



**DOWNING PLACE  
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH  
CAMBRIDGE**

# **PLACE MATTERS**



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## FROM THE MINISTER

A recent visit to Blackpool coincided with the famous *Illuminations*. Having once lived just down the road in St Annes on the Sea, we were regular visitors for a few years. Jess enjoys happy memories of them every Autumn half term throughout her time at primary school. Two decades later, I appreciated them once more and narrated the entire 75-minute ride on the mobile phone to the Manse, sending photos on WhatsApp whenever the traffic jam allowed! I was particularly fascinated by the horse-drawn landaus, controversially re-imagined to be like the pumpkin carriages of Cinderella, this year's pantomime at the Winter



Gardens. I so remember many a bride arriving to be married in St Annes United Reformed Church, borne by one of the original landaus, at once both cheerful and dignified. How amused I was when my excited announcement that a wedding would be beginning in this quaint way was met with the Verger's crusty rejoinder: 'Oh, is it. Well, I hope they're bringing their own bucket!'

There is something important about Blackpool. My predecessor at St Annes URC, who was minister there for 22 years, used to make sure he went to Blackpool every week, 'because there you see people being made happy'. Well, that is something of the lights' purpose, too. As this year's official leaflet says, 'each twinkling glow represents joy, optimism, and a promise of good times ahead.' Given that there are 'more than a million magical bulbs', that's quite a lot of joy, optimism and hope. Moreover, for only the second time in the 140 years history of the lights, in 2021 they are glowing and flashing for two months more than usual. Typically ending when the October school break concludes, this year they are continuing until January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Now, we should not be naïve; that extension is essentially about increasing the tourism dividend the lights offer. But it also sustains through much of the winter this blaze of light, which can seem to be something like a static and lingering firework display.

That leaflet's description of the *Illuminations*, opens with the phrase 'From out of the darkness shine more than a million magical bulbs...' I dare to see in this ever so popular secular event something which points to the very heart of God's intention in Jesus. It's this: to ensure that from out of the darknesses which so dominate our world and our experience, an infinity of bulbs of God's wisdom and grace pierce the gloom and disperse the shadows. You might say that hay

filled manger and empty tomb are supreme amongst those lights. Actually, though, just as the *Illuminations* are a barrage of light comprising innumerable minuscule sources, so the world's experience of God is not only to do with a couple of definitive events in history, and much more about the cumulative effect of a million contemporary acts of mercy and charity, of campaigning for justice and re-cycling for preservation.

So it is that in this month, which will commence with the service to rededicate the Downing Place Church premises, we might discern how our life as Christians and as Christian communities can be illustrated by Blackpool's *Illuminations*. We exist - in what we proclaim and what we model - to shine with the light of God's saving grace towards all God has made, in order that 'people might be made happy' in the very best sense of that word, their joy, optimism and hope renewed. We can dress it up in theological language if we like, but it will not touch the lives of many on Blackpool's Promenade each Autumn in the way that inextinguishable kindness does. That's why our hospitality in the Hub, our openness to community groups throughout the building, our determination to be green, our sponsoring of the arts, not least music, and our capacity to welcome and embrace are so much more than mere good works. They are how the light of Jesus shines on in the darkness. May it do so long after 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

*Nigel Uden*



## PROFILE - MARGARET REYNOLDS

As COP 26 approaches, it is clear that “a rapid green energy transition will probably result in overall net *savings* of many trillions of dollars”\* if we can just convince our governments to act. I am honoured to be profiled this month, but humbled, not having achieved this political action myself, even with my architectural work and climate change activism.

I did start young: my first sustainability campaign was at age 17, when as a Girl Scout in the American Midwest, we led a two-week residential event for 25 young people, with speakers on world resources and pollution. I was “Camp Director,” interviewed on radio and television, and presenting the agenda each morning. However, within weeks, I had left Illinois (and Scouts) for good, to study at Radcliffe College, now merged with Harvard, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. My Girl Scout event did at least inspire my mother to pursue a low-energy, recycling life style for the rest of her life.

My family always loved the outdoors; we drove and camped across the continent each summer, 1300 miles from Illinois to New Hampshire. There we enjoyed swimming and adventures at the former summer camp my mother’s family ran from 1922 until 1958. We still go to Lake Winnepesaukee each summer.



*On Raycraft deck with David and our son Jim, 2011*

I was brought up a Unitarian, in a curious family - older, eccentric parents, 1000s of books, science experiments and junk to make artworks. Unitarians teach children to wonder - about life's purpose and about how scripture has been handed down to us. This was the 1960s, and we Unitarians were early Vietnam War protesters; our young people were Freedom Riders on buses in the South, and we worked hard to desegregate our town.

I have always felt that 'spiritual' people have a duty to understand the science shaping our world, to equip us to protect and celebrate our natural environment. Yet in this frightening climate crisis, when we depend on science for solutions, it is an unquantifiable leap of FAITH that has become essential: even non-believers need to trust that somehow we can be guided to let go of bad habits and embrace better solutions. Churches can help with this.

My parents were both university librarians, training us how to search out answers. My mother worked full-time at the Library of Congress, in Washington DC where we children were born. The snapshot shows us with Maria Lindsay who took care of us during the week, bringing her children along. We moved to Illinois in 1959.



My father was actually a retired diplomat who kept up a reading knowledge of 15 languages. Southern Illinois University grew astronomically in the 1960s, partly by taking on overseas contracts. Thus, in 1966 my family went for 2 years to Mali, in French West Africa, where Dad worked on a US Agency for International Development education project.



*Brother David, me and our mother Jean Ray, buying 'calabasses' in Kati market, Mali*

I learned French there, and in France at Collège Cévenol, a Huguenot boarding school, where I did BEPC exams (=O-Levels). Three months of family travel in Europe inspired a fascination for art (Rijksmuseum), urban design (Rome), and the dream of studying architecture (Alhambra). But we never forgot how, outside rich Western countries, people struggled simply to survive; like them, as my mother put it, we should all “live lightly on the Earth.”

Once I started at university, there followed about 25 years of turbulence as I was pulled in many directions and struggled get my bearings. First I had studied Fine Arts and French, writing about creative reuse of historic buildings in France, followed by a fellowship year in Paris. I met David at Harvard and we married in 1977. I had won a scholarship to train in architecture at MIT, but this course was interrupted by a family mental health crisis, and the surprise discovery that we would be living in England. Eventually, after study at King's College Cambridge, and criss-crossing the Atlantic to finish at MIT in 1981, I registered, becoming a



member of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Back in Cambridge I practised in local firms, until the birth of our son, Jim, in 1990. I worked from home, while Jim was little, and designed renovations to family buildings in New Hampshire in summer vacations.

Finally in 1999, I re-engaged with sustainability concerns, completing a Masters in Environmental Design, back at King's and the Department of Architecture. I returned to work, for Bland Brown & Cole, in 2000, including project-managing the York Street Medical Practice design for St Columba's. I was at last able to focus on low-energy upgrades of older buildings. After further years of specialist training, I currently design and specify low-carbon measures for people's house renovations; my clients tend to be fellow climate change activists.

Having been peripherally involved with the re-development of Emmanuel URC in 1991, I was keen to help envisage how we could unite Emmanuel and St Columba's. After a year on the Building Group, as we prepared to interview our shortlist of architects in November 2017, Nigel Uden said "Whenever possible, the most sustainable route should be pursued." I carefully minuted this suggestion.

Nigel also said, "Margaret, we hope you will show us how to do this." It was like the starting gun for a race. I put together a research report for Building Group on ways we could achieve energy savings on the St Columba site. With Building Group support, I lobbied to get our newly-appointed consultants to include these measures in the redevelopment contract tender documents 14 months later.



*Nigel Walter, Margaret Reynolds and Stuart Humphrey. Picture: Keith Heppell. (21695809)*

Fortunately, Church members voted in favour of the redevelopment at our Church Meeting on 2 June 2019, including eco-measures, despite the higher cost. DPURC also voted unanimously in favour of becoming an Eco Church last April.

And the rest, as they say, is history.



*with grandson Toby*

\*[ [www.inet.ox.ac.uk](http://www.inet.ox.ac.uk) - Oxford Institute for New Economic Thinking]

**Stop press** .... There will be a Day of Action for COP 26, organized by a coalition of groups (including Global Justice Now, whom we support through Commitment for Life) on Saturday 6th November.

People will gather at Great St. Mary's at 1 pm and walk to Parker's Piece for a Climate Fair. For more details go to [CambsCOP26 Coalition Global Day of Action \(actionnetwork.org\)](http://CambsCOP26Coalition.org). This is of course the day of our rededication service, but there is just time to join the action before the service if you wish. More details in the Weekly Notices.



A prayer from Christian Aid before COP 26

*Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God. - John 6:68-69*

Lord to whom else can we go,

As we look at our world, and what we have done?

Lord to whom else can we go,

When we see our climate in crisis?

Lord to whom else can we go,

When we feel powerless before decision makers?

Lord speak your words of life

Into negotiations and corridor conversations,

Lord speak your words of life

Into global choices and global decisions,

Lord speak your words of life

That climate justice may be done.

Lord to whom else can we go,

In the urgency of the hour?

Lord speak your words of life

Into our prayers and petitions.

Amen



# UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE UK 2021

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

## COP26: THE ROAD TO GLASGOW

The United Reformed Church (URC)'s Moderators are among representatives of religious communities across the UK who have signed the Glasgow Multi Faith Declaration ahead of the COP26 Summit.

In the joint statement, they committed to responding to the climate emergency through being “advocates for justice by calling on governments, businesses and others who exercise power and influence to put into effect the Paris agreement; to make the transition to a just and green economy a priority; and to commit to science-based targets that are aligned with a healthy, resilient, zero-emissions future.”

As for individual responsibility, these religious leaders pledged to reflect in prayer and worship for creation care, and to encourage their communities to do likewise. They also promised to make transformational change in their own lives and the lives of their communities.

### **What is COP26?**

COP26 is the 26<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the ‘Conference of Parties’ on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This is the international framework through which governments agree action to limit global emissions.

### **Where and When:**

COP26 is being held in Glasgow from the 31<sup>st</sup> October to 12<sup>th</sup> November 2021

### **Why is the Glasgow Summit so important?**

#### Global

COP26 is an important moment for global climate policy. Scientists have

warned that if climate change is not kept below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, the consequences are irreversible. At COP26, for the first time each nation will be asked to set a date for achieving net-zero carbon emissions. This is a more powerful objective than previous agreements, as net zero sets out a vision for carbon neutrality. Governments are also required to make explicit pledges about what they will achieve by 2030. Ahead of COP26, governments have been increasing their commitments. The COP is an opportunity for these to be stated and welcomed globally, and also to welcome the return of the USA to the Paris Agreement.

## UK

In April 2021, the UK Government made a commitment to cut carbon emissions 78% from 1991 levels by 2035. It extended these targets to include emissions from international aviation and shipping. At COP26, the UK government will have two roles:

As the UK holds the presidency of COP26, it will play a key role in shaping discussion and ambition at the meeting. It can use this role to secure global commitments and drive just and fair outcomes from the talks.

As a member of COP, the UK needs to commit to its own ambitious targets for net zero, and outline plans to achieve them.

## **What needs to happen at COP26?**

A successful COP26 meeting would be one where:

The UK government is held to account on its own commitments for climate action

The government uses the presidency to achieve progress on the international agenda for just and fair solutions

## **Our values: What are the churches saying?**

### Caring for God's Creation

A central calling of Christianity is to live in a way which enables both people and planet to flourish. As churches and as part of a wider body of faiths, we have a strong moral voice to bring.

### Just and Fair commitments

We need to recognise the injustices of the climate crisis, and work towards responses that are fair for everyone. Higher emitting countries must commit to ambitious targets for emissions reductions, as well as paying their fair share to

support rebuilding and resilience. Lower emitting countries already on the frontlines need to be able to shape decisions about their own future.

### Local, national, global

As Christians, we recognise that our neighbours spread across the world, from local to national to global. Our calling to love our neighbour means that we have a responsibility to seek partnership, listen well and prioritise the needs of others.

### Advocacy and Transformation

As a church, we can take this opportunity to reflect on our own complicity in the climate crisis, and the steps we can take towards change. At the same time, we can amplify our commitment to climate justice by calling the on the UK government to do the same.

## **Spotlight on: Policy Campaigns**

### UK Carbon reduction and net zero

There has so far been a gap between the pledges the UK government has made and the action they have taken to meet them. COP26 will be an opportunity to encourage the government to commit to concrete action to close the gaps and keep the UK on track for net zero.

### Stop funding the expansion of the fossil fuel industry

The UK subsidises fossil fuels by directly financing UK oil and gas projects, charging a discounted 5% VAT rate for gas and electricity usage, and freezing fuel duty in successive budgets. Faith groups will be asking the UK government to end fossil fuel subsidies in the UK.

### International climate finance

Countries on the frontline of the climate crisis often do not have sufficient funds to deal with loss and damage, resulting in an incredibly unequal and unjust impact. There has been little progress at successive meetings to get finance to address loss and damage on the agenda. Faith communities are calling for action to protect and support vulnerable people in the long term.

## **Useful Links for more information and actions we can do:**

Joint Public Issues Team: <https://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/cop26/>

Climate Sunday: <https://climatesunday.org/>

Christian Aid: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved-locally/scotland/preparing-cop26>

The Climate Coalition: <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/>

Make COP count: <https://makecopcount.org/>

Young Christian Climate Relay: <https://www.yccn.uk/>

Faiths 4 Climate Justice: <https://greenfaith.org/faiths4climatejustice/>

Eco Church: <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

COP26 Homepage: <https://ukcop26.org/>

*Material from the Faith in Action Forum – a committee reporting to the Mission Committee of the Eastern Synod of the URC.*

## URC PUBLICATIONS

The experience of living in the time of Covid has made many of us more computer literate. For this reason, and to remove the responsibility from our hardworking administrators, individuals should contact URC Church House Bookshop to order the Handbook (5.49), or Diary (6.99) or both plus postage: <https://urcshop.co.uk/> or 020 7916 8629.

Other interesting items may come to your notice too!

It is also time to thank Andy McKenzie for his commitment as distributor for "Reform", as he relinquishes the role. Since personal postal subscriptions were taken out by many people for 2021, it would seem sensible for individuals to renew as they wish. Again, if anyone wants to find out more, look at <https://urcshop.co.uk/reform-magazine/> for a sample copy.

For those who do not have access to the internet, the route to follow is to write or telephone

Reform Subscriptions  
c/o Esco Business Services  
Trinity House  
Sculpins Lane  
Wethersfield  
Braintree  
Essex  
CM7 4AY

Tel: 01371 851 886

The cost is £29.50 if ordered before the end of November.

*Margaret Thompson*

# MONTHLY CAUSE FOR NOVEMBER

## BLUE SMILE



Since the effects of the pandemic lockdown have begun to be widely shared there has been much discussion about an increase in mental health issues, but this is not new and not just down to the pandemic. There are many reasons in our society today for this increase and perhaps, most disturbingly, for its increase among children and young people. Today, one in every four children in a school class is likely to have a mental health problem, and half of all the lifetime mental health problems are likely to emerge by the age of fourteen.

**BLUE SMILE** is a local charity dedicated to transforming the mental health and life chances of children across Cambridgeshire. As their website puts it: “Sometimes Blue Smile is called upon to help a child at crisis point, but our aim is to intervene early because when a child is struggling with difficult emotions such as grief, anger, worry or shame, they are not free to play, grow and learn.” We also know that while any child can be affected by such life events children from deprived backgrounds are four times more likely to suffer mental health difficulties and have poorer attainment – leading to poorer life chances - than their more fortunate contemporaries.

One way in which Blue Smile works is through a “whole school” approach, offering support and training for teachers, head-teachers and groups of staff as well as one-to-one counselling and therapy for children aged three to 13. Their highly skilled therapists use arts-based therapies which engage the child in a non-threatening way, helping them to organise their feelings and process traumatic experiences. At present Blue Smile is also working more intensively with nine Partner Schools, mostly in disadvantaged areas, where a team of therapists and mentors goes into the school on one day each week, known as



the “Blue Smile Day”, to work with children but also with parents, carers and teachers on goals and strategies for helping the child with their emotions.

The other way in which Blue Smile works is through “Outreach Therapy” by which highly trained therapists work with individual children with complex needs in schools across Cambridgeshire. The range of problems they encounter includes (among others) bullying, distress and bereavement, relationship problems, phobias, depression or withdrawn behaviour, eating difficulties, panic attacks, behavioural problems, self-harm and suicidal thoughts. Blue Smile also offers training and mentoring support to teachers and carers, helping them to consider personal and professional issues affecting their work.

It is possible to donate to Blue Smile directly via their website

- <https://www.bluesmile.org.uk> – or by sending a cheque payable to “Blue Smile” to the Blue Smile office at 47-51 Norfolk Street, Cambridge, CB1 2LD.

Registered Charity No. 1139279

*Janet Bottoms*

## A REMINDER ABOUT CHARITIES

Do you have a charity you would like Downing Place to support?

The World Church and Public Issues group is inviting suggestions for charities Downing Place could support in 2022. We are looking for charities for the 2022 monthly causes, and also for charities to receive a donation from the York St. money we can distribute each year.

We would especially like to support charities which fall within our three priority zones – **sustainability, inclusivity and wellbeing.**

The closing date for proposals is **October 30th**. Please send your suggestions to Chris Wright or David Reynolds, any member of the World Church and Public Issues group, or Ann Auger who will pass them on.



# NEWS FROM THE SALLY MAY PRIMARY SCHOOL IN SIERRA LEONE, SUPPORTED BY THE DOWNING PLACE KNIT ONE GIVE ONE GROUP.



The school is developing fast, and now has 120 pupils. A new toilet block will soon be finished, and extra staff, including a caretaker, have been employed – and have to be paid! On her last visit the school's founder, Cambridge based healthcare support worker, Marion Koroma, set up a new parents' group.

These pictures are of a recent graduation ceremony –Marion likes to follow a University model, and last Christmas even organized a carol service based on the famous King's College service.

*Thanks to Anne Disney for this news and for passing on the photographs.*





## A PANDEMIC PRAYER FROM THE URC

Days go by; weeks pass; the months accumulate  
and the world seems to move on.  
People gather; families reconnect; social life is rekindled  
And we breathe a sigh of relief.  
The pandemic storm has been weathered ...

But for many the clouds do not lift;  
Their loved ones have died;  
Long Covid persists;  
jobs and careers are stunted.

Lord be there in the midst of us all.  
Be with us in our rejoicing  
at renewal and return to what we have treasured.  
And Lord also embrace those  
who continue to mourn and grieve;  
for whom things will never be the same.

Lord be with us all in the days in our life.

Amen.

# PENNY FLYNN, OUR NEW SYNOD REPRESENTATIVE, REPORTS ON TWO MEETINGS.

## **Eastern Synod meeting 9<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

This was the first meeting chaired by the new moderator, Revd Lythan Nevard. In her address, Lythan read of Jesus' ascension. She referred to a book, *'Who moved my cheese?'*, a business management tool to help think about change. She spoke about discipleship and mission, asking 'If my church was not there, would it be missed?' – by the community – and pondered how churches build a relationship with their community outside; all of which is relevant to DP as it continues to do just that. The word 'deployment' is never far away: in our Synod and Area we continue to be over-deployed, believe it or not; churches recently in vacancy won't be declared as such until the balance across the country is levelled up. Jesus will never leave us under-resourced though – after His ascension, the promised Holy Spirit came. Lythan said, "The future is going to look/be different from the past – but then it always has!"

There was a video from Karen Campbell on 'Being an Anti-Racist Church', an excellent thought-provoking presentation following on from the 'Legacies of Slavery' explorations in our house groups earlier in the year. Also, Jeremy Flack (Synod Green Advocate) spoke of opportunities and resources to discover how to make the Church more environmentally friendly, and we heard from a man with a passion for this at Bungay URC, resulting in their Eco Church Gold Award.

Nicola Grieves (Synod Children and Youth Development Officer, also Safeguarding Officer) spoke about safeguarding, who needs training and how often; also whose responsibility it is to have up-to-date policies in the church and the importance of their display so everyone knows about them.

Nicola also reported back from General Assembly, focussing on Israel/Palestine. Congregations are encouraged to actively engage with the issues and with Palestinian people, contacting MPs with concerns about settlement expansions and house demolitions; to refrain from buying Israeli products (who knew that might include using booking.com or Tripadvisor?), and to opt in to purchasing Palestinian products [some sources were given and I could pass these on].

Revd Catherine Ball reported from General Assembly too, mainly on nominations and appointments. Mission Council has been renamed 'Assembly

Executive’, to make its role clearer; the recent rise in the use of technology for worship has seen a new post advertised – ‘General Assembly minister for Digital Worship’; Revd Adrian Bulley has been appointed the Deputy General Secretary for Discipleship. But I was struck by the great number of people in our own Synod who have taken positions of responsibility across the denomination – hence the prayers in our Sunday morning service the day following the Synod meeting.

There were reports from the various Synod committees, as usual, and one realised ever more how much vital work is done by the dedicated few, the responsibilities taken on top of regular employment, ministerial or lay, and one is increasingly full of admiration for the commitment shown and talent available. Nevertheless, there are always vacancies to be filled, and church members are needed to step up to the challenges of the wider Church too.

### **Meet the Moderator**

In the same week, I also attended the Cambridge Area Partnership meeting, a first for me! It was billed as ‘Meet the Moderator’, and Revd Lythan Nevard gave us a fascinating insight into her journey of service through various objects in her box, starting with a pot of ginger powder, representing her year on the Ginger Group in the 1980s – when a team of 18-25 year olds served the Church, aiming to ‘ginger it up’ through work, worship, entertainment, youth and children’s activities and so on – through various leaving gifts made as she moved on, and their significance to her life and work.

News, sadly, of two churches with collapsed ceilings or more major parts of buildings was shared, and two Advocates on the team of four indicated a replacement was needed for them as they had served their time – and longer! We were introduced also to the two newest ministers in the area: Revd Sue Fender in the Link Pastorate, and Revd Phil Nevard at Sawston, Whittlesford and Castle Camps.

At both these gatherings, I was glad to be there in person with others, and to have the opportunity briefly to renew acquaintances – ministers who have passed through our doors in training, and lay preachers from training days or conferences – and to feel encouraged by the worship that took place as well.

## MODERATOR INDUCTION

The Revd Lythan Nevard was inducted as Moderator of the Eastern Synod at a service at Stowmarket URC on 4 September. Lythan said: “I’m really looking forward to meeting the people walking the way of Jesus across the Eastern Synod, hearing their stories and working together to respond to the challenges of life, Church and mission today.”



### LUNCHTIME CONCERTS - WEDNESDAYS AT 1PM

Free Lunchtime Concerts with a retiring collection for our monthly Special Cause. Booking is not necessary. Come and bring friends!

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 3 November  | Alice Bishop (soprano) & David Elwin (piano)                  |
| 10 November | Ian de Massini (piano & organ)                                |
| 17 November | Jessica Lawrence-Hares (mezzo-soprano) & Olga Elbourn (piano) |
| 24 November | Mifune Tsuji Trio   |

See more on our website: <https://downingplaceurc.org/lunchtime-concerts/>

# LIZ RUSSELL

## RECOLLECTIONS FROM CHERRY HINTON ROAD URC MEMBERS



*Liz in November 2019*

Liz Russell, who passed away earlier this autumn, was a committed member and Elder of the church who attended regularly and was also an active member of the choir and singing house group until her caring duties for her husband increased during the last few years, preventing her from attending to the same extent.

We remember Liz as a vital character who added colour to our lives. She was a one off, always friendly and supportive and always willing to step in when necessary, for example reading the Bible when no one else was available. We remember too her lovely singing voice so it was a pleasure to sit next to her. When we were unwell or in hospital she visited us with flowers, CDs, DVDs and books saying we

could keep them for as long as we liked. Whenever she had problems as she did with her balance she would say “this is ridiculous. I am a dancer.” And she was a dancer.

Liz was passionate about medieval dancing. She discovered a period of dance, early medieval from thirteenth to fourteenth century, which she thought was particularly suited to church settings. She and her dancing group, the Capriol dancers, danced at Cherry Hinton Road URC in a concert called “Something Different” in 1995 and again in 2003 as a contribution to the church’s Centenary “Hay Day”. She also performed for the Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship both in 2011 and 2019. The group performed several times in Emmanuel, giving a talk and demonstration for the “After Eight” groups from Emmanuel and St Columba’s in 2012 and contributing to Emmanuel’s

Advent Miscellany Evening in 2014. Liz also visited Rainbows (a group of young children attached to the Girl Guiding movement which she loved) twice a year and involved them in a line dance called the Farandole, which is an early form of medieval dancing and which consists of following the leader in a dance.



*Dancing at St Catherine's College, Cambridge 1998. Liz is third from the left.*

We will miss her so much as she was a much valued member of our small remaining Cherry Hinton Road URC Sunday congregation community. We will always have a memory of Liz, seeing her dressed in a wonderful medieval costume with a head dress, dancing beautifully with her group to medieval music. She saw a strong connection between dance and Church life, believing that the medieval form of dance was very inclusive, creating a sense of community. Even more significantly, she believed that medieval dance was a form of dancing which could be seen as a human extension of singing for the Lord. May her love of dancing, which was her way of expressing her faith, be always remembered and be an inspiration for others whom she encountered during her life.



## Everyone Sang by Siegfried Sassoon

Everyone suddenly burst out singing;  
And I was filled with such delight  
As prisoned birds must find in freedom  
winging wildly across the white  
orchards and dark green fields; on; on ; out of sight.  
Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted  
and beauty came like the setting sun.  
My heart was shaken with tears, and horror  
Drifted away.....O but everyone  
was a bird and the song was wordless; the singing  
will never be done.

### THE CHOIR AND INSTRUMENTAL GROUP

The choir have been enjoying meeting for the past few weeks at 10am. Mark and Ian would love to welcome some new members in all voice parts. It's clear that there are many in the congregation who like singing and it's not essential to read music to be in the choir. We learn a wide variety of music, some of it written especially for us, but much is familiar and well known, with a few unknown gems too.

The instrumental group has just started playing together again. We play the hymns and usually another piece before or during the service, which is not too difficult. Music can be sent out in advance. We meet at 10am on the 3rd Sunday of the month as a rule and it would be really good to have a few more to join our number.

Please speak to Mark or Ian about the choir, or Pippa about the instrumental group.

*Pippa Jones*



## CAROL SERVICE PARTICULARLY FOR THOSE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CARERS

**Friday December 10th at 10.30am**

Everyone is, of course, welcome to this Carol Service. This year the Service will be held in Downing Place Church and will also be live streamed to our YouTube channel.

It will last about 40 mins and consist of a few well-known carols and Christmas readings, woven skillfully together by Nigel. We will sit round tables, so that tea, coffee and mince pies can easily be served in the Sanctuary after the service.

We are sending information about the service to city centre churches, local care homes, and other organisations catering for those with dementia. As well as watching the livestream, people can watch it on YouTube later.

Please come along, and invite your friends and neighbours.

*Jenny Jacobsberg*  
*Convenor of the Pastoral Care Group*



## MEDITATION GROUP

**Everyone welcome, whatever your faith, whatever your tradition.**

Do not try to save  
the whole world  
or do anything grandiose.  
Instead, create  
a clearing  
in the dense forest  
of your life  
and wait there  
patiently,  
until the song  
that is your life  
falls into your own cupped hands  
and you recognize and greet it.  
Only then will you know  
how to give yourself  
to this world  
so worthy of rescue.



*Clearing* by Martha Postlewaite

Please join us for a quiet time in the chapel at Downing Place URC on alternate Fridays from 5:30 to c.6:15pm. We have short readings from a variety of sources, then about 20 minutes of silence; we share reflections and prayers.

Meditation is an ancient form of prayer dating back to the Desert Fathers of the 4th century. These holy men developed practices which help us clear away our pre-occupations, and let go of our nervous grip on people and situations. We sit in silence and allow God to work in our very depths.

Contact Jenny and Robin Turner

## MEETING DEMENTIA WITH PASTORAL AND SPIRITUAL CARE



Westminster College and the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion brings you 'Not Forgotten: Meeting Dementia with Pastoral and Spiritual Care' a one-day online workshop on 6 November from 9.45am-3.30pm.

Speakers include Julia Burton-Jones, Anna Chaplaincy lead for the Dioceses of Rochester and Canterbury, and Prof Rodger Charlton, GP principal and senior partner in Hampton-in-Arden Surgery who is also Professor of Undergraduate Primary Care Education at Leicester Medical School. The webinar costs £40 (£25 for students). Find more information and book [here](#).

# CAMBRIDGE FESTIVAL OF THE VOICE



2-4 November, 2021

Downing Place United Reformed Church, CB2 3EL



Tuesday 2 November, 7:30 pm  
Ensemble Pro Victoria, *Fayrfax Quincentenary*

Wednesday 3 November, 7:30 pm  
The Marian Consort, *The Constant Heart*

Thursday 4 November, 7:30 pm  
Echo, *The Polish Court*. Conductor: Sarah Latto



The Williams  
Church Music Trust

[www.CambridgeEarlyMusic.org](http://www.CambridgeEarlyMusic.org)

With generous support from Roger Mayhew

Tickets  
£25

# GHASTLY CHURCHYARDS AND BRAVE MEN

An illustrated Zoom talk

7.30pm, Thursday 18 November 2021

Dr Virginia Warren, Dip Garden History from  
the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh  
Cambridgeshire Gardens Trust member



This online talk will be about the setting up of two unconsecrated, Nonconformist cemeteries in East Anglia in the first half of the 19th century.

At this time, death - like life - was more straightforward if you were well off, rural and a member of the Church of England. But if you were Nonconformist, the church and state placed constraints on your way of life and how and where you were buried.

Most urban churchyards were grossly overcrowded and mismanaged. If you were condemned by penury to live downwind of one and obliged to use its parish pump, even Baldrick wouldn't swop places with you. The water from one Norwich parish pump was described as "almost pure essence of churchyard".

Step in the determined and philanthropic Unitarian minister Thomas Drummond, and the convention-defying Bishop of Norwich, Henry Bathurst. These men saw a need to allow Nonconformists to be buried using their own services, in their own cemeteries, and for these places to be gardens, not horror shows.

The 1821 unconsecrated Rosary Cemetery in Norwich is testament to their forward-thinking approach, and an early example of a garden cemetery compatible with Sir Christopher Wren's widely disregarded suggestions of a century before.



*The tomb of Thomas and Ann Drummond in the Rosary Cemetery, Norwich*

Forward two decades and shift to Cambridge, and cross paths with the phenomenal JC Loudon. Brought up Presbyterian in a Scottish tenant farming family, he was a social reformer who gave practical expression to his philosophical and political views through garden and landscape design and practice, architecture and education.

As well as publishing prodigiously on these topics, this remarkable man made a fortune and lost it, married a science fiction writer, and coped with severe ill health and an amputation.

When Cambridge Nonconformists wanted their own cemetery, it was apt that they should commission him - and utterly typical that he should make Histon Road Cemetery a centrepiece exemplar of his 1843 book *On the Laying Out, Planting, and Managing of Cemeteries and on the Improvement of Churchyards*.

Members of Cambridgeshire and Norfolk Gardens Trusts, the Nonconformist congregations of Norwich and Cambridge, and Friends of the two cemeteries are invited to attend.

**Please email [gin-warren@ntlworld.com](mailto:gin-warren@ntlworld.com) and ask to receive the Zoom link. It will be sent during the week starting 15 November.**

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## FLOWERS AT DOWNING PLACE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

For many years, members of St Columba's and Emmanuel, (and Downing Place since 2018), have provided flowers for the church, a form of ministry, and something very much appreciated by those who receive them later at times of illness, bereavement or to mark a special birthday.

The rota, organised by Kathleen McBrearty, is in need of some new recruits. Might you consider offering to take a Sunday (or two)?

I want to emphasise that only ONE bunch of flowers for display is sought and NO special skills in arranging the flowers are assumed or required. Elaine is also on hand to advise about access to the church premises.

Please get in touch with me in the first instance: Margaret Thompson, by phone, email or after worship any Sunday.





## **Cambridge Churches Homeless Project – Volunteers needed**

CCHP have decided this year to offer a slightly different kind of support to rough sleepers in Cambridge. They write:

‘Cambridge Churches Homeless Project will be working in partnership with 'It Takes A City' (ITAC), 'Cambridge City Council' (CCC) and several other local charities throughout the winter of 2021/2022 to provide a temporary homeless project known as 'Crossways'. Crossways is a 20-bed property, located at Crossways, 176 Chesterton Road, CB4 1HZ, which is being rented by ITAC and CCC to house some of the homeless through the winter. Guests will be referred to the property by CCC who will be guided by relevant agencies. Whilst living at the property guests will receive any support they require from partnership organisations, including assistance to find more permanent accommodation. The project will be a 24-hour service where guests are able to stay at the property all day and a hot evening meal is provided each night.

Our volunteers have always been essential to the running of our wonderful community meals each night, and in providing companionship and comfort to our Guests. It has been a true blessing for all those involved to receive a delicious hot meal and a time of fellowship and community around the dinner table. CCHP has therefore been asked to host all the evening meals at Crossways and provide volunteers to help run the project. This is a very exciting opportunity for us and after much discussion and prayer we have decided that this is the option we will be taking this winter rather than a winter shelter within our churches.’

As well as preparing the evening meal, there will be a need for people to volunteer during the day to prepare simple lunches or carry out other tasks.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Heather Simmons  
[heather@cchp.org.uk](mailto:heather@cchp.org.uk)

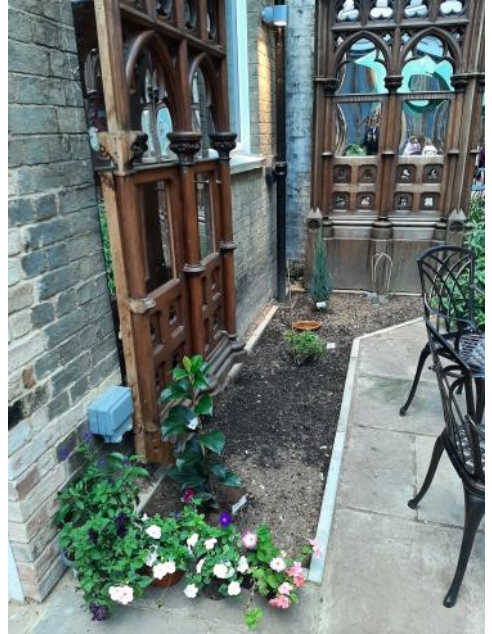
for more information, or fill in the on-line registration form at

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScEb-8dxEHNV01f4o240UfnVnw8dnwVXEYWBhPVADm9EqbPQw/viewform>



# COURTYARD GARDEN

Our Courtyard Garden project has moved on during October. Mirrors and screens are now in place; and some of the plants kindly donated by many of you have been installed. If you don't see 'your' plant here yet; there are several on back-order from suppliers. Thanks to everyone who has weeded, planted and tended over the past weeks and months!





Westminster College is due to undergo major repairs, and at considerable cost. During the period between the closure of Emmanuel United Reformed Church, at the beginning of Lockdown 1 in March 2020, and the opening of Downing Place Church in May 2021, Westminster College very kindly allowed appointed ministers, preachers, musicians, readers, and recording-engineers of Downing Place Church to make weekly recorded services, week in, week out, throughout the whole 15-month period, which were then relayed not only to the membership of Downing Place Church but to the whole world, via YouTube. Now is our chance to repay Westminster College's unstinting hospitality to us by putting on a concert, in our beautiful new church, to help raise money for Westminster's extensive programme of repairs. The concert will last an hour, and be very child-friendly, and will feature many of the most memorable highlights from those weekly broadcasts, played by the very musicians who took part in that historic series of recordings: **Revd Nigel Uden** (Piano, & Digital Keyboard), **Mark Dawes** (Keyboards, Organ, Glockenspiel, Voice, Guitar, and Front Desk call-bell no. 1), **Ian de Massini** (Keyboards, Accordion, Tube Melodica, and Front Desk call-bell no. 2), **Pippa Jones** (Cello), **Jane Bower** (Voice, Guitar, and Narrator), **Peter Sarkies** (Oboe), and **Cambridge Voices** (choral music). Admission will be free, followed by a voluntary retiring collection as you leave the church. And plans are afoot to put on a little reception afterwards!

## MEMBERS PREACHING ELSEWHERE

7 November	Chris Baker Liz Caswell David Cornick Janet Tollington	Melbourn Fowlmere Bury St Edmunds Buntingford
14 November	Chris Baker Janet Bottoms Liz Caswell Penny Flynn Deborah McVey Nigel Uden	Ely Methodist Haverhill Burwell Fowlmere URC Sawston Fulbourn village Remembrance Service (am) & Trinity Hall Remembrance Service (pm)
21 November	Penny Flynn Simone Maghenzani Janet Tollington	Sawston Free Church Open Table (DPURC) Bassingbourn
28 November	Penny Flynn Janet Tollington	Water Lane, Bishop's Stortford Burwell



## DIARY

Services are conducted by the Minister, except where shown

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sun	31-Oct-21	Sunday Worship	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Mon	01-Nov-21	Autumn Housegroup	2:30pm	The Hub
Mon	01-Nov-21	Officers' Meeting	4:00pm	Downing Place URC
Tue	02-Nov-21	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	02-Nov-21	Autumn Housegroup	7:30pm	Zoom
Tue	02-Nov-21	Cambridge Early Music presents Cambridge Festival of the Voice (see p.29)	7:30pm	Downing Place URC
Tue	02-Nov-21	Evangelism and Service Group	7:30pm	Therapy Centre
Wed	03-Nov-21	Lunchtime Concert - Alice Bishop (soprano) & David Elwin (piano)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Wed	03-Nov-21	Cambridge Early Music presents Cambridge Festival of the Voice (see p.29)	7:30pm	Downing Place URC
Thu	04-Nov-21	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Thu	04-Nov-21	Cambridge Early Music presents Cambridge Festival of the Voice (see p.29)	7:30pm	Downing Place URC
Thu	04-Nov-21	World Church and Public Issues Group Meeting	7:30pm	Zoom
Sat	06-Nov-21	Dedication Weekend Service	2.30pm	Downing Place URC
Sun	07-Nov-21	Sunday Worship with Communion	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Sun	07-Nov-21	Open Table Social	7.00pm	The Hub
Mon	08-Nov-21	Autumn Housegroup	2:30pm	The Hub

Tue	09-Nov-21	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	09-Nov-21	Autumn Housegroup	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	10-Nov-21	Lunchtime Concert - Ian de Massini (piano & organ)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Thu	11-Nov-21	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Thu	11-Nov-21	Elders' Meeting	7:30pm	Zoom
Fri	12-Nov-21	Meditation Group	5:30pm	St Columba's Chapel
Sun	14-Nov-21	Sunday Worship led by Revd David Tatem	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Mon	15-Nov-21	Autumn Housegroup	2:30pm	The Hub
Tue	16-Nov-21	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	16-Nov-21	Autumn Housegroup	7:30pm	Zoom
Tue	16-Nov-21	Worship, Discipleship and Spirituality Group Meeting	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	17-Nov-21	Lunchtime Concert - Jessica Lawrence -Hares (mezzo-soprano) & Olga	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Thu	18-Nov-21	Cambridge Early Music: The Brook Street Band	7.30pm	Church
Thu	18-Nov-21	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Sat	20-Nov-21	Fundraising Concert for Westminster College (see p.34)	4.00pm	Downing Place URC
Sun	21-Nov-21	Sunday Worship	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Sun	21-Nov-21	Church Meeting	12:15pm	Gibson Hall
Sun	21-Nov-21	Open Table Communion Service	7:00pm	Downing Place URC
Mon	22-Nov-21	Autumn Housegroup	2:30pm	The Hub

Tue	23-Nov-21	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	23-Nov-21	Autumn Housegroup	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	24-Nov-21	Lunchtime Concert - Mifune Tsuji Trio	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Thu	25-Nov-21	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Fri	26-Nov-21	Meditation Group	5:30pm	St Columba's Chapel
Sat	27-Nov-21	Elders Training Day	9:30am	Gibson Hall
Sun	28-Nov-21	Advent Sunday Worship	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Tue	30-Nov-21	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Wed	01-Dec-21	Lunchtime Concert - Fumi Otsuki (violin) & Sarah Kershaw (piano)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Thu	02-Dec-21	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Sun	05-Dec-21	Sunday Worship with Communion	11:00am	Downing Place URC

## LECTIONARY

*The following are the readings from the Revised Common Lectionary for each Sunday.  
If there are to be varied on any occasion, the reader will be notified in advance.*

### OCTOBER

**31** A prayerful occasion to prepare for the COP 26 conference  
Job 12.1-10; Matthew 7.24-27

(The Lectionary readings are:  
Deuteronomy 6.1-9; Psalm 119.1-8; Hebrews 9.11-14; Mark 12.28-34)

### NOVEMBER

**6** 2.30pm Service of Rededication of the premises  
Preacher – The Revd Dr John Bradbury, General Secretary of  
the URC  
Readings – TBA

7 11.00am Holy Communion to celebrate the rededication of the premises  
Preacher, The Revd Clare Downing, Moderator of the URC's General Assembly  
Lamentations 3:21 to 25, Ephesians 3:14 to 4:6

(The Lectionary readings are:

I Kings 17.8-16; Psalm 146; Hebrews 9.24-28; Mark 12.38-44)

14 Remembrance Sunday  
Preacher, The Revd David Tatem

Daniel 12.1-3; Psalm 16; Hebrews 10.11-14, (15-18), 19-25; Mark 13.1-8

21  
Daniel 7.9-10, 13-14; Psalm 93; Revelation 1.4b-8; John 18.33-37

28 Advent Sunday  
Jeremiah 33.14-16; Psalm 25.1-10; I Thessalonians 3.9-13; Luke 21.25-36

## **DECEMBER**

5 Advent II  
Malachi 3.1-4; Cantic: Luke 1.68-79, *Benedictus*; Philippians 1.3-11; Luke 3.1-6





*Photograph by Elaine Barker*

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 December/January edition to both Sheila and Ann by the cut off date of **Wednesday 17 November**

The December/January edition will be available from **Sunday 28 November.**