

HEATH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH



NEWSLETTER

Issue # 1031

April - May 2016

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Contact



MENDELSSOHN ELIJAH

A service of lessons & song

Heath Street Choir

Pentecost Sunday

May 15th 2016

7pm, Heath Street Baptist Church

84 Heath St, Hampstead,

London NW3 1DN



MINISTER'S LETTER

Baptist church polity and the concept of the church #2

In the previous edition of our newsletter I introduced a discussion of the concepts of congregation and church in what seemed to me the most obvious way: by raising the question of belonging. It's hard not to feel that this is the natural place to start. How can we talk about a congregation without determining who's in and who's out, who counts and who doesn't? However, as I argued then, while we can't help wondering about these things, they're really not our business to know, much less to decide.

Questions of belonging always make us irritable. Whether it's Believer's Baptism, Church Membership or Holy Communion, whether it's the affirmation of certain theological tenets, or attendance at public worship, we're always tempted to take the central pil-

lars of our church life and make them into bars to keep out the unworthy (or possibly to stop the worthy getting away!). However, if we insist on using the pillars to bar the door, it will only be a matter of time before the building falls down.

And even the metaphor of pillars is perhaps rather too static to convey the significance of the key structural elements of congregational life. The creative action of our God cannot be reduced to a single moment, an event happening at some circumscribable point in an ever more distant past. In God, creation is eternal. And the power with which God sustains the universe in being has nothing neutral or matter-of-fact about it; much less is it a matter of God bloody-mindedly keeping the world in being - "I've started so I'll finish!". On the contrary, every moment of our life is a moment in which creation is freshly sustained in being by the power of God's joyful affirmation - behold it was [and still is!] very good. The same goes for what we do as God's people. Everything that is

truly of God partakes of a creativity which is inexhaustible, which can never be used merely to provide us with the data we need to satisfy our curiosity about who belongs and who doesn't.

In that spirit, I'd like to take a look at the words we have at our disposal to talk about our shared life, both the more specialised terms that we keep on the higher shelves of the theological arsenal, and the common or garden words we use everyday purposes, and consider what untapped resources they have in them for deepening our understanding of ourselves as a Christian community. And again, I'm going to try to focus not on the church universal, but on the nitty-gritty of the local unit, by whatever name it goes. Normal English people tend to plump for 'church' or 'congregation', while the New Testament almost always gives us 'ἐκκλησία', from which Greek word we get our English terms 'ecclesiastical', and 'ecclesial'. (Admittedly the latter isn't the sort of word you often hear down the pub, but it does

make into the Scrabble dictionary!).

Church

However much preachers may inveigh to the contrary the church is a building. Not only is the church a building because the Bible says so (1 Cor. 3.9), but also because our English word church derives from a word for a building. The **κυριακή**, meaning 'of, belonging or pertaining to the Lord', was an old Greek term for a chapel, and developed by extension to cover the people who gathered in the church. The word "Lord" here gives us plenty of food for thought. In Old and New testaments alike the word Lord is a paradoxical combination of the powerful and the intimate. The word church invites us to be the people not of a nebulous Deity, or a distant, impassive Supreme Being, but to be under the command of a Lord whose love is close and personal.

Congregation

Our word congregation comes not from Greek but from Latin - specifically from grex, meaning flock or herd. Controversially, it's a word that might seem to imply that we are a species apart, sheep in contradistinction to goats. But it's also a word suited to keeping us humble - being lambs in contradistinction to lions. It's also a word that stresses gathering, with that little prefix 'con-' (Latin for 'with'). We can't 'just be' a flock, we have to make sure we're 'flocking together'. The ever-present sheep-imagery in the Bible is remarkably consistent, and more than a little counter-factual. The picture of the flock that emerges is again and again one of intimacy: the flock is mutually dependent, the lost sheep, left alone, is vulnerable in the falling evening. For Jesus, it is not (as in real life) an act of proprietorship when it is borne homeward in the shepherd's bosom, back to the huddled warmth of shared presence: it is an act of love to restore the wanderer to the companionship it craves.

Εκκλησία

Perhaps most literally translated as the 'out-calling', the ek-klesia pictures us as those who have heard the voice of Jesus calling them from the world. This ek- reminds us of all the Biblical 'outs': Israel coming out of Egypt, the father running out to meet the returning Prodigal, Lazarus called to "come forth", out of the house of bondage, God's salvation bringing God's people out of darkness, sin and night. By the same token it reminds of the various 'intos': into the wilderness, into freedom, into the light. Again this word calls us closer together in its own way. We are called to be travelling companions, thrown into one another's company with the particular ineluctability and intensity that characterises everyone called to journey together whether on cruise ships or road trips, fraught family flights or Canterbury pilgrimages.

I hear in each of these words a challenge to us as a community at Heath Street - to be called further into one another's presence - to be more open to the sharing of suffer-

ings and rejoicing in the body of Christ that will make true of us what Luke said of the congregation of Jerusalem who were of "one heart" and "one soul". But to conclude these self-absorbed reflections on us as church, I'd like to mention two things worth bearing in mind. The first comes from Hans Frei's wonderful *The Identity of Jesus Christ*:

The really significant events may well transpire among the "Gentiles" from whom the church ("Israel") receives the enrichment of her own humanity. Humanity at large is the neighbour given to the church through whom Christ is present to the church. It follows that even though events in history, such as the imperative move towards church reunion, are important, there are other events in the history of mankind at large that may paradoxically bespeak the presence of Christ in a far more significant and evident way.

And finally on a more warlike note, it's worth noting that grex is the collective noun not only for sheep, but also for a group of eagles!

With love,

Ewan

P R A Y E R & C O N T E M P L A T I O N

March 27th - April 2nd

Genesis 1.1 - 2.4a

- 27th Then Jesus our good Lord said:
"If you are satisfied, I am satisfied.
- 28th Lydia Baker
- 29th For children, parents & carers attending Oldtime Nursery
- 30th Nesa Thorne
- 31st Susan and Tom Brandt
- 1st 'It is a joy, a bliss, an endless delight to me that ever I
suffered my Passion for you;
- 2nd and if I could suffer more, I would suffer more'

April 3rd - 9th

Acts 4.32-35

- 3rd For the Baptist Union of Great Britain
- 4th Hildegard Williams
- 5th 'Commit thy way unto Him and trust in Him,
6th and fret not thyself because of evil-doers.'
- 7th Andrea MacEachan
- 8th 'return to God; for He is slow to anger
9th and merciful and kind and gracious.'

April 10th - 16th

Acts 3.12-19

- 10th Robin Thorne
- 11th John Walsh
- 12th Edward Humphreys
- 13th HM
- 14th "'If with all your hearts ye truly seek me,
15th ye shall ever surely find me": thus saith our God.'
- 16th David & Eleanor Neile'

April 17th - 23rd

Acts 4.5-12

- 17th For all who attend the Contact Club
- 18th 'Oh that I knew where I might find Him,
19th that I might even come before His presence.'
- 20th Annie Fang
- 21st Judith Peak
- 22nd 'the barrel of meal shall not waste;
neither shall the cruse of oil fail
- 23rd until the day that the Lord sendeth rain on the earth.'

April 24th - 30th

Acts 8.26-40

- 24th 'Through darkness riseth light to the upright.'
- 25th For the church in the Middle East
- 26th For children, parents & carers attending Oldtime Nursery
- 27th Susan Le Quesne
- 28th Margaret Smith
- 29th For the life and ministry of the Parish church
- 30th 'Thanks be to God: he laveth the thirsty land.'

May 1st - 7th

Acts 10.44-48

1st 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord
2nd For the Baptist Union of Great Britain
3rd 'and He shall sustain thee.
4th Stan Dorer
5th 'He never will suffer the righteous to fall:
6th For the sick
7th He is at thy right hand.'

May 22nd - 29th

Psalms 97, 98

22nd For patience
23rd For all who perform at and attend the lunchtime recitals
24th The King family
25th Shouldst thou, walking in grief, languish,
26th He will quicken thee.
27th For all in hospital
28th Evelyn Baker

May 8th - 14th

Acts 1.1-11

8th 'Thy mercy, Lord, is great
9th and far above the heavens.'
10th Onome Okunlola
11th Sharon Williams
12th 'Let none be made ashamed that wait upon Thee.'
13th Beryl Dowsett
14th For Syria

May 29th - June 4th

1 Samuel 3.1-10

29th 'Lord, our Creator, how excellent Thy Name is
30th in all the nations.'
31st For the imprisoned
(June)
1st Gaynor Humphreys
2nd For all who sing in our Community Choir
3rd Marie Isaacs
4th 'Thou fillest heaven with Thy glory, Amen!'

May 15th -21st

Psalm 48

15th 'Lord my rock: be not silent to me
16th and Thy great mercies remember, Lord!'
17th For the life and ministry of Christ Church, Hampstead
18th The Okunlola children
19th Theresa Thom
20th 'He, watching over Israel,
21st slumbers not nor sleeps.'

W E E K L Y A C T I V I T I E S

U P C O M I N G S E V E N T S

Sundays		
	11-12:00	Divine Worship
	20-22:00	Contact Club
Tuesdays		
	10-11:00	Old Time Nursery
	13-14:00	Lunchtime Concert
2nd Tuesdays	19-21:00	Sacred Harp Hymn Singing
Wednesdays		
	14:30	Any Beny Russian Language Class
Thursdays		
	10:00	Rachel Ward Yoga Classes
	19:30-21:00	Heath Street Choir Rehearsals
Saturdays		
	11-13:00	Coffee Morning (alternate Saturdays - see website for details)

A P R I L		
Tues 26th	13:00	Adrian Butterfield plays solo Bach*
Wed 27th	tbc	Nordic Fiddlers Band concert
Sat 30th	all day	Shhh Festival - CANCELLED
M A Y		
Sun 1st	11:00	Lord's Supper
Tues 3rd	13:00	The Zelenka Band*
Thurs 5th	-	Ascension Day
Fri 6th	19:00	Hampstead Celidih
Sun 8th	11:00	Ascension Sunday Service
Tues 10th	13:00	Curzon & Ter-Berg*
Sun 15th	-	Whitsun
	11:00	Pentecost Service (inc. Service of Blessing)
	19:00	Mendelssohn: Elijah (Heath Street Choir)
Tues 17th	13:00	Simply Viols*
Fri 13th	19:30	Human Cargo*
Sat 14th	19:30	Human Cargo*
Fri 19th	tbc	New End School (private event)
Tues 24th	13:00	Lunchtime concert (TBC)
Tues 31st	13:00	Lunchtime concert (TBC)

*For more information see over page.

26th April | Adrian Butterfield plays Bach

J.S. Bach Partita No.1 in B minor BWV1002

J.S. Bach Partita No.2 in D minor BWV1004

Adrian Butterfield has gained an international reputation as a violinist, director and conductor who specialises in period performance of music from about 1600-1900. He is Musical Director of the Tilford Bach Society, Associate Music Director of the London Handel Festival, Professor of Baroque Violin at the Royal College of Music in London and teaches on the Aestas Musica International Summer School of Baroque Music and Dance in Croatia.

He leads and directs The Revolutionary Drawing Room and The London Handel Players and directs and conducts The London Handel Orchestra as well as being invited to work as a guest with many other ensembles in Europe and North America.

3rd May | The Zelenka Band

Zelenka Sonatas No5 and No6

This group formed of alumni from the Royal Academy of Music's Historical Performance department bring to life the music of this under-rated Czech composer of the Baroque period, on baroque instruments. Expect a generous portion of harmonic variety and counterpoint with some eccentric twists and turns and some bursts of virtuosity from all [especially the nether regions], all beautifully woven together.

Camile Ravot | Nicola Barbagli | Hayley Pullen | Thibault Back
Harpichord, Oboe, Bassoon, Double Bass

10th May | Curzon & Ter-Berg

Collected Tunes and Songs

This dynamic duo grew organically out of a passion for Transylvanian music. The girls have been playing together for years in different bands, but here they've been able to amalgamate a collection of the tunes they love. They bring little known traditional tunes from all over Europe to delight audiences.

Flora Curzon | Francesca Ter-Berg
Violn, Cello

13th-14th May | Human Cargo | £8 advance / £10 on the door

The London Lubbers return to Heath Street with two special concerts to mark the publication of Human Cargo by Matthew Crampton. We see the plight of migrants today. But what of those trafficked in the past? What can we learn from their experiences? Human Cargo blends story and traditional folk song to trace paths through some horrors of the 18th and 19th centuries: slavery, emigration, the Highland Clearances and convict transportation. A mix of TED-style lecture, close harmony concert and rousing singalong, it's an unusual approach to one of the most critical issues of our time. Written and presented by Matthew Crampton, with Chris Hayes and Jan North, a.k.a. The London Lubbers. www.humancargo.co.uk

"Beautifully done, gorgeous venue, soulful singing." John Landor

"I was captivated from start to finish by your powerful storytelling, and the exquisite blend of your voices together." Olivia Dobbs

17th May | Simply Viols

Marin Marais: Suite in A major from Pièces de Viol Book III & V

Johann Schenck: Sonata III from L'Echo du Danube

Francois Couperin: Douzième Concert from Les goûts-réunis

This duo bring a facinating insight into the mysteries of the early baroque world of viols. Despite their young appearance, between them they hold an impressive roster of top orchestras and early music groups around the UK and Europe, and an even more mouth-watering list of instruments they can play with panache to spare. Prepare to be enlightened and mesmerised in a world of french and dutch music of celestial offerings.

Bianca Riesner | Jon Rees

Assorted Viols

Unless otherwise stated all concerts are part of our Tuesday lunchtime concert series, starting at 13:00 with tea and coffee before. Admission is free but we have a retiring collection for the musicians. Children welcome.

HEATH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

Church officers:

Gaynor Humphreys (Church Secretary & Treasurer)
Annie Fang (Deacon)

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 June - August newsletter
should reach Ewan King
(ewan_king@mac.com)
Not later than Wednesday 18th May



Minister Ewan King

Heath Street Baptist Church

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