that is so frequently repeated it's almost a cliché. The Church is not the building but the people. It's the stark truth of that phrase which saves it from being a cliché. The Church is nothing without the people. Yet those people can be so assisted in



their service to God's mission if they have the right building and the appropriate attitude to it. I wonder whether the original name of Emmanuel Church might help us get this balance right. The Great Meeting, ironically next door to what is now Downing Place United Reformed Church, was established in 1687 and was one of the names proposed – fifty-three of them! - by church members for the newly united Emmanuel and St Columba's.

In what ways might our restored home call and equip us to be a great meeting? I would like to offer three ways.

First and foremost, we are called to be a great meeting for worship. It's our *raison d'être*. We will have a plethora of human resources, complemented with fine musical instruments, state of the art audio visual installations and an adaptable space. They offer great potential to collaborate in word and silence, in movement, music and art, offering something for all ages, which draws us into an encounter with the grace and truth of God as they are in Jesus Christ.

Secondly, are we not called to be a great meeting of those who are learning to live in fellowship with one another? The wonder of the Church at its best is that it is not a society of the like-minded, less still a bland association of clones, but a celebratory cross section of God's diverse people – diverse in age, gender, race, sexuality, and understanding. We're like a jigsaw really: no two of us identical, and some of us quite different, but side-by-side we make the picture complete ... provided we don't leave any out. What a great meeting we shall be as we are held together in Christ – those who have known each other for decades, those who have covenanted to get to know each other now, and those who walk in off the street to find community in this community of communities.

Thirdly, will we not also be a great meeting by the way that we disperse? The Downing Place Sanctuary, committee rooms, offices, and Hall will find their true value as they inspire and encourage us to leave them to live-out the Christian Gospel in homes and workplaces, in stadia and malls, in places of learning, of healing or of trade. The One who became incarnate modelled a liberty from buildings and gave his message its finest expression on a stark hill outside the city wall. The God we see in Jesus Christ is not hiding in the Temple and nor, surely, does that God offer us our prized premises as a hiding place. It's the springboard from which we are launched into the city, its suburbs, and the surrounding villages. Energised by the great meeting we have had by coming in, we cannot but go out.

Let's enjoy the building to which we so eagerly return, but less for what it is and more for what it makes each of us to be.

*Nigel Uden*

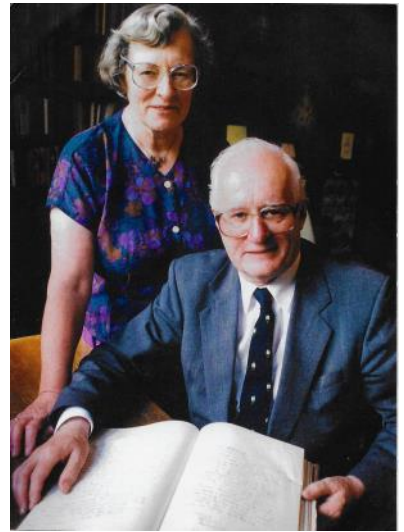
# BEING A WOMAN IN THE MEDICAL WORLD OF THE NHS



*This month, instead of a straightforward profile, Pamela Cressey reflects on her long experience as a woman in medicine. Pamela needs no introduction to Downing Place members, and we are very grateful to her for giving us this insight into her career and the contribution she has made to women's healthcare especially.*

No one who has seen their stern portraits in the Westminster College dining hall, or knows the story of Agnes Lewis and Margaret Gibson, should complain about their own position as twenty-first century women. The twins were born in 1843 and their achievements are breath-taking! The first woman medical doctor, Elizabeth Blackwell, qualified in 1849, followed soon after by Elizabeth Garrett Anderson.

When I was born almost 100 years later - in 1930 - many things had changed, and over the last ninety years they have changed again. I would not use the word "feminism" about myself, as it has connotations of intensity. The word was apparently coined in 1837, to mean 'equality of the sexes', or 'men and women being of equal value'. In this I have indeed been involved in several ways. I am especially grateful to Martin for championing the cause of the equal value of women and men. He always supported me, and in



*Pamela with her husband, the Rev. Martin Cressey, in the Principal's study at Westminster College.*

fact when he spoke it was much more effective than when I said the same thing! We were involved together in the formation of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM-UK) and the Medaille Trust, which helps people trafficked for sex or labour (*and our March monthly cause, see p.12*).

This has all been behind my career choice of medicine to work for the NHS, soon after it began in 1948. Now women are much more accepted as equals than they were then.

There was a great change with the arrival of the NHS. I still have vivid memories of encounters with doctors before that. A visit to the G.P. entailed a long walk, a queue at the door, and a waiting room which was the family dining room, still smelling of breakfast. The chairs had prickly horsehairs, painful to the bare legs of children. A pie dish on a gas burner containing shiny metal instruments was the sterilizer. "Panel patients" had to wait till the paying patients were seen. We waited again for the brightly coloured medicine wrapped and sealed with sealing wax. Home visits were more expensive, and worried my mother as we did not have much money.

Fast forward to 1951. Charing Cross Hospital Medical School accepted nine women and thirty-six men each year. I entered with a mixed role, as a "student-demonstrator", which was a part-time post created for me to earn my fees for the course. The common room was sordid, with torn old brown leather chairs, stained with beer. The atmosphere was thick with smoke. It was not really welcoming to women. The teachers were nearly all men, but we were privileged to have Dame Josephine Barnes as our Obstetrician and Gynaecologist. She was a wonderful role model, respected by everyone. It was clear that the women needed to work harder than the men to be equally accepted, and this was apparent in the allocation of house jobs at the end of the course. Women were expected to seek work in public health, laboratory work or family planning and possibly general practice. None of the obligatory house jobs at the main hospital were occupied by a female at that time. The ward sisters admitted that they preferred their young men. Although it was harder to get accepted I apparently passed the test, and enjoyed the friendships of the nursing staff for three fulfilling years of hospital work with two women obstetricians. The other ten registrars and consultants were men.

Here in Cambridge in 2021 50.5% of medical students are women, though in higher paid specialities men are still dominant. And whereas in 1960 it was generally assumed that doctors were men, and nurses women, now we have Team Leader Nurse David Morrison, who grew up in our Congregation, as a great role model of progress.

Martin and I were married in Cheam in 1958 and a year later went to the pastorate of St Columba's Church, Coventry, where we spent a very happy eight years. Our wonderful congregation there welcomed and embraced our four children of the Manse.

Medical work involved locum general practice and helping to set up a clinic with the Family Planning Association. Looking back, it was very different in many ways. Only married women should attend. There must be no advertising of the times or address of the clinic and payments were made. "The pill" was beginning to be available. No men were admitted, so our male treasurer entered secretly by a back door. In 1975 these clinics were taken over by the NHS.

In 1967 Martin joined the Selly Oak Colleges staff in Birmingham, and I helped to set up three family planning clinics. When Anna, our youngest, was seven I joined a refresher course in General Practice, where men and women were in more equal numbers.

From 1973 Martin's work moved to Westminster. I was invited to join a practice in the villages around Swavesey and Willingham as a locum, and then an assistant. My colleague Fiona Waters and I were both busy with our families, but worked in both surgeries as salaried partners. There were many home visits, and twenty-four hour shifts for on call. Then, out of the blue, we were both asked to leave. Sadly there are often "divorces" in general practice.



*First morning at the new Over surgery, 1st July 1987*

we needed. It was unusual to have a purpose-built surgery. The architect despaired of working with this stubborn woman, as we went for all the cheapest options.

It is a long story, but eventually we decided to set up a new practice together in Over, where a new surgery was required, with the blessing of the FHSA. Was it viable to be two women offering this service? It was a daunting prospect, but I had a very special colleague in Fiona, and it turned out to be successful. We had no money, so I borrowed £250,000, bought a piece of land and designed the building



For a year we worked in a portacabin on the site. All our staff were women, with Sylvia, a brilliant manager, Susan, a qualified pharmacist, and soon after Sheila Strachan. I think it was the first practice in East Anglia to employ a qualified pharmacist to keep us safe. Jane was our medically trained secretary/receptionist, and nurses completed the team. Early on we added a "token man", Dr David Galloway, an expert physician. The patient list grew rapidly, to our relief, confirming that the village community accepted this female-dominated practice. Everyone worked very hard and loyally and contributed to the adventure. We weathered the labels "little women" and "the girls". We soon needed to extend the building to add two more doctors, one male, and more staff. We kept morale high with frequent parties! We invited consultants from Addenbrookes, including the psychiatrist, Dr Ross Mitchell, and a physiotherapist, to run clinics for our patients, which were popular.

I had always wanted to have a "medical day centre" to serve the needs of the elderly, and this became possible when we vacated the portacabin. There was much enthusiasm in the village, and the centre still runs, in a permanent building, thirty-three years later. There is a special bath, a hairdressing salon, a kitchen with home cooked hot meals, and a state-of-the-art minibus (donated) transporting clients from the nine villages we served. For two years we even added five short-stay beds to care for those needing more intensive help, and cared for two hundred patients in that time, but this was not viable long-term. I wonder whether a man would have thought of having a day centre attached to the surgery, though some were and are very supportive.

It has been a great privilege to be a woman in the medical work of the NHS, and I have many people to thank. I have no regrets.





**TRAIDCRAFT**  
Fighting poverty through trade

## NEWS FROM TRAIDCRAFT

As you may remember, in the Autumn of 2018, Traidcraft announced that the company was in difficulty and unless drastic action was taken the business was likely to have to close down following the Christmas season. This was mainly due to the fact that supermarkets and other large retailers who had previously bought direct from Traidcraft had begun producing their own fair trade lines. The market for Traidcraft's biggest sellers, the 'Geobar' cereal snacks rapidly collapsed and action was needed to save the company. All fair traders and supporters were encouraged to make a great effort to boost sales in the lead up to Christmas and in January 2019 the announcement was made, that thanks in part to these efforts, the company could remain in business though activity would be significantly scaled down and sadly a good number of staff made redundant. Under a new business model and with the remaining staff being willing to take on new roles, Traidcraft began to rebuild, concentrating its efforts on trading with fewer suppliers and reducing its range of products. However, it was determined to remain true to its aim of supporting small producers around the world by offering a fair price for their goods under the Fairtrade international standards and certification scheme.

Two years on, how has Traidcraft fared? We recently listened to a very encouraging presentation from Matt Oliver from Traidcraft who told us their efforts had paid off and they were now in a good position to carry on trading into the future, no longer under the threat of closure. Sales hit £1m a month in November 2020 for the very first time since the recent difficulties.

At the start of the pandemic Traidcraft received a surge in orders from individual customers originally just trying to get hold of toilet rolls when there was a shortage in the shops! This was expected to be short lived, but many of these customers have stayed with Traidcraft and bought other items. By the end of the year over 50% of trade was direct with customers, leaving fair traders amounting to 36% of the business.



Traidcraft has recently published a booklet called '*Make the Switch to Fair Trade*' which is full of interesting information setting down the history of the company over the past 40 years and its aspirations for the future. Still pioneering the future of fair trade, they are following three key themes to

place at the heart of their decision making, much in the same way as we have adopted three themes for our church, going forward. These are:

- Trade Justice: to address power imbalances in international trade,
- Social Justice: to foster equality in terms of gender, religion and opportunity, and
- Environmental Justice: to bring attention to the effects of climate change on their producers.

The purpose of this booklet is to encourage people on their journey with Fair Trade, by suggesting that **making simple switches** in our everyday lives and shopping habits can enable us all to live more sustainable lives. We have a supply of these booklets which we are currently distributing with our Traidcraft Home delivery orders.

From 22nd February to 7th March we will celebrate national **Fair Trade Fortnight**, when the Fairtrade Foundation, together with Traidcraft will set out to raise awareness of a particular issue that affects fair trade around the world. This year's theme is **Climate Change** and the impact this is having on the lives of many of the world's poorest people who have done least to contribute to the climate crisis, yet suffer the most. More information can be found at [www.traidcraft.co.uk](http://www.traidcraft.co.uk) and [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)

We are awaiting publication of the Spring 2021 catalogue and as soon as these arrive, we will get them out to customers. Although we cannot meet together yet, please consider making purchases from Traidcraft, and remember, we can deliver direct to your door.



*Lorraine and Stephen Thornton*



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are need of some volunteer Fire Wardens to be trained to act in case of emergency. If you would be willing to be part of our Fire Warden team, please let Alan Rickard know.

# MONTHLY CAUSE FOR MARCH – THE MEDAILLE TRUST



The March Monthly Cause is the Medaille Trust, which works to combat modern slavery.

We think of slavery as something which was abolished two centuries ago, but enslavement is still part of our society, and the Medaille Trust was set up in 2006 to fight against all

forms of exploitation and to support the victims. They are now one of the largest providers of supported safe house beds for victims of modern slavery in the UK. Founded originally by a group of Catholic religious women it now works with different organisations with similar priorities, such as the Salvation Army.

Modern slavery is a crime that reaches into every community. It includes all forms of slavery, human trafficking and exploitation. Victims are often vulnerable, coming from areas where there is little work, such as Albania or Vietnam. They are offered a guaranteed job and a good wage but the promised job is a lie. Instead, they are forced to work long hours in hard and degrading conditions with little or no pay, threatened by violence. They could be working in nail bars, brothels or car washes, construction or fruit picking, or as domestic workers, or exploited by County Lines drug gangs.

There are estimated to be 40.3 million victims in the world today, 136,000 in the UK. 6,993 potential victims were found in the UK in 2018.

The Medaille Trust combats human trafficking and modern slavery by offering safe housing, providing support for victims, raising awareness in communities, partnering with law enforcement authorities. They accompany the police on raids and in reception centres to provide immediate support and reassurance to those rescued. After victims are found and rescued, Medaille Trust opens its doors to them 24/7 – 365 days a year, then journeys with victims on their road to recovery, opening the doors to a life free from exploitation.

You can find more about the Medaille Trust on their website, including details of how to donate online. If you would prefer to send a cheque, then you can make this payable to The Medaille Trust and send it to their Finance department at:

The Medaille Trust, Cathedral Centre, 3 Ford Street, Salford, M3 6DP

Please remember that you cannot donate via the Church Office, which is still out of action, but only directly to the Trust.

On behalf of slavery victims, thank you.



## CAMBRIDGE CHURCHES HOMELESS PROJECT – A PROGRESS REPORT.

The CCHP is one of the charities supported by an annual donation from our York St. fund.

Last month the Chair of the Project, the Revd. Jon Canessa, wrote to supporters about the Project's work during this bitterly cold winter. The pandemic meant that the usual programme of pop-up overnight shelters could not run.

“Despite this, the CCHP has been busy behind the scenes, working in partnership with Cambridge City Council, the Street Outreach Team, Wintercomfort, Caring for Cambridgeshire's Homeless and It Takes A City to provide accommodation and support for those individuals whose circumstances mean they are beyond the scope of the local authority's help. Examples of the pastoral and practical support CCHP has been able to provide include:

Five individuals who are ineligible for funding and those who are especially vulnerable are being accommodated by CCHP in a local Travelodge and guest house. CCHP is providing pastoral support to each person while our partners are preparing and delivering hot meals on a daily basis.

CCHP volunteers are working at Wintercomfort where they are undertaking SWEP (cold weather) assessments on behalf of the Street Outreach Team to ensure people who are 'newly homeless' access support as quickly as possible.

70 homeless people have been placed into temporary student accommodation by the City Council where CCHP volunteers help with sorting the laundry. CCHP is covering some of the significant laundry costs for the guests. CCHP is also providing on-site pastoral support to this group.”

**In February, Stephen Barwise, a Trustee and Treasurer of the CCHP, sent a further update:**

Despite the pandemic, we have had a good winter so far in terms of delivering services to the vulnerable and homeless in our local community. So far this winter we have housed seven men and four women.

Two of our guests are asylum seekers and Mr J, who was referred to us by Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum (Refugee Services), moved in successfully at the beginning of February, having been hosted by various

families over the last four years while he sought refugee status. This status has now been achieved, which means that he can access some benefits as he has a clear legal status. Mr E is still pursuing clarity over his refugee status. Neither of these Guests consume alcohol or drugs, and the landlady at our friendly B&B states that they are 'charming'.

Mr D moved out of the B&B on Thursday of last week and into a council flat. Mr D has been with us most of the winter and everybody has been impressed with his commitment to being clean from heroin use. Mr D fought back from heroin use two years ago while rough sleeping. I consider this to be absolutely outstanding. He now has two complaints. 'I am getting fat', and 'I have so much energy I don't know what to do with myself'. The landlady advised that he visit anywhere that is open and offer to help. Mr D carried out these instructions and has found regular work on two or three mornings a week.

Mr H was offered accommodation by the council in Peterborough, but he found this unacceptable as his partner is in ICU at Addenbrookes in a coma with Covid. Mr H visits Addenbrookes every day to ascertain if there are any changes. This would be impossible if Mr H lived in Peterborough due to the cost and lockdown rules. Over four months ago, Mr H began his journey to become clean from Heroin use while rough sleeping and has been a great success.

We have also been able to offer emergency accommodation to those who need it, including one male Guest, and his female partner who stayed three nights with us until statutory services successfully rehoused them.

Two of our other male Guests are in poor physical health, with no access to public funds, and Mr K was discharged directly from Addenbrookes in-patient status to rough sleeping. We were successful in accommodating him within a couple of hours of discharge and continue to have him in our care.

The three other female Guests had all withdrawn from their emergency accommodations due to there being an immediate risk to their safety. One of these female Guests was 18 years of age. This is not an uncommon occurrence in emergency hostels as these are now mixed facilities and we are grateful to our partner agencies for working with us to ensure all vulnerable women have access to a safe and secure environment.

These success stories have only been achieved due to the support of our volunteers & donors. The accommodation that we access is paid at a rate of £25 per night, i.e. £750 for 30 nights. This is a reduction of £40 or more per night. We hope to accept a new Guest this week, once he accepts that our offer is 'for real'.

All that CCHP achieves is dependent upon the prayers & support of people like yourselves. I would like to take this opportunity to Thank You both for all your Prayers and your donations.

CCHP is only organised compassion, so Thank You for your support. Christ said, "I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome". We will not cure homelessness but we can make a difference to those with whom we engage.



One of the charities we support through our donations from the York St. funds is Church Action on Poverty. Here are three of the local Partner groups working with CAP to help people exercise **dignity . . . agency . . . power . . .**

### **Cedarwood Trust**

The **Cedarwood Trust** has been supporting people in **North Shields** for 40 years. It is a community anchor ensuring nobody is cut adrift. Staff challenge the systems that increase poverty and worked tirelessly during lockdowns to ensure people had food and someone to talk to.

[www.cedarwoodtrust.com](http://www.cedarwoodtrust.com)

### **The Food Glorious Food Choir.**

Music brings people together and captures our attention. **The Food Glorious Food Choir** and subsequent **Guitar Circle** were born in **Sheffield** food banks and have helped people in the Gleadless Valley neighbourhood to raise their voices against poverty and strike a chord for justice.

Food-glorious-food-singing-in-the-city –

### **Migrant Support**

People arriving in the UK are often denied access to employment or support. The systems don't reflect the compassion of our society, but **Migrant Support** in **Manchester** is a lifeline, providing practical support, training and social encouragement and a media project to amplify marginalised voices.

[www.migrantsupport.org.uk](http://www.migrantsupport.org.uk)

*Janet Bottoms*

## EASTER IS COMING!

This year, more than ever, Easter will be a time of hope and promise – for everyone, hope of escaping some of the effects of the pandemic, and for Downing Place, hope of finally being able to settle in our renewed building.

We'd like to have some of your Easter thoughts and memories in the next Place Matters, to make it a celebration of this special Easter, 2021. What has Easter meant for you? Have you had special Easters, here or in other countries, perhaps where Easter fell in autumn? How did that feel?

Please help to make the April Place Matters a very special Easter edition – let us have short texts telling us about your Easter experiences, poems (yours or other people's), quotations about Easter, photographs of Easter all over the world, pictures of Easter themes – spring flowers, eggs, baby animals. Perhaps you have witnessed other Churches' ways of marking Easter, photographed Easter morning model gardens, or just a lovely spring landscape.

Please send your texts and pictures to me, Sheila Porrer (copy to Ann Auger) by the closing date of Wednesday March 17th. Let's make the next Place Matters a real celebration of Easter and Spring.

### A BASKET OF FLOWERS

Here are some flowers to colour, (not just for our children but for anyone who enjoys colouring). Get the page printed out and colour in the flowers. Then see whether you can send your finished picture to Sheila and Ann, and you may find it decorating the next edition of Place Matters to celebrate Easter and Spring.

Happy colouring!







## SALLY MAY PRE-SCHOOL – UPDATE

We have now heard that the children’s chairs from Emmanuel have arrived in Sierra Leone, at the Sally May pre-school which is supported by the Knit One Give One group. The children are delighted with them.



There are two short videos on the Mission section of the Downing Place website where you can see and hear the children saying thank you. Do have a look.

<https://downingplaceurc.org/mission/>

Thanks to Anne Disney for this news.

## A TALE OF THREE TIME CAPSULES

Now that each of the capsules is safely interred, readers may be interested to learn more about them.



*The 1992 Time Capsule*

The first find, contained in a cardboard tube, was in the roof space and dated 1992, a surprise to those associated with St Columba's, although one surmise was that it might have been to remember the work on the building a century before. Should it be opened after such a relatively short time? Opinions differed, but eventually David Thomas, whose knowledge of the building is second to none, and who, significantly, could not offer any explanation himself, investigated the

contents. Here is what he found: a tabloid newspaper wrapped round a re-development leaflet which outlined an appeal for £133,000, the changes being planned, (mentioning the committee involved, David himself, John Chaplin, Ann Jack and Donald Douglas amongst others), together with some photographs. The first of these was of two painters from Rattee and Kett, who had access to the roof – David recognised them. So the mystery was solved, and a tradition on the part of stone masons in past times to leave their marks, might be said to have been adopted/adapted.

That initial discovery led to the idea of putting together a new capsule to say something about Downing Place United Reformed Church in 2020, with suggestions being sought from members of the congregation. As the pandemic had already established itself, not surprisingly a mask, bottle of gel and a negative test “certificate” are included. Also in the collection are two rainbow images in support of the National Health Service. Congregational life is represented by a pie chart which provides as accurate a guess as possible of the age profile of members and others who attend, (a total of 231 in October). In addition, there are fliers for Children's Ministry, Open Table, Commitment for Life, the March issue of Place Matters (the last from normal times?) and photographs of events since the union of St Columba's and Emmanuel, where the children have a prominent place. The CD of the uniting service in 2018 may fall out of the strict calendar remit, but it's there. Since this might not be “readable” by a future finder, the service order is included, plus the sermon preached at the final service from Trumpington Street in July 2020. There are also some coins to the value of

2p, 5p and 10p. Historical artefacts are represented by photographs taken prior to rebuilding, a chair plaque which refers to the love and fellowship experienced at Emmanuel, and the note discovered in the dismantled pulpit from St Columba's, concealed by its builders, John Medlock and Henry Drew in 1891. To complete the cache and provide some historical context, a comment has been taken from the URC's website, where Karen Campbell, Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries, reflected on God-filled moments at the turn of the year.\* The Guardian for 31 December signs everything off, whereas a copy of the Cambridge News for the day of deposit brings the "story" to date.



*The 2021 Capsule*

My account might have concluded here, but the building revealed another secret, after the contractors opened up the wall that had mounted the foundation stone in 1890. Behind it were newspapers, three in total, all printed in Cambridge. The Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal for 16 May contained a front page notice about the laying of the "memorial" stone planned for Thursday 22 May, and on examination I found coins to the value of a half penny, a penny and three pence inside a fold. There was also an issue of the then denominational magazine, The Presbyterian Messenger for the month, and the University's Cambridge Review, for the day of the ceremony. All



*The 1892 Capsule*

these were wrapped inside a piece of parchment, carefully inscribed with a list of members of the Session (from the Presbytery of London North), and the twenty seven members who had formed the local Organising Committee. One of the latter was Herbert Coulson, of 50 Burleigh Street, later to be an elder and whose memorial plaque will

continue to be displayed. The firm that he founded has been our contractor. It therefore seemed appropriate that the congregation's own Building Group, and lead representatives from the Coulson Building Group and Archangel Architects, should be listed for inclusion in the latest capsule. And, of course, the day chosen without any previous knowledge for the service to mark Downing Place's next stage of its life, is the eve of Pentecost, 22 May 2020. The box used to house all the current items is interesting in itself, as it appears to be a travelling writing case, complete with recessed ink stands, discovered at Trumpington Street when clearing the building.

All the "capsules" have found a home, and a note will be deposited in the church safe as to their exact locations, but my lips are sealed. I am very grateful to all who provided ideas or contributed items.

*Margaret Thompson*

You may wish to read this:

\* <https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3680-god-filled-moments>

# Commitment for Life

Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love

We are most grateful for your congregation's kind donation to Commitment for Life. Your continued generosity towards our support for Christian Aid and Global Justice Now is much appreciated.

At General Assembly in July 2018 the Chief Executive of Christian Aid, Amanda Khozi Mukwashi said of our long-standing partnership,

“Christian Aid’s relationship with the URC through Commitment for Life (CfL) is a model of positive partnership. Partnership is the cornerstone of how we’re going to get to the promised land. For Christian Aid, Commitment for Life is not just a partnership, it’s that moment, that rope where, when you are feeling like it’s really tough, you know that you’re not alone.”

Your contributions make an enormous and practical difference to our partner communities. Your prayers, activism & generosity are a wonderful demonstration of ‘life giving faith, defiant hope and generous love’.

With grateful thanks,

Suzanne Pearson

Administrative Assistant Commitment for Life | The United Reformed Church



# Commitment for Life

In appreciation of

Downing Place URC Cambridge

for the generous donation of £11,175=45  
towards

**Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love**

Commitment for Life is the global justice programme of the United Reformed Church  
working in partnership with Christian Aid and Global Justice Now.



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 3.2.2021.



[www.urc.org.uk/cfl](http://www.urc.org.uk/cfl)



## Have you or your loved ones had your vaccine?



As more of our family, friends, and neighbours receive their COVID vaccinations, we rejoice and are glad that our loved ones are protected. We give thanks for all the NHS staff and key workers who continue to save lives across the UK.

For the poorest and most vulnerable communities across the world, there is little hope of a vaccine rollout. These people already face a lack of water, food, and healthcare.

Some are homeless. Some are living with underlying health issues such as HIV.

Christian Aid is already on the ground, helping keep people safe from coronavirus with practical support – but with your gift of thanks we can do more.

Please give thanks with a donation to help protect our global neighbours while the vaccine is out of reach.

*We are still accepting postal donations, although please note that there is a delay to processing these due to operational restrictions regarding Covid-19. Please give via our website where possible, or alternatively call 020 7523 2269 to donate by telephone.*

*Should you wish to send a donation, please make your cheque payable to Christian Aid and use the address below, including a brief cover letter so we can acknowledge your kindness, if needed.*

*Christian Aid, PO Box 100, London SE1 7RT*



## THE FARADAY INSTITUTE PROGRAMME OF EVENTS ON ZOOM.

This academic year, all Faraday Institute Research Seminars will be online, making them accessible to all who are interested, wherever they may be. This term's last seminar is:

**9th March 2021** Dr Mirjam Schilling [Oxford]

From Biology to Theology: How viruses challenge our perception of good and evil

The seminars will be held as Zoom Webinars at lunchtime and are free to attend. All are welcome. More information can be found at <https://www.faraday.cam.ac.uk/events/seminars/>

On **Saturday March 20th**, the Faraday Institute, together with Westminster College will be holding a one-day online workshop entitled 'End of Life Matters'. This will be an opportunity to develop understanding and think through a Christian response to issues related to the end of life. For more information, visit <https://www.faraday.cam.ac.uk/event/end-of-life-matters/>

The Faraday Institute will be participating in the Cambridge Festival (in which the University is bringing together its Science Festival and Festival of Ideas). Prof. Bob White and Revd Dr Roger Abbott (both Faraday staff) will speak on 'Plagues and Pandemics: Perspectives from Science and Faith' on **Friday 26th March** at 2pm GMT.

The Faraday Institute will be hosting our Summer Course online this year; the title is 'Faith in Science? Interaction of Science and Belief in a Challenging World', and the course will run **4-9 July**.



Last year, the Revd James East, left St Andrew's Street Baptist Church to become Senior Minister of Dorchester Baptist Church in Dorset. St Andrew's Street has been in pastoral vacancy since then, but is now delighted to welcome its new pastor, the Revd Dr Steve Langford. Nigel has greeted Steve, and was very happy to be invited on behalf of Downing Place Church to the Induction Service on 20th February, live to Zoom.

## A POEM BY JANE BOWER

Spring Song (tune: Danny Boy)

O damn it all, the pipes, the pipes are freezing,  
Weeks end to end lockdown hems us inside,  
My mojo's gone, my nose is far from pleasing,  
'Tishoo, tishoo', is heard both far and wide.  
But every evening's sun is later burning,  
And every morning's hopes of freedom grow  
And my heart soars to feel that Spring's returning  
O annual joy, O annual joy, I love you so.

O sanitised is every surface wholly  
The wipes still sprawl o'er worktop, sink and loo  
I'm tired of tuna, beans and ravioli  
And meals with friends are sadly still taboo.  
But daffodils will spear our land's green spaces  
Stand side by side in one great gathering  
And they will burst the masks that hide their faces  
And, breathing freely, in their glory greet the Spring.





# Holy Week

From Palm Sunday, 28th March until Holy Saturday, 3rd April, we offer a sequence of pre-recorded services, learning from last year's experience, when people so valued being able to access acts of worship at whatever time of each day suited their other activities – dawn, Noon, dusk, late at night, or whatever.

Many of the Holy Week services will follow St Mark's account of that week, as is shown on the Lectionary page.

On Maundy Thursday the Communion service will be led by The Revd David Tatem, and overleaf there is a note he has written to introduce that occasion.

On Good Friday, there will be a service live to Zoom at 10.00am (TBC). As usual, this will be a Free Churches event in which we join some of our Baptist, Lutheran and Methodist partners around the city.

On Easter Day, we very much hope to offer worship from the sanctuary of Downing Place Church – the first service to be held there since we received it back from the Contractors. We last met in that building on Easter Day 2019. We hope it will be possible for a few people to be present, safely distanced, subject to prudent interpretation of the HM Government's guidelines effective at that time. For those unable to be physically there, we cannot at this stage say exactly what format we will use – live to Zoom, live-streamed or pre-recorded. A decision will be easier in a few weeks' time, once we have seen how the technology will work and announcements will follow in the Weekly Update. Whatever happens, there will continue to be a printed service posted to those who do not use the internet.

## MARCH DIARY

Day	Date	Name	Time	Location
Mon	01-Mar-21	Officers' Meeting	4:00pm	Zoom
Tue	02-Mar-21	Lent Housegroup (Please contact Kelly O'Doherty if you're interested in the Tuesday evening meetings)	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	03-Mar-21	Lectio Divina (Please contact Deborah McVey for more details about our Lectio Divina sessions)	8:30am	Zoom
Thu	04-Mar-21	Lent Housegroup (Please contact Tim Rowland if you're interested in the Thursday afternoon meetings)	2:30pm	Zoom
Sun	07-Mar-21	Sunday Worship with Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden  (A link to register for this will be found on the homepage of our website)	11:00am	Zoom
Sun	07-Mar-21	Open Table Discussion (Please contact Alison Binney for all Open Table enquiries)	7:00pm	Zoom
Tue	09-Mar-21	Lent Housegroup	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	10-Mar-21	Lectio Divina	8:30am	Zoom
Thu	11-Mar-21	Lent Housegroup	2:30pm	Zoom
Thu	11-Mar-21	Elders' Meeting	7:30pm	Zoom
Sun	14-Mar-21	Sunday Worship led by Church Members  A recording will be available on our Youtube channel from Saturday evening		Youtube
Tue	16-Mar-21	Lent Housegroup	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	17-Mar-21	<b>DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES FOR APRIL'S 'PLACE MATTERS'</b>		

Wed	17-Mar-21	Lectio Divina	8:30am	Zoom
Thu	18-Mar-21	Lent Housegroup	2:30pm	Zoom
Sun	21-Mar-21	Sunday Worship led by the Revd Nigel Uden, with the Revd Paul Whittle A recording will be available on our Youtube channel from Saturday evening		Youtube
Sun	21-Mar-21	Church Meeting with Election of Elders	12:15pm	Zoom
Sun	21-Mar-21	Open Table Communion Service	7:00pm	Zoom
Tue	23-Mar-21	Lent Housegroup	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	24-Mar-21	Lectio Divina	8:30am	Zoom
Thu	25-Mar-21	Lent Housegroup	2:30pm	Zoom
Sun	28-Mar-21	Sunday Worship led by the Revd Nigel Uden A recording will be available on our Youtube channel from Saturday evening		Youtube
Wed	31-Mar-21	Lectio Divina	8:30am	Zoom
Thu	01-Apr-21	Maundy Thursday Communion led by the Revd David Tatem (see overleaf) A recorded service will be available on our Youtube channel.		Youtube
Fri	02-Apr-21	Free Churches' Joint Good Friday Worship	10:00am	To be confirmed
Sun	04-Apr-21	Easter Sunday Worship with Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	To be confirmed (see previous page)
Sun	04-Apr-21	Open Table Discussion	7:00pm	Zoom

## **MAUNDY THURSDAY – 1<sup>st</sup> April**

### **A note from David Tatem who conducts the service**

‘Maundy Thursday then and now’

Our Maundy Thursday celebration of the Last Supper this year will be recorded and available on You Tube. It will take the form of a guided meditation which will, naturally, also include the receiving of the bread and wine. There will also be other actions that you will be invited to engage in at certain stages, so that as many senses as possible are drawn into the meditation.

There are two advantages in using a recording. One is that it can be used at whatever point in the evening seems appropriate. The second is that a recording can be paused at certain points in order to be able to spend appropriate time on the things you will be invited to do. Doing any of these, of course, will be entirely voluntary.

More details and explanation will be available closer to the time and at the start of the video.

### **READINGS IN HOLY WEEK**

For the Services during Holy Week, and for people’s private reading, we offer here the readings from Mark for each day of that week

#### **Monday March 29**

Mark 11.12-19

#### **Tuesday March 30**

Mark 11.20-13.37

#### **Wednesday March 31**

Mark 14.1-11

#### **April 1                      Maundy Thursday**

TBA

(Mark 14.12-72)

#### **April 2                      Good Friday**

Mark 15.1-47

#### **Saturday April 3**

Mark 16.1

#### **April 4                      Easter Day**

Acts 10.34-43

# MARCH LECTONARY

## **March 7**            **Lent III**

Exodus 20.1-17  
Psalm 19  
I Corinthians 1.18-25  
John 2.13-22

## **March 14**            **Mothering Sunday**

Numbers 21.4-9  
Psalm 107.1-3 and 17-22  
Ephesians 2.1-10  
John 3.14-21

## **March 21**            **Passion Sunday**

Jeremiah 31-31-34  
Psalm 119.9-16  
Hebrews 5.5-10

## **March 28**            **Palm Sunday**

Readers are asked to check which passages have been selected

Psalm 118.1-2 and 19-29  
Mark 11.1-11  
plus  
Isaiah 50.4-9a  
Philippians 2.5-11  
Mark 14.1-15.47

Psalm 118.1-2 and 14-24  
I Corinthians 15-1-11  
Mark 16.1-8





MAGAZINE EDITOR:                      Sheila Porrer

ITEMS FOR MAGAZINE:

Please send items to both Sheila Porrer and Ann Auger  
([ann@downingplaceurc.org](mailto:ann@downingplaceurc.org))

WEB EDITOR:                              Ann Auger

Please send all items to be included in the April edition to both Sheila and Ann  
by the cut off date of **Wednesday 17 March 2021**

The April edition will be available during week ending **Friday 26 March.**