

HEATH STREET

BAPTIST CHURCH

Feb - Mar 2019





The chapel in the front room of the house where prayer happens through the day.

(Calais refugee support work supported by Heath Street Baptist Church and New End School)



Art refuge doing art therapy in the house,

(Calais refugee support work supported by Heath Street Baptist Church
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TREASURER'S NOTE

The lovely performance at Heath Street chapel on 19 December by the New London Children's Choir, including Britten's Ceremony of Carols, was very well-attended and all the proceeds from ticket sales, refreshments and donations, amounting to 655 will be given to Panzi Hospital in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (through its charitable foundation). The hospital functions as a general hospital for the local population (the only one in a very large geographic area), but we at Heath Street have got to know it because of its specialised support for survivors of sexual violence and women suffering from complex gynaecological conditions such as obstetric fistula.

At just about the same time as our concert was taking place, the hospital's founder, Dr Denis Mukwege, was receiving his Nobel Peace Prize, well-deserved recognition for the extraordinary work achieved through Panzi.

Our fundraising for Panzi in 2017 raised 500 so we are pleased to be able to send more this year and thank all those involved in the Children's Choir for their beautiful and moving singing.

Huge thanks too, to the half dozen

people who have clubbed together to buy an electronic keyboard for a young member of the congregation who, since arriving in the UK, has been unable to keep up his piano practice.

I am putting together the annual accounts for 2018, in time, I hope for our AGM in March. Given that we are not very numerous in terms of people taking responsibility for running the building, it is astonishing how much we manage to achieve. This year saw the completion of our vestibule project which undoubtedly makes all visitors feel more welcome as they step in to the building, the new soft play area to keep babies and toddlers discreetly amused during services, the purchase of an excellent new grand piano for the church, and the start of a commitment to "eco-church", i.e. finding ways to acting out our environmental responsibility in the way we run the building. Anyone particularly interested in the latter should ask Ewan or me for a copy of the first Eco-Audit we have commissioned and see how to help with this. Many other bits of work on the building have made improvements to safety, given us better space for storage and completed essential repairs - not very visible but all very useful.

With love and best wishes,
Gaynor



COMMUNITY REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

A quick update on the Community Sponsorship program. I'm sure most readers know that Churches Together in Hampstead have worked to bring a family of Syrian refugees to safety here in London. Rahaf, her husband Monzer, and their children Aseel (4) and Hamed (2) are all now being supported by our community. I have gone round to their flat many times now, mainly to eat their delicious food, but nominally to help them practice English. We spend a lot of time translating idioms on Google and knitting our eyebrows in confusion. And laughing, the whole family being the most hilarious crew you could hope to meet. Rahaf particularly has a cutting wit that often has me rolling on the floor; and this with level 1 English! But though mirth is never far away, this is still a hard time of adjustment for the family. They sorely miss their relatives, and so much else about their homeland. Please pray for them to learn our language quickly, to feel safe and supported, and to flourish in our society.

Wilf Merttens

ADVENT STORYTELLING - THE KING IN THE WILDERNESS

Well, this year's Advent Storytelling sessions were swell! And hopefully not just because of the hot chocolate. The idea is that I tell Bible stories, specifically types and antitypes.

A 'type' is a prefiguring of a New Testament story in the Old, with the 'antitype' being the New Testament bit. For instance, I told 'the slaughter of the innocents', both the hideous Hebrew-baby-killing Pharaoh iteration and the Herod-trying-to-eliminate-baby-Jesus-sequel.

My favourite of the series is currently the eponymous 'King in the Wilderness'. This is the story of how an eccentric chap named Abram travelled out of his native Assyria, having been told by a mysterious, invisible, living God that he will found a new nation. Abram and his long-suffering wife Sarah quickly find out that founding a new nation is very difficult and annoying. They have to: a) face starvation, b) be immigrant workers in wealthy Egypt, and, c) deal with the relentless squabbles over resources with which we humans fill our days. At one point, Abram's wayward nephew Lot gets kidnapped by some gangsterish kings. Luckily, Abram is able to rescue Lot, and on his way home he meets a stranger in the wilderness who claims to be a king. This 'King of nowhere' (whose name, 'Melchizedek', means something like 'My King Is Righteousness') is not like the warlords that Abram has just tangled with. The two sit down to share some provisions

and when Melchizedek prays, Abram knows that he is worshiping the very same living God that he and Sarah have followed into the desert.

In the Christian imagination, Melchizedek is a 'type' of Christ: in human terms, weak, having no force of arms or political sway, and yet a true Lord who serves like a priest instead of ruling like a victor.

Maybe it's true that for all their rich spiritual meanings these stories don't have a particularly 'Christmassy' feel. Since I can't avoid the accusation, I'll wear it proudly! While I fervently love Christmassyness, the idea of the advent storytelling sessions was to root around in the tinsel and polystyrene shrimps, and to pluck out something strange and spiky biblicality, throws into relief what the birth of Jesus means to those of us who believe in him.

Wilf Merttens



Sleeping in the woods

(Calais refugee support work supported by Heath Street Baptist Church
and New End School)

A HOUSE OF HOPE IN CALAIS

For the last three years in an unassuming suburban street in Calais a house has offered hope to countless refugees. On a daily basis a couple of dozen live and sleep there, several dozen more have their laundry done and find a few hours respite from the tedium of being on the street. Lots of people eat good food in convivial surroundings every evening and every other week those that want to engage in art therapy with a team from the UK.

It's known as 'the safe house' by the various groups that work on the streets of Calais offering support to the several hundred exiles on the city's streets. To us it is the Maria Skobtsova House, a community run roughly on the lines of the Catholic Worker model. It began three years as the brainchild of a Belgian Benedictine monk who came to the jungle in Calais wanting to establish a prayerful presence among the displaced people living in the makeshift camp.

He and I met in the caravan of one of the camp's community leaders in December 2015. By February he had acquired the house from Secours Catholique and recruited me to be one of his management group. Along with a formidably energetic catholic laywoman, we three set about establishing a light touch association that could oversee the affairs of the

house.

The house is a community of mainly Eritrean refugees aged between 14 and 25 or so with a group of European volunteers to handle the day to day running of things - ensuring there's food to cook, that the washers and dryers are in good working order, overseeing the discipline of prayer and quiet, chores and games that make up the daily life of the house.

A former resident now in London, says of the house, 'Your home is not where you come from but where you feel safe; I feel safe here.' A volunteer tells the story of the day a resident wrote in Tigrinya Matt 11:28 ("Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."), applying those words to the house. 'I think this was very important for him,' she says, 'because he wrote it out again and put it back up when we had a periodic clean up of the walls!' It is amazing to think of the house as the outworking of this saying of Jesus, suggestive of how scripture is fulfilled through the people who hear it, and act on it, often when they are not consciously trying! To see the house as the embodiment of Jesus suggests something deeply profound has been created in this ordinary Calais semi.

The list of things this project needs is probably endless. Top of it is a group of people across Europe who will commit to pray for its work. Then we need food, clothing of various types for our boys to wear - especially underwear and socks, and shoes that will endure the life of endless walking in a European winter.

We really appreciate the help you have already given us on a couple of occasions and hope that the partnership might continue as long as the house is needed.

Simon Jones, pastor Bromley Baptist Church



JANUARY 27TH – FEBRUARY 2ND

GENESIS 14.17-20

- 27th Cole Harper
28th Beauty Kunene
29th Eleanor Patterson
30th Laila Ghasempour
31st Laura Somers
(Feb) 1st Joachim King
2nd Mysie Johnson

FEBRUARY 3RD – 9TH

ISAIAH 40.21-31

- 3rd Evelyn Baker
4th Theresa Thom
5th Christina Cairns
6th Gaynor Humphreys
7th Gabrielle Falardeau
8th Robin Thorne
9th Andrea MacEachan ’

FEBRUARY 10TH – 16TH

2 KINGS 5.1-14

- 10th John Baker
11th Lydia Baker
12th Heini King
13th Ewan King
14th Wilf Mertens
15th Josh Somers
16th Ali Ghasempour



FEBRUARY 17TH – 23RD

ISAIAH 43.18-25

- 17th Rhona MacEachan
- 18th Anselm King
- 19th Jen Finamore
- 20th Nomsa Ndebele
- 21st Gaynor Humphreys
- 22nd Isabel Somers

FEBRUARY 24TH – MARCH 2ND

PROVERBS 8.1, 22-31

- 24th Hildegard Williams
- 25th Leo Patterson
- 26th Annie Fang
- 27th Birgit Leuppert
- 28th Thaddeus King
- (Mar) 1st Nesa Thorne
- 2nd Elia Ghasempour

MARCH 3RD – 9TH

2 KINGS 2.1-12

- 3rd Thomas Falardeau
- 4th Michael Bloxham
- 5th Tom Somers
- 6th Selena Barrera
- 7th Sarah Harper
- 8th Susan Le Quesne
- 9th Frida King



Lunchtime Recitals (Tuesdays, 1pm)

Tuesday 19th February

Ensemble Molière - Air de Versailles

Let Ensemble Molière transport you to Versailles with music by composers who held positions at the court of Louis XIV and XV.

Alice Earll - Violin

Kate Conway - Viola da Gamba

Satoko Doi-Luck - Harpsichord

Tuesday 26th February

Alexander Metalfe - Piano

We journey back to 1820s Vienna as Alexander takes us through a selection of Schubert Impromptus, as well as his most demanding technical challenge, the Wanderer Fantasy.

Sunday 10th March - Royal Baroque 6pm - £10

Royal Baroque: Bach&Buxtehude

Join us for this Easter inspired programme featuring works by Bach and Buxtehude playing by the highly acclaimed Royal Baroque, an ensemble made up of multi-instrumentalists who bring courtly influences from all over Europe.



Bach&Buxtehude!

PROGRAMME:

Dietrich Buxtehude: Trio sonata op. 1 D minor (viol, violin, organ)

Johann Sebastian Bach BWV 232 (B minor Mass): Agnus Dei

J. S. Bach BWV 244 Matthew Passion: Erbarme Dich

Dietrich Buxtehude: Passacaglia in D (organ solo)

**Johann Sebastian Bach BWV 248 (Christmas Oratorio):
SchlieÙe, mein Herze, dies selige Wunder**

Buxtehude: Trio Sonata op. 1 A minor (violin, violin, organ)

Buxtehude: Jubilate Domino (alto, viol, organ)

“...rarely do you come across a chamber ensemble so well-coordinated.”

Graham Vickers - The Artsdesk

“Royal Baroque’s playing is committed, knowing, seemingly effortless and brimming with genuine affection, both for the repertoire and each other’s musicianship.”

Adam Fergler



The guys eating in the house

(Calais refugee support work supported by Heath Street Baptist Church
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WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Full information about all our weekly activities is available on our church website

Sundays	11am-12 noon 7.30-9.30pm	Divine Worship (including Sunday Club for children) Contact Club
Mondays	7pm 8pm	Swing Patrol (Swing dancing - beginners class) Swing Patrol: improvers class (level 1.5)
Tuesdays	10-11am 1-2pm	Oldtime Nursery Lunchtime recital
2nd Tuesdays	7:30-9:30pm	Sacred Harp hymn singing
Wednesdays	4.30 pm	Storymakers Club
Thursdays	10.30am 7.30-9pm	Oldtime Nursery Heath Street Choir

For requests regarding church membership, Baptism or opportunities for Christian ministry in the church, please contact the minister.

For questions regarding space use and room hire, please contact the minister.

Copy for the next newsletter should reach Ewan King (ewan_king@mac.com) not later than Wednesday 20th February

HEATH STREET BAPTIST



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