



February 2022
Number 269

Homeward bound – Easter



As I write this, Mothering Sunday is soon to be celebrated. Originally, it was the day people were encouraged to return to their “mother” church where they were baptised. For many in the 16th Century onwards, that was the village where they’d always lived. However, as years went by, particularly young teenage/ adult girls who were away in service in large country estates were given this day off to return to their parents (mothers) and their mother churches often just for that day each year.

Mothering Sunday is about coming home. Home to church, to mum, to God. Easter created us a way home to God for all of us if we choose to follow. Easter is one of the 3 major church festivals of the church year. In fact, I believe it’s the most important of them all! It created the opportunity to come home to God.

Jesus’ death on the cross for our sin and His glorious resurrection reconnected us not to an earthly home but a home in Heaven!

For many people, there is a longing in their lives to find “home”. A place of comfort, protection, blessing love, joy, peace and so on. Only Heaven ultimately provides all these things.

This Easter, for the first time since 2019, we have no restrictions. Yes, sadly, covid is still around but for most of us, having been vaccinated, the virus is not the great danger it once was. Hopefully by Easter cases will have fallen.

Easter Day is the day to come to church – to return to “mother” church, to return to worship of the Living God together in person. Yes, sadly for some it is still not safe enough to attend (there will be an online service to watch at 10:30am). However, for most of us it is safe.

Easter Sunday has a number of options.

8am Holy Communion (BCP) in the chapel.

9am Holy Communion in Church with music.

10:30am Family Communion (with activities for children and young people)

6:30pm Evening Easter Celebration

It is likely there will be relatively small numbers at the earlier services (8am and 9am), enough to space out, wear masks (if you want) and as always plenty of ventilation!

I trust we will see many of you with us,

May the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ fill you with His joy this Easter,

Michael Norman

Vicar



Fairtrade Quiz Night

On Saturday 19th February a brave few met to compete in a quiz to promote fairtrade in Watford.

It was a tense evening very well prepared by Graham and Linda Hall with five teams competing to win a grand selection of fairtrade prizes. We enjoyed rounds on recent history, what had happened so far in 2022 and opening lines of books amongst other things. After each round Graham shared the answers on a power point with some additional trivia. Very cleverly, the last round was 10 questions based on things he had just told us during the evening. Funny how little we could remember!!!!!!

It was a most enjoyable evening. The winning team was made up of members of St Mary's Watford. The prizes were generously filled tote bags with fairtrade goodies. The winning team kindly shared their prizes with all those who attended.

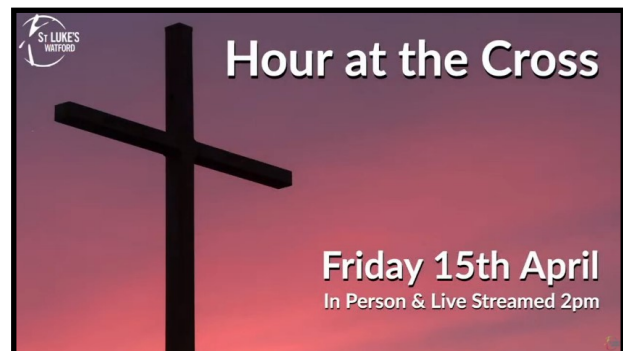
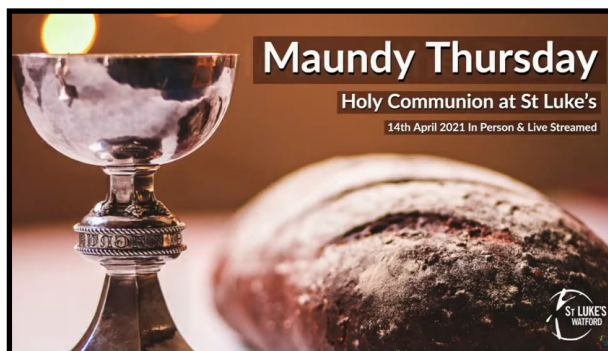
The evening raised just over £120.

Fran Davies



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 8th April CAMEO Easter Blessings with Geoff Fox who is coming to demonstrate his wonderful art of flower arranging!
- 18th April Electoral Roll Forms need to be completed and returned to the Church Office
- 6th May CAMEO Trip to RHS Wisley. All welcome - car drivers required
- 8th May APCM
- 8th May Recital Michael Hogarth (tenor) with Jeremy Hogarth (piano)
- 10th June CAMEO FEBA Radio talk - they reach out to the unreachable world-wide spreading the Gospel.



Services in April and the start of May

8:00am Holy Communion services

These will be held once a month in St Luke's chapel. These are a said Communion service and all are welcome.

10:30am Morning Service/ Communion Service

These are our main morning services, and are currently available live-streamed on YouTube. All are welcome, and there are usually children's groups provided as well as a crèche for younger ones. The service plan is below, but details may change

6:30pm Evening Worship/ Communion Services

These are quieter services, which are not live-streamed. The Bible reading and sermon are made available online later in the week. The service plan is below:

10am Tuesday Morning Holy Communion

We also have a weekly Communion at 10am on Tuesday mornings (it is a Service of the Word if the Vicar is unavailable). This is a lovely, reflective service with a couple of hymns, followed by a community tea and coffee.

Please do come along and join us for one of our services, we'd love to welcome you

April 2022			Theme
Tue 5th	10.00am	Holy Communion	
Sun 10th <i>Palm Sunday</i>	10.30am	Family Service	<i>Palm Sunday</i>
	6.30pm	Holy Communion	<i>Preparation part 2</i>
Mon 11th	7:30	Compline	<i>The House of Prayer</i>
Tue 12th	10.00am	Holy Communion	
	7:30pm	Compline	<i>A Day of Questions</i>
Wed 13th	7:30pm	Compline	<i>The anointing at Bethany</i>
Thu 14th	7:30pm	Maundy Thursday Communion	<i>The Lord's Supper</i>
Fri 15th <i>Good Friday</i>	2-3pm	Hour at the Cross	
	4-6pm	Good Friday Easter Picnic	
	7:30pm	Sung Compline	<i>At the tomb</i>
Sun 17th <i>Easter Sunday</i>	8am	Holy Communion (<i>in Chapel</i>)	<i>Why do you seek the living among the dead</i>
	9am	Family Communion	<i>Why do you seek the living among the dead</i>
	10.30am	Family Communion	<i>Why do you seek the living among the dead</i>
	6.30pm	Evening Service	<i>The Resurrection of Christ</i>
Tue 19th	10.00am	Holy Communion	

Sun 24th	10.30am	Morning Service	<i>The Resurrection of the Dead</i>
<i>Easter 1</i>	6.30pm	Evening Service	<i>12 Dead Men Speak: Hosea</i>
Tue 26th	10.00am	Holy Communion	

May 2022			<u>Theme</u>
Sun 1st	10.30am	Family Communion	<i>The Resurrection of the body</i>
<i>Easter 2</i>	6.30pm	Evening Service with anoint & prayer for healing	<i>12 Dead Men Speak</i>
Tue 3rd	10.00am	Holy Communion	
Sun 8th	10.30am	APCM	<i>Using our gifts</i>
<i>Easter 3</i>	6.30pm	Holy Communion	<i>12 Dead Men Speak: Obadiah</i>
Tue 10th	10.00am	Holy Communion	
Sun 15th	8am	Holy Communion	
<i>Easter 4</i>	10.30am	Family Service	<i>All-age service</i>
	6.30pm	Holy Communion	<i>12 Dead Men Speak: Jonah</i>
Tue 17th	10.00am	Holy Communion	
Sun 22nd	10.30am	Morning Service	<i>One body, many parts</i>
<i>Easter 5</i>	6.30pm	Holy Communion	<i>12 Dead Men Speak: Nahum</i>
	6.30pm	Holy Communion	
Tue 24th	10.00am	Holy Communion	
Sun 29th	10.30am	Morning Service	
<i>Easter 6</i>		Evening Service with anoint & prayer for healing	





Tuesday Communion
10am - 11am in St Luke's Church
Our quieter contemplative Holy Communion service,
observing government guidelines

Community Coffee 

Tuesdays at 11am
Teas and Coffees following Holy Communion, all welcome



Live Life Mission with the team from Wycliffe Hall

A Personal Reflection:

As the one who had invited the Wycliffe team to come and planned it with Canon Bruce Gillingham and others, and encouraged you all to participate, it was a great shock the Monday before mission week to go down with Covid, having never had it before! Pam, my wife, and Beth our

church administrator, also had it. So a 10 day period was spent in exile. This led to remote working again, waving at people and passing work through windows. However, despite others too struggling with Covid, the mission not only happened (praise God) but what an encouragement it was!

So my major reflections were:

Give thanks:

For all who hosted (some at very short notice), cooked lunches and evening meals for the team and others.

For all the groups who changed their meeting programmes to welcome the team among them that week.

For all who went prayer visiting from St Luke's with the team and all who helped with events from St Luke's.

For Canon Bruce Gillingham and all the team as to how, despite difficulties, they threw themselves into the mission and blessed us all.

For those who were able to participate, go to events, and work with the team. It has been, I believe, a real time of refreshment, encouraging our relationship with God and His call to reach out with the Good News.

For the many highlights, including (personally)

- prayer visiting a road and only covering 4 houses in nearly 2 hours, having some very good conversations with the 4 people who answered.
- A lovely refresh evening on Saturday.

So what can we learn?

That despite challenges, God comes through and brings blessings.

The call to go out to the people of the estate is loud and clear and brings fruit. There was a positive welcome of prayer visitors on the door step.

There is a need to adapt plans as situations develop, which we have had to do constantly during the last 2 years and that experience was used well in the mission.

Prayer is crucial to doing works of God. Thanks for all who prayed.

Although we coped amazingly well with the last minute aspects of the mission due to covid, a mission with a longer run up would be preferred!

Michael Norman
Vicar



The team from Wycliffe visited church groups during the week including the uniformed organisations, children's groups and Life Groups. Below are reports from 2 of these Life Groups.

What a delight to have Bruce and three of the ordinands join us for Life Group on Monday. Their expectation that God would be at work in the prayer cards they'd delivered locally plus their positive interactions with the Scout groups was encouraging to hear and a reminder that we all need to sow into our community and believe in a harvest. Bruce's heartfelt enthusiasm for, and knowledge of God's word both lifted and enlightened us.

We definitely benefitted from all their contributions.

Gillian Strevens

Notes from Sue Miller's Life Group

'Go with the flow ' said Bruce Gillingham, and that's what happened. God was in

control, not us and we saw how opportunities for conversations pop up in all sorts of places from doorsteps to Starbucks to Creative Spaces. We have been prompted and encouraged to open our eyes to see the opportunities God puts in front of us.

At our Life Group, James expressed how worried he was that as a Vicar everyone would rely on him but what he saw at St Luke's was how he wouldn't be alone. He would be part of a body of people, often changing but always there supporting and encouraging one another.

Isaiah ch55 v9-12

9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,

11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

12 You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.



Some of the team and Lydia went out on Saturday evening with the Street Angels



**The new prayer
room set up in
the chapel
for Mission Week**





LIVE LIFE

HAPPY EASTER
FROM ST LUKE'S



Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, He has Risen!

Luke 24:5-6

Life! How it's meaning & purpose often eludes people. We seek it in relationships, work, in wealth, but nothing satisfies that desire for meaning.

The tragic war in Ukraine has woken us up to how life is unpredictable, even a nightmare for many and how hidden that fact can be in our comfortable Watford world. However, Covid, the Ukraine, a renewed nuclear threat, climate change have woken us up. The question is, how do we deal with this? Some people bury their head in the sand, others get fearful, anxious and upset. That's not what God wants us to do!

God loves and cares for His world and we who live in it. But He wants us to realise there is more.

However good or bad, long or short this life is, it's not the only life. Life goes on beyond the grave if we follow Jesus.

Easter Day is the reason I can say this with confidence. The resurrection of Jesus Christ turned the world upside down. Jesus' rising from the dead shows us there is more to come. The empty tomb, the physical encounters with Jesus for the women at the tomb and the apostles meant that a weekend of deep grief turned into amazing joy!

This is a joy people are still experiencing today, one available to all who seek Jesus.

This Easter, we invite you to join us. We will still be available online on the St Luke's YouTube channel but we'd love to have you with us. Yes, there will still be reticence with Covid still present in our community (hopefully by the time you read this the numbers are reducing).

But come and safely join us live and discover life in abundance. Jesus said "I have come that you may have life and have it abundantly" (RSV). John 10:10

Celebrate with us this year, a Happy Easter 2022 to you all,

***God bless,
Michael
Vicar of St Luke's***

Anne Holloway



You may have heard that our much-loved Mum, Anne Holloway, died on 22 February, she was 94. We had a wonderful celebration service for her life on Thursday 10 March and there were about 90 people in the church. Michael was unable to take the service because he had Covid but Dave Clarke stepped in and did wonderfully well.

Anne must have been one of the of the most longstanding members of St Luke's, having first attended the church in 1940. She knew every incumbent right back to Dick Rees and Ralph Dean.

Ten years ago, she wrote up a few memories of early days at St Luke's (*see below*) which were published in the magazine and I just wondered if this might be a time to republish this.

With best wishes,

***Peter Holloway and
Deborah Griffin***

Some Early Memories of St Luke's

As September approaches I am thinking back to my very early days at St Luke's. It was in my early teens, in about 1940, that I first came to hear Dick Rees preach. Dick was St Luke's first Curate in Charge and was something of an evangelist. Consequently, St Luke's became known as a young people's church. When Dick left to take up a position in Hove, he was followed by Ralph Dean who quickly became popular with old and young alike.

What a different scene it was from today! Ralph ran the church from his home in Cassiobury Drive - he was to be seen around the parish on an ancient bicycle; no car, no curate to assist, no office, no Jenny or Caryl, only an old typewriter which he attacked with one finger!

Of course, we didn't call him Ralph! He was "Mr Dean" to all but a few. Such as it was in those days. Ralph Dean went on to have a stellar career in the Anglican Church. In the 1950s he became Bishop of Cariboo in British Columbia, a diocese about the size of England, where he visited remote Indian communities on horseback. He was Executive Officer of the Anglican Communion in the 1960s and was largely responsible for organising the 1968 Lambeth Conference; then in the early 1970s was Archbishop of British Columbia.

Ralph's wife and many other women in the congregation, such as members of the Mothers' Union, wouldn't have dreamt of attending Sunday services without wearing a hat and gloves – again how different from the way things are today!

I was lucky enough to help with Children's Church which took place on Sunday afternoons, while parents slept off their lunch I suspect. The children were not catered for at morning or evening services so we didn't enjoy the family feeling we have here today.

We young people met at Ralph's home on a Wednesday evening at what was known as "Query Club"; very popular with late teens and early twenties from St Luke's and other churches in Watford. One of the church members who lived in Church Road let us use her tennis court one evening a week – a great treat and a good evening of fellowship.

I remember during the war the many occasions of sadness arriving at church on a Sunday morning to learn of another member of "Query Club" having been killed. Most of these boys had joined straight from school – so young to lose their lives.

We met for confirmation classes in the church vestry and it was here that the young John Taylor, later to become Bishop of St Albans, gave his life to God. We certainly never dreamed then that he would go on to achieve so much in the Church.

At that time St Luke's was still a daughter church to St Mary's and consequently no baptisms, marriages, funerals or confirmations could take place here – I understood that this was due to the licensing of the church.

How much has changed over the years I have attended this wonderful church, yet we, as a congregation, still come for the same reason; to meet together and to worship God.

*Anne Holloway
June 2012*

If you would like to give to St. Luke's by bank transfer the details are as follows: -

Account name PCC St Luke's Watford

Sort Code 20-91-79

Account No 70687472

*[Donations to the Thanksgiving Fund have same Account name,
and sort code but the Account number is **13611779**]*

Reference state if the donation is for a particular appeal e.g. Santa hampers, Rebuild, Foodbank etc.

Please remember to complete a Gift Aid Form as well if you are a Tax payer

Rotas

Please let the office know when you feel safe to come back onto the rota and we will be happy to welcome you back.

Newcomers to the rotas also welcome, please let us know.



We have some awesome kids groups on during our 10.30am services!

For more information about children & families at St Luke's, contact children@stlukeswatford.org

Youth Groups

K2	Tuesdays 6.15pm
Youth Alpha	Tuesdays 7:45pm
RISE	Thursdays 6.15pm
Rock Solid	Thursdays 7.30pm
Urban Saints	Saturdays 6.00pm
Altitude	Sundays during 10.30am

For more information about Youth groups, contact our Youth Director Neil

We are starting a new series this month in which we invite members of the various church Working Groups here at St Luke's to share with us what they do, and why!

We started off by catching up with Bill Miller, Chair of the Partners in Mission Working Group.

Partners In Mission

Q: So Bill tell us about Partners in Mission, or PIM as it usually gets abbreviated to. What do you actually do?

A: That's a good question. We are tasked with encouraging mission in all its different forms throughout the church, and specifically to build and maintain links with the various Mission Partners and organizations that as a church we support. The PIM members are all passionate about mission - we all have different interests and areas of focus, but together we make a great team!

Q: So how long have you been involved with PIM?

A: I've been involved with PIM for well over 10 years now, and have been chair since about 2013 I think. I was originally involved through my role as chair of the Thanksgiving Fund, which has now become the Partnership Fund and has been absorbed into the work of PIM.

Q: What excites you about the work of PIM?

A: I think supporting our Mission Partners is just about the most exciting thing that happens at St Luke's! We have a fantastic range of Partners involved in all sorts of work in all sorts of places, from Lancashire to Nepal, and from Malawi to Japan! Some work directly in planting churches and preaching the gospel, others are involved with medical work, theological education and bible translation. All of them have dedicated their lives to serving their Lord, and it is a joy and a privilege to stand with them, to share their news and to support them in any way we can through prayer and through our giving. The work of the gospel is never dull!

Q: Is it just individuals you work with or do we also support Mission Organisations?

A: We do both! But our guiding rule on PIM is to prioritize support for individuals or organisations that we have a direct link with. Some of these are former church members who have been called to serve in some way whether home or abroad, such as Sarah Gelsthorpe working with OMF in Japan, or Sally Miller working with Friends International in Lancaster. Nearer to home we support a number of local organisations that St Luke's members have had direct involvement over the years, such as New Hope, the Schools Trust or the Town Centre Chaplaincy (which runs the Street Angels). We have also maintained links with a number of organisations or churches that we have supported through the Thanksgiving Fund over the years, and some of these links have turned into more personal relationships with individuals such as Drs Sujai and Lavanya Suneetha who run the Nireekshana ACET HIV/Aids & Leprosy clinic in

(Continued on page 17)



NEW WINE 2022

UNITED

at the EAST OF ENGLAND SHOWGROUND, PETERBOROUGH

A 23 JULY - 28 JULY 2022

**Book by
15 September 2021
for best prices**

FLASH SALE NOW OPEN at new-wine.org or see **John and Melanie Sills**
(john.sills5@gmail.com)

**You are welcome to
participate in our services!**

A gentle reminder that if you come up to the front for anything, we assume permission is given that you are happy to be on a livestream.

(Continued from page 15)

Hyderabad in India, and who have become Mission Partners and good friends of St Luke's in their own right.

Q: So how much money does PIM have to spend on our Mission Partners?

A: Not enough is the honest answer! The needs are huge, and there are so many brilliant missionary societies that we would love to support, but we just can't give to every organisation that we hear about. Our aim is always for our giving to make a difference, and if we spread our support too thinly then it won't have the same effect. In broad terms the PCC allocates 10% of the church's total income to mission, and this is what PIM has to give away. For 2021 the total allocated was £26,000, of which £11,750 went to local organisations, £2,500 went to other UK causes, and £11,750 went to overseas mission. In addition, we hold regular appeals for the Partnership Fund, most recently to build some teachers' accommodation for a school in Uganda which raised over £14,000, and each year we hold a Harvest Appeal which in 2021 raised over £4,000 for the Bishop of St Alban's & TearFund's Harvest Appeal "Water is Life" for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. St Luke's is a fantastically generous church, and it is very humbling to be in charge of giving all this money away – it is a responsibility we all take very seriously.

Q: So can anyone get involved with the Partners in Mission Group?

A: Absolutely! We are always looking for new members with new ideas and time and energy - but the most important thing is to have a heart for mission. If anyone is interested then I would love to chat to them, or they can talk to any of the members of the group. Currently the members are John Bishop, Paul Evans, Angela Gourley, Jos Lawrence, Richard Waddington, John Williamson plus the Vicar. We are a friendly bunch, so do feel free to approach us to find out more.

Thank you Bill Miller, Chair of PIM Working Group

Volunteers urgently required for...

Coffee after 10:30 service

Children's groups (Sundays and Tuesdays)

Welcoming (hopefully once a month maximum)

Security rota (about one week a quarter)





Urban Saints

Fun, Games, Activities and Bible Teaching

Every Saturday Evening
6pm-7.30pm in Church Hall
For ages 7-11

For more details email Susan Miller
susan-miller@ntlworld.com



Next Recital:
Sunday 8th May

Michael Hogarth
(Tenor)

with
Jeremy Hogarth *Piano*



Entry free. Donations welcome. With tea/coffee provided afterwards. Mask wearing is recommended

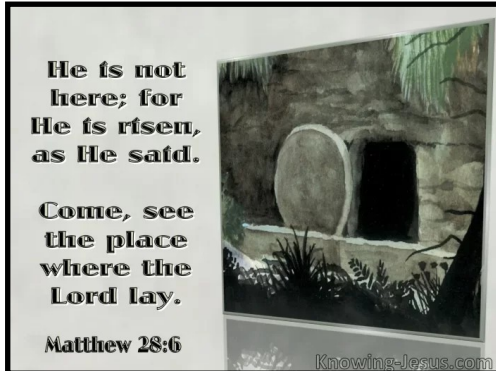
News from some of Our Mission Partners



Message from the Gelsthorpes in Japan:

Dear All,

Thank you for your faithful prayers for us as we minister in Hanamaki, rural, northern Japan.



We are not sending out a formal prayer letter this month as we have been away in the UK for the last month. **Praise God** for his help in arriving here safely today and successfully navigating all the enhanced quarantine measures in Japan.

Please pray for a good time of fellowship as a church at our Good Friday reflection and Easter Day Service.

Please also continue to **pray** for our church building project. I hope you will be able to access this link to a video which shows how the building project has progressed over the last two years:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10g8cOHwQtg5qYxKYP6AU2a7ZYQBgAFvo/view?usp=sharing>

Thank you for all your support. May God bless you as you remember the work of his son over Easter.

*Mark, Sarah,
Grace, Isaac and Caleb xx*

Letter from Alastair Patterson

Dear All,

After two years, I am now back in Pokhara! It is quite hard to believe after all that has happened and please accept my apologies for not mentioning it sooner. There was a fairly quick window of opportunity and trying to get everything sorted out, like where to get a PCR test, all took a fair amount of concentration and research, praying that I had the right documentation for the respective airports.

It was with prayerful thanks that everything went smoothly. Speaking of smoothly, it felt quite unreal and sad while flying across the Black Sea, that there was war happening beyond the port wing.

Anyone who has lived in two countries and spent time away will probably know what I mean about the unusual experience of carrying on as if nothing had happened while in the other country and where you left from is just like a dream. That is what returning to Kathmandu felt like, but of course, it isn't exactly the same after two years. Some things have actually changed but you realise that your memory is not the 'solid

Cheddar cheese' you thought it was, but is more like Swiss cheese with a few holes in it and a few things need to be re-learnt.

It was very good to be able to meet several people in one day, which bought some time. This included the person I have been working with over the internet.

One of the things that had changed was the bus company I use to get to Pokhara is no longer running, so there was some last-minute effort to try and find another one, but that all worked out fine.

After all the travelling effort, it was great to finally reach the flat, only to find that inside it looked like a major earthquake had happened.

The landlord had had the inside of the flat painted and all my 'stuff' was left in heaps and has spots of paint all over it. Quite a large part of the first evening was spent trying to find the water filter so that I could drink some water. I then found that the gas cooker was not working so couldn't even have a hot drink.

The first day was spent getting a new sim card so that I can have some internet access - how did we manage without it? Then it was off to the bank to reactivate my account which had gone dormant and try and register for mobile banking with the new phone number. Then off to a supermarket to buy a new gas cooker (yes, I have some gas!) It was nice to be able to go into two supermarkets and be welcomed back by various staff. And to end off a busy day, what could be better than laying down on a dentist's chair. Yes, the work has begun and just now I have had the remains of a tooth extracted.

This morning it was good to see how the recording of the Gurung NT is progressing and how is actually being done. It should be completed next week, so good to be able be here for that. This is being done by Faith Comes by Hearing and has involved much work with several speakers for different parts, so the recording isn't just a narration.

Having arrived here, it is almost time to start working on the reverse journey! I only have a 30-day visa. Four of those are taken up with travelling. Because of PCR testing etc, I need to be back in Kathmandu a little early but that might give the opportunity to meet one or two others.

OK, now going to cook then cool some rice as I might be able to eat that.

Thanks as always for your help and prayers.

*God bless,
Alastair*

UPDATE And greetings from my last day in Pokhara! Can't believe it has come round so fast but it has been a blessed time for sure. One of my dental trips managed a root canal treatment on a wisdom tooth, a filling on its opposite number and another extraction - not bad for one sitting but eating became a bit of a challenge! I now have a large stack (5000) of the Ancient Path booklets which are being distributed. Hope to be meeting Andrea and Clive later today.

Greetings from Clive and Andrea

Our dear friends,

We apologise for not writing sooner - it seems a bit lame to blame it on the mysteriously disappearing time... but the last few weeks really have been bit of blur, especially for Andrea who's working hard on finalising her Master's dissertation.

We are planning to be in Nepal from 21st March until 1st June and would value your prayers for our travels and for the management of all that needs to be done in the UK before we leave. We thank God for the provision of a lodger who is one of our All Nation's colleagues - he's looking forward to a break away from living in student accommodation! We're busy with the usual routine of sorting out the house and have tried to 'get ahead of the game' with some of the allotment tasks. We are, of course, sad to be leaving our loved ones again and would be grateful if you could keep them (especially parents) in your prayers.

Due to Nepal's negative PCR entry requirement, we've been trying to distance ourselves from others but we've just heard today that this may no longer be necessary! We have yet to confirm the airline requirements, as we pass through a 'hub', so we continue to be careful.

There's a lot on the agenda for our relatively short time in Nepal and it means a lot knowing that you are journeying with us :-)

We'll keep you updated on how things go.

*Love & blessings,
Clive and Andrea*

PS. Our next time in Nepal is likely to be around October/November, mainly because of the INF 70th anniversary celebrations!!

Latest Prayer letter from Sally Miller in Lancaster

Weekly Prayer Points 28/3/22

*'He is the Maker of heaven and earth,
the sea, and everything in them –
he remains faithful for ever.'* (Psalm 146:6)

In our North Region devotions last Tuesday, we were reading thinking about God's faithfulness that remains constant through every situation. After a more 'successful' term than the Autumn term, connecting with more students, it is natural to thank God for his faithfulness. However, one thing I have been challenged by in the past week is that God was still faithful even in the times when ministry was hard and discouraging! He is the creator of the entire universe and he is not just the God of when things are going well, but the God of when things feel difficult too. As we thank God for the students, we have got to know this term, this Psalm has been a great reminder not to look at our ministry through the eyes of the world but to remember that it is the things that are unseen that are eternal.

Prayer Points

Please give thanks for our International Dinners event last Thursday. Please give thanks for the 11 students who came and for the good conversations we were able to have over food. Please give thanks for some students who have only been to one thing returning and wanting to get more involved. Please pray for good follow up, particularly as Sally tries to meet up with two of the students over the Easter break.

Please pray for our North West Cluster meeting on Tuesday morning. Please pray that this would be a great time of encouragement for the Friends International staff and affiliates across the North West. Please pray for Sally as she leads her first Cluster meeting!

Please pray for our Branch meeting on Tuesday evening. Please pray that this would be a good time to reflect on our ministry over the past two terms and that we would be able to have some helpful discussions as we think about plans for next term.

Greetings from Ruth Guinness in Malawi

Dear friends,

Greetings from Malawi! We've just passed the second anniversary of my last 'normal' lesson at the Evangelical Bible College of Malawi - before COVID, before my sabbatical, and before my new roles. Below you'll see a little of what my life looks like now. There's certainly been a lot of change!

Warm greetings from Blantyre! I'm writing from my new office – I now have a desk in a shared office in the SIM Malawi building. It's next door to my own home, in the same compound, but I'm finding it helpful to have a dedicated workspace which I don't have at home. The view from my desk is of the beautiful tree in the garden – which I also see from my kitchen window! I love looking at the roots of this tree – I'm sure it could be used for a sermon illustration one day!

Andrea, my neighbour, and I did some fairly drastic pruning of some plants in the garden a couple of weeks



ago. It's amazing how quickly they bounce back, putting out new green shoots. That's another good illustration! Jesus said of his Father, the gardener, *"every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful."* (John 15:2) During my sabbatical my focus was growing deeper in my identity in God and in my experience of God's love, and I don't want to lose sight of that as I get to grips with my new roles. I am approaching things with a different perspective and pray that as I let God work in me, his



work will bear fruit.

I'm really appreciating the more global picture my new role as Ministry Point Person for Theological and Missiological Education is helping me to gain. It's an amazing privilege to be able to speak with people in different places and chat with them about what they are doing or hoping to do. In time I hope I will be able to network more, helping to make connections as well as stimulating conversations and helping to develop our role in theological and missiological education.

I wonder what you think about when you hear the words, 'theological education'? Some people have talked to me about the impact on minds as people learn and grow in knowledge. Whilst this is true, what I love to emphasise is spiritual transformation. Theological education, in whatever form (in formal institutions such as the Evangelical Bible College of Malawi, or non-formal small study groups in churches), needs to lead to changed lives, and to engagement in God's mission.

As I have been talking to people in other countries, I have been struck by some similarities with what I have seen here in Malawi – things which some Malawian pastors I have spoken with have also expressed. One of these is the impact of the prosperity gospel, which is attractive and appeals to those in distress. It's great to hear of some Theological Education by Extension programmes which are bringing about changes.

As yet, I have been mainly office-based, working by email and zoom and on the internet. (I have been amazed how internet access and availability have changed in the course of a few months – it is significantly easier now than it was before I left Malawi in January 2021.) However, I have loved the occasions when I have met with people face to face. This includes regular times meeting with Hannah, a new SIM missionary who arrived at the end of January, as her orientation mentor. It will be a privilege to do the same with Esther, who is due to arrive at the end of this week.

I am praying that God would open a door for a more on-going practical involvement with ministry on the ground. In April I hope to visit colleagues, Steven and Jo Wheatley, who live at Nanjoka, a village near the town of Salima, relatively near to Lake Malawi. I hope to go with them to a meeting of pastors and their wives from the Africa Evangelical Church, gathered together from the lakeshore area. It is good to have this opportunity, hopefully to encourage as well as hear them sharing joys and challenges. I will be able to travel up there as I do now have a car! I'm so thankful for the help of others both in finding a suitable car, and getting it inspected to make sure that it was okay.

This week I attended a 'governance workshop' with some of the SIM Malawi team: another chance to be face-to-face with people! Life in Malawi has its challenges! Yet listening to the world news helps to put things into perspective. Like you, I'm sure, I've been much



in prayer for Ukraine. SIM has links with the European Freedom Network which is working to prevent the trafficking and exploitation of Ukrainian refugees, and to provide practical support to local churches in Europe as they respond. If you want to find out more, see www.europeanfreedomnetwork.org/ukrainechurch/

We have seen sharp increases in the prices of some goods in shops. Also, many in Malawi, particularly in the Southern Region, have been affected by tropical storms. SIM has been involved in some relief work together with the Evangelical Association of Malawi and the Africa Evangelical Church. The majority of Malawi's electricity is generated through hydropower, and there was major damage to the generators. We've been having power cuts for several hours almost daily (I think we had power all day on Sunday, a nice surprise!)

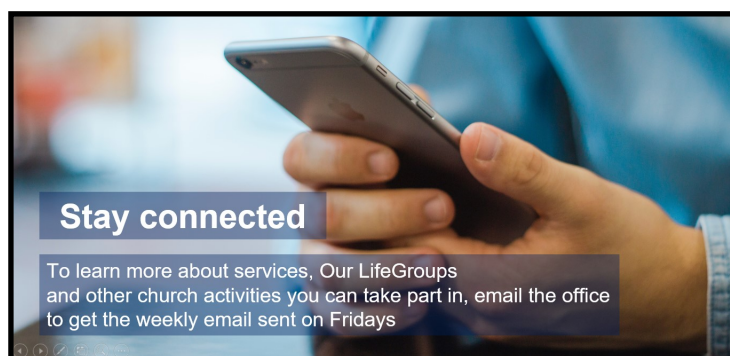
Prayer points

Please join me in giving praise for:

- a new office space and a new car!
- the encouragement and privilege of listening to many in the SIM world and learning from them;
- the opportunity to visit Nanjoka. Please pray for:
 - God to open a door for practical involvement with ministry on the ground;
 - patience and enthusiasm as I continue on a steep learning curve in my new roles;
 - building good relationships both internationally and within SIM Malawi;
 - finding opportunities to get out and enjoy God's creation. (The header photo is from my trip to Elephant Marsh in February)

Thank you so much for your faithful support and prayers. May God bless you,

Ruth Guinness



Churches are not supposed to be museums that display perfect people, walking around looking holy.

They are called to be hospitals where the wounded, hurt, injured and broken find grace and healing.

There is a story they tell of two dogs.
Both at separate times
walk into the same room.
One comes out wagging his tail
while the other comes out growling.

A woman watching this
goes into the room to see
what could make one dog so happy
and the other so mad.

To her surprise
she finds a room filled with mirrors.

The happy dog found
a thousand happy dogs looking back at him
while the angry dog
saw only angry dogs growling back at him.

What you see in the world around you
is a reflection of who you are.

**Creative
space for**
hard-working women



Come together for continental
breakfast (Sats), drinks and cake (Mon),
a short talk and then spend time
enjoying learning a new craft.

Creative space
venue



**St Luke's
Church**
Langley Way
Watford
WD17 3EG

- learn a new craft skill
- chat with friends

Places are limited

Please book yours by contacting Pam:
07975 748243 or pam.stlukes@gmail.com

www.stlukeswatford.org/creative-space

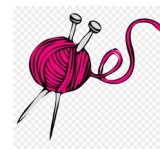
WOOL

St Luke's Knitting group, which meets once a month on a Monday morning is in need of more wool to make baby items and hats for adults.

Can you help? All wool gratefully received via the
Church Office, during working hours.

To join the group contact **Di** via the office.

Thank you.



A Prayer for Ukraine

**God of Peace and Justice, we pray
for the people of Ukraine today.**

**We pray for peace
and the laying down of weapons.**

**We pray for all those
who fear tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort
would draw near to them.**

New Hope

New Hope Crowdfunder Haven appeal

New Hope has been chosen to take part in the National Emergencies Trust Local Action Fund! This is great news! This means that donations to their Crowdfunder Haven appeal will be matched by the National Emergencies Trust (up to the value of £250 per donation).

So, if someone donates £10, this will be matched by the National Emergencies Trust, and the Haven will receive £20! If someone donates £100, the Haven will then receive £200 and if someone donates the maximum of £250, the Haven will receive £500.

The appeal is running until 4th May and you can view it here:

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/the-haven-supporting-people-homeless-in-watford>

Right now, they are seeing 34 people accessing support from the Haven each day – in some cases, this may be phoning their emergency helpline for advice but the majority of people who come to them may be rough sleeping or hidden homeless such as sofa-surfing with friends and family or ask risk of losing their home.

Donations to the Haven enable them to provide meals for those who are hungry, clean clothes for those who need them and a friendly face to listen and advice for those facing homelessness.

We'd be really grateful if you could help us spread the word about this fantastic opportunity and help us receive this additional funding!

We are delighted that the Crowdfunder for the Haven has already raised £2,000 and we hope we can reach £5,000 by the end of April!

New Hope's new Recovery Services

This month sees the launch of New Hope's new Recovery Services. This new service will enable people to move from homelessness and addiction to living independently, free from alcohol and drugs. Addiction is broken down into three stages: Recognising Change, Making Change and Maintaining the Change and this forms the basis of our vision.

Accessing the Project – Recognising Change:

People, who have recognised the need to change and who want to enter a programme of recovery, will move from New Hope's Emergency Accommodation to New Hope House (the first stage of the Recovery Services).



Stage 1: Making the Change: Based at New Hope House, a 10-bed home, full support will be given for a six-month period to help people safely give up alcohol and illicit drugs. Working closely with health professionals and Change Grow Live, groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Cocaine Anonymous, will also be in place to support residents as they make the first changes in their recovery. Residents will be able to access Cultivate, our in-house horticultural therapy and wellbeing programme.

Stage 2: Maintaining the Change: Based at the Manse, a four-bed house. This home is for people who have reached their goal of abstinence and are now trying to maintain their recovery. We will still provide support through groups and key working but the focus moves to life skills, preparation for living independently, and how to prevent a relapse.

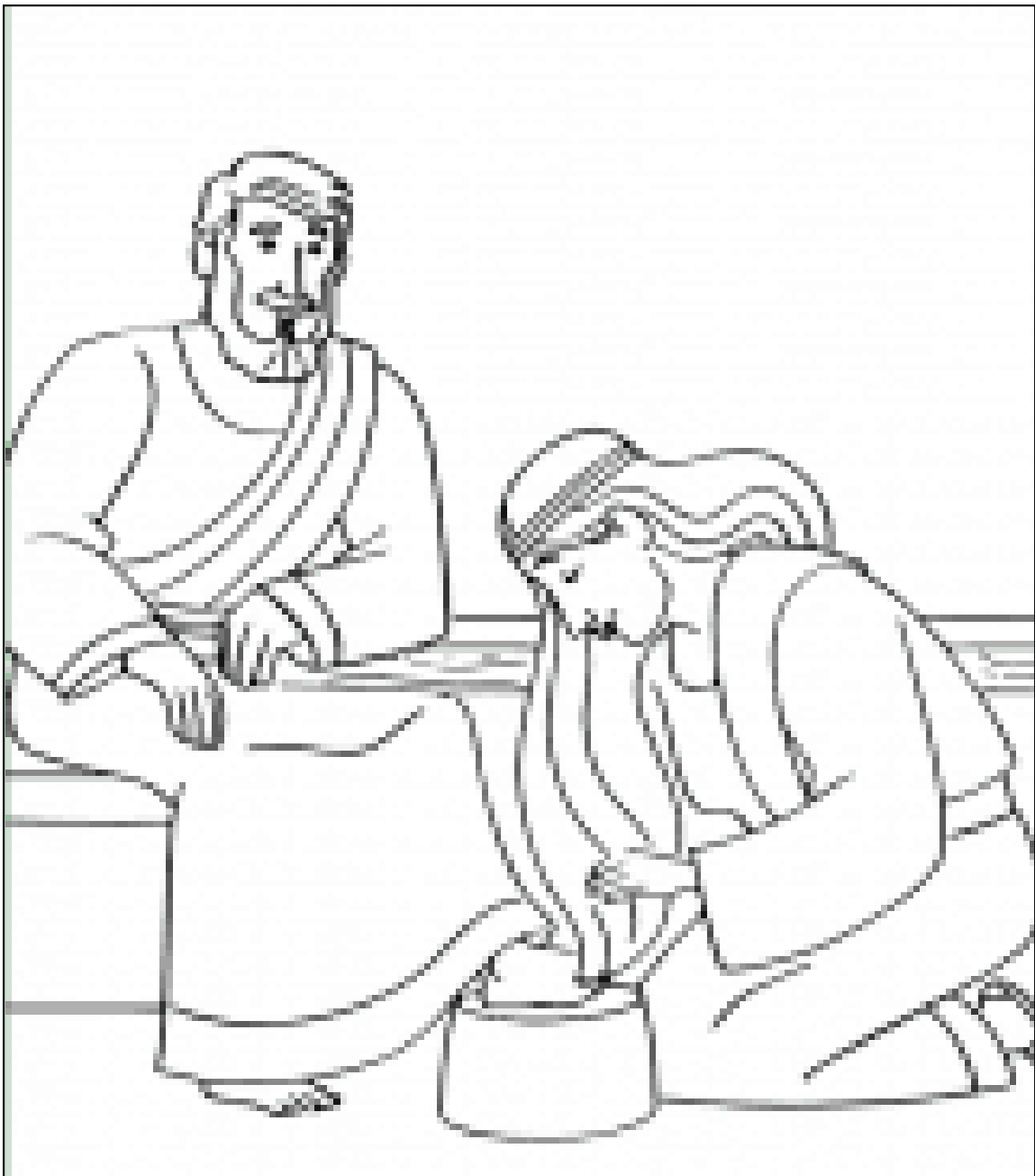
Stage 3: Preparing for independent living: Based at the Community Home, residents will continue to maintain abstinence. Residents will be supported by the New Hope Move On Accommodations Worker who will help people find and maintain suitable long-term, independent accommodation.

We are excited about this new development which will enable us to help more people successfully escape homelessness and addiction.

Children's Page

Colour in this picture of Mary Anointing Jesus's feet with Oil.

You can read about it in The Bible in John chapter 12.v1-8



Word Search

Find the following words which come from the story of Mary Anointing Jesus's feet with Oil.

betray	fragrance	Martha	pint
burial	hair	Mary	poor
dinner	Jesus	nard	pure
disciples	Judas	Passover	raised
expensive	Lazarus	perfume	six

E	M	U	F	R	E	P	S	D	Y
X	L	S	A	D	U	J	U	I	A
P	A	S	S	O	V	E	R	S	R
E	M	A	R	Y	E	S	A	C	T
N	A	R	D	A	F	U	Z	I	E
S	R	P	I	N	T	S	A	P	B
I	T	O	P	U	R	E	L	L	U
V	H	O	Y	E	N	O	M	E	R
E	A	R	A	I	S	E	D	S	I
D	I	N	N	E	R	X	I	S	A
F	R	A	G	R	A	N	C	E	L

You are welcome to submit an article for the next edition of St. Luke's News which should be no more than 450 words. We may edit articles for clarity.

Please email articles to the editor, Margaret Forester or to the Church Office

If you wish to receive St. Luke's News regularly, either delivered to your door or emailed, please contact the Church Office (246161). Large print is also available. Alternatively, please let us know if you no longer wish to receive it.

The magazine appears on our website, www.stlukeswatford.org

Vicar	Michael Norman
Reader	Dave Clarke Pam Norman Wendy Somerville
Music Director	Jeremy Cooke
Youth Director	Neil Brookes
Children & Family Team Leader	Lydia Davies
Administrator	Beth Burns
Assistant Music Leader	Jeremy Hogarth
Church wardens	Susan Miller John Williamson
PCC Lay Chair	Richard Waddington
PCC Treasurer	Paul Evans
PCC Secretary	John Sills
Safeguarding Officer	Mary Bowen

Please leave a message for any of the above on the Church Office answerphone -
246161

Website

www.stlukeswatford.org

Email

office@stlukeswatford.org