

**The Drive Methodist Church  
Eastern Avenue**

# NEWSLETTER

**January 2021**

Living  
Hope



Minister: Revd. Mmasape Zihle

Website: [www.drive-methodist.church](http://www.drive-methodist.church)

## **Church Mission Statement of The Drive Methodist Church**

The Drive Methodist Church aims to be faithful to the commandments of Jesus, and the calling of the Methodist Church.

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission, and to fulfil the promises detailed in the Methodist worship book.

Provide a weekly opportunity for all people to worship God in Christ, here at The Drive Methodist Church.

Enable people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care.

Be a good neighbour to the immediate and wider community. Sharing our faith with others through pastoral care, church activities and communication.

## **Our Minister writes:**

Welcome to January 2021

A friend sent me the following transcript and said "it might come in handy" and it has...

*When the song of the angels is stilled,  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and princes are home,  
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,  
the work of Christmas begins:  
to find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry,  
to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations,  
to bring peace among the people, to make music in the  
heart.*

*Howard Thurman*

Howard Thurman an African American, was born in 1899 in Daytona Beach, Florida He was raised by his grandmother, who had been enslaved and grew up in the segregated South. Howard's family scraped together the funds to send him to high school in Jacksonville. However, at the train station, Thurman was told he had to pay extra to send his baggage. Buying the ticket had left him destitute; he had no more to ship his trunk. Penniless, the boy sat down on the steps and began to cry. Then, a stranger - a man dressed in overalls - walked by and paid the charges. He didn't introduce himself, and Thurman never learned his name. When Thurman wrote his autobiography, he dedicated it "to the stranger in the railroad station in Daytona Beach who restored my broken dream sixty-five years ago."

Howard was, among many things, an influential Baptist Minister, theologian, and civil rights activist, who worked for

non-violence. He also is well known to Quakers having studied with one of their leading members, Rufus Jones. He was a noted Quaker philosopher, mystic and leader of the pacifist, interracial Fellowship of Reconciliation. Here Howard began his journey towards a philosophy that stressed an activism rooted in faith, guided by spirit, and maintained in peace.

### **Food for the Needy**

Friends, one of my passions is social justice – making sure that my fellow humans are treated with the same respect and dignity I demand for myself. There is no dignity when people are hungry and have to beg. Please may I appeal on behalf of those in hard times that we dig deep again and bring what we can in terms of foodstuffs and toiletries to go towards the food bank and to those families I continue to deliver food packages to. The effects and impact of 2020 and the pandemic that brought so many lives to a halt are still with us. We are hopeful that the rollout of the vaccine will allow life to get back to a sense of normalcy but until then there is a great cry for help that we need to heed.

**I am happy to do doorstep pickup from those unable to get foodstuff to church. For those of us who are able to get to church (The Drive) I will be there to receive donations on Saturday 9 January between 10am and 12 noon; (Barkingside) between 1pm and 3pm; (Seven Kings) 3.30pm and 4.30pm.**

In anticipation of your generosity, thank you.

*May we the church of God be rooted in faith as we act to share God's love, guided by His Spirit of compassion and may the year 2021 be a peaceful year for us all.*

**Mmasape**

**If you or anyone you know is experiencing distress or hardship due to Covid 19 please contact the Minister Reverend Mmasape Zihle.**

***[www.drive-methodist.church](http://www.drive-methodist.church)***

*We hold in mind* ..... Many in our church family are in poor health and receiving medical treatment or at home recovering. Others have been recently bereaved or remembering the anniversary of their loved ones and we pray for their peace and comfort.

We also remember those who are caring for their families under very difficult circumstances.

All front line and keyworkers are doing the most amazing work and we applaud them for their care and commitment under such extreme pressure.

Michelle's mother **Elise** who remains unwell and cared for at home by her family.

**Liz Amar** who has been poorly with Flu. Get well soon Liz.

**Janet and Geoff** remain at home and are cheerful as usual. Janet reports there are no new developments with her health, which is good news indeed.

We remember **Marlene** who cares for **Danny** at home.



## Leotta Alleyne

I was saddened to hear of the death of our friend **Leotta** on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at King George Hospital where had been receiving treatment. I had known Leotta, a kind and gentle natured lady with a deep Christian faith for many years and I know she will be so missed. We offer our condolences to her family and friends.

Should you wish to offer your condolences to the family, please contact Lorraine Bendon contact details.

### Messages of condolence from the church family

- Our deepest condolences to Leotta's family and to those in our church who knew and had journeyed with Leotta. May Leotta rest in peace. *Reverend Mmasape Zihle*
- That's such sad news. My thoughts and prayers are for Leotta and her family. May she rest in peace. *Kay Whidden*
- I am very sad to hear that dear Leotta has passed away this evening. I shall hold Leotta and her family in my prayers. God Bless her. *Anne Dellow*
- Sorry to hear that Leotta has died. she is now at peace. I will pray for her family. *Brian Grinham*
- Oh dear, she passed on peacefully. May she rest in everlasting peace. I do recall her smiling face. My condolences to all her family. God Bless you all. *Antonia*
- My condolences to Leotta's family members. *Sheela Selwyn*

- Very sorry to hear of Leotta's passing. May she rest in peace. Her family will be in my prayers. *Jo Wright*
- Sorry to hear the sad news of Leotta's passing. May she rest in peace. My condolences to her family. *Oli Fadojutimi*
- May Miss Leotta's soul rest in peace. *Amy Gabbidon*
- Very sad to hear of Leotta's passing. May she rest in peace. Our condolences to her family. *Diane Foster*
- Dear Leotta, another special lady who will be sadly missed. May she rest in peace. *Lorraine Bendon*
- So sorry to hear that Leotta has died. she is now at peace and I will pray for her family. *Janet Brunnen*

### **Pauline Rodway**

*As I write, Colin shared a very sad message that Pauline died on the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021, following a courageous fight against cancer.*

*It is fortunate that Pauline came home from hospital on Christmas evening to spend precious time with Colin and their children Clare and Cíaran. We send love and pray for them as a family.*

*Colin is keen to ensure Pauline's wish not to be known as 'poor Pauline' and asks that we take a while to think positively about her and toast her memory with a glass of her favourite red wine.*

## **LB**

### Messages of condolence from the church family.

- We at The Drive were privileged to have journeyed with Pauline. May she rest in joy and love. May Colin, Clare and Ciaran find comfort in the Lord. May God comfort us all.

*Reverend Mmasape Zihle*

- Pauline was a lovely lady who we have been honoured to know. She, along with Colin, brought a different approach to some of the services they took which were appreciated by the congregation. We will miss her cheerful presence. May God spread his loving arms around you all.

*Brian Grinham*

- I'm so sorry that Pauline has passed away, she put up a brave fight and was very courageous. May she rest in peace now. I pray you will be given strength at this difficult time. God Bless you Colin, Ciaran and Clare.

*Janet Brunnen*

- Pauline will be remembered for her beautiful smile, amazing church sketches and delicious soup. Colin, Clare and Ciaran, you are all in my prayers.

*Jo Wright*

- We miss Pauline. I am sure she is in a better place.

*Amy Gabbidon*

- Pauline will be dearly missed. Her beautiful smile and care she gave Rochelle at brownies will be remembered. Colin, Clare and Ciaran will be in our prayers.

*Priya Inbakumar*

- There are no words to express the loss of a loved one. I am sorry to hear this sad news. A brave lady, who has left so many happy memories with us all. My condolences to Colin, Clare and Ciaran.  
*Antonia, Bambo and Moji*
- I will always remember Pauline for her warmth, her smile and the sense of fun she and Colin brought to the services they took. May she rest in peace. Colin, Clare and Ciaran are in my prayers.  
*Anne Dellow*
- We are so sorry to hear this sad news. Pauline had put up a brave fight but now she can rest in peace. Thinking of you, Colin, Clare and Ciaran. God Bless.  
*Diane Foster*
- Pauline was an amazing lady inside and out. I've always had fond memories of her and she always brightened our Sundays with her sketches and made sure to have TDY involved. I was lucky enough to have her as my unit leader as a Brownie when I was little, and then as a volunteer at the unit just before lockdown. I know she was an inspiration to so many people inside and outside the church. Our prayers are with Colin, Clare and Ciaran.  
*Rochelle Inbakumar*
- We will miss Pauline very much. the Lord has gained an inspirational and humorous worship leader and we have lost one. I recall the words at the end of `A Tale of Two Cities`, it is a far better place Pauline has gone to than she has ever been. It is a far better rest Pauline knows now than she has ever known. I take comfort in this thought. God Bless and Comfort you and your family Colin.  
*Jan and John Pearson*

- Pauline was a lovely lady, and she will be greatly missed by all who were lucky to have known her. My prayers are with you Colin, Clare and Ciaran.  
*Kay Whiddon*
- Even though it has been a relatively short time I have known Pauline, it has been an honour and a pleasure knowing her. I pray that the peace which passes all understanding now be with Colin, Clare and Ciaran.  
*Sandra Folkes*
- Pauline will be missed, but remembered for her sense of fun, joy and kindness, especially by my family and I. May she rest in peace. God bless and spread comforting arms around you Colin and your family.  
*Oli Fadojutimi*
- My thoughts and prayers are with Colin, Clare and Ciaran at their tragic loss. I also raise a glass and drink a toast to dear Pauline, who fought a long, valiant fight. she may have lost this battle but as a woman of faith, her efforts have won her a seat at the best table in town – the Lords table. Praying for you all.  
*Ruth Joyce*
- This is the saddest news. Pauline was a fun and joyous woman who has left her mark in this world. The courageous fight she put up, with the support of her loving family and friends is inspirational. A lovely human being. May God bless and enfold Colin, Clare and Ciaran.  
*Lorraine and Peter Bendon*



## Mmasape's Father

*Mmasape informed us that her dear father died on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at home in South Africa with his sons by his side. As you will know, Mmasape recently spent several weeks in South Africa looking after her parents and ensuring their care needs were well provided for before she left. We hold Mmasape and her family both here and in South Africa in our prayers.*

## **Olive and Doug Hazard**

I am informed by Mike Seviour that his Aunt, Olive Hazard sadly died on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021 aged 92 and Doug is currently in hospital following a fall and has Pneumonia and the Covid virus.

Olive and Doug left Castleview Gardens in Redbridge 30 years ago to live many happy years in Felixstowe. Recently when they both needed extra support, they moved together to a care home.

Some of you may remember Olive who along with Doug worked tirelessly at The Drive fulfilling many roles in church life. Olive was a long serving Sunday School Superintendent as well as being a Church Steward, Flower Secretary and Leader of the then Church Playgroup. They were a great team.

Mike described Doug as a one-man Property Committee, who could be found cutting the grass in the summer and in the winter, down in the boiler room at least twice a day setting the valves to heat the various rooms as there was no automation in those days. Mike recalls what an arduous task this was when from aged 14 he was occasionally called on to

cover for Doug if he was unavailable. Doug continued until Catherine Sayers took over as Property Steward around 1979

Olive and Doug were very kind to Peter and myself when we had our young family. Olive encouraged me to work alongside her in the playgroup and when she resigned her leadership she and Doug came back as volunteers and were very loved by the children. when I took over managing the Playgroup Olive was always there to offer support and encouragement.

I also was Olives flower arranger `apprentice' when she took her turn on the flower arranger rota and spent many interesting hours `learning the craft' in the parlour kitchen. Happy Times indeed. Olive lived a long, busy and useful life and was a credit to her Christian faith. I remember her with great fondness.

Jill, their daughter lives in Maldon and Richard their son lives in Cumbria.

## **Lorraine**

### *Prayers for Family and Friends from Colin*

**A Prayer for My Family** - God, Thank You for my family. You tell us that no family is put together by accident. That the people in our lives are placed there by You. Thank You for making us a loving family and the support they give.

Amen

**A Prayer for My Friends** - God, Thank You for my friends. You tell us that it is not good to be alone, God, and bless us with friends all around us. Thank You for giving us people to talk to and laugh with. I pray for my friends today, that they have a good day and a blessed life. They are a blessing to me, God, when I need them the most. Just like Jesus is to

me. Help me to be kind like Jesus. To be a good friend to others and spread His love.

Amen

## **Hello from Frank**

Thank you all for your lovely cards and good wishes. Happy New Year and hope to see you soon. 

## *Congratulations and Best Wishes*

Since our last newsletter, I know of Jo and Funmi who celebrated their birthdays on 30<sup>th</sup> December.

Hope you both had a very special day.

Congratulations to anyone I have missed who has celebrated a special occasion.



## **A Prayer for a New Year**

The District Chairs hope that 2021 will be a year of healing and new opportunities for the communities that we serve. When we make our Covenant promises we are reminded that we continue to have faith in God, in both the good times and the challenging times; and we commit ourselves to remain faithful, as God remains faithful to us. As the writer to the Thessalonians reminds us, we are to rejoice always, to pray without ceasing and to give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for us all. So, as we go forward together in love, faith and fellowship, here is a prayer of praise that we might use in this New Year.

*Creator God, we praise you for this New Year, for opportunities to worship, together or 'on-line', for this moment in our lives.*

*Creator God, we praise you for all that you have made, for all that you have given, for all that you have promised.*

*Redeemer God, we praise you for the new life found in Christ, for the chance to begin again, for the story of salvation.*

*Redeemer God, we praise you for your grace that is without limit, for your love which knows no end, for your living among us.*

*Sustainer God, we praise you for the gift of your Spirit, for the outpouring of your love, for the fruits of our relationship with you.*

*Sustainer God, we praise you for your open embrace of all, for your infectious joy, for your presence in our lives.  
Amen*

With blessings, **Micky, Nigel and Jongi**  
*Chairs of the London District of the Methodist Church*

Let's remember –  
to look after one another....



HANDS



FACE



SPACE

## News of meetings from Jan and John



**Church Prayer Meeting** on January 28 from 7:15 to 7:45. We pray at home for the time being. A prayer sheet to guide us in our prayers will be on the Church website.

**Bible Reading Group** will meet on Zoom on Friday January 8<sup>th</sup> and Friday January 29<sup>th</sup> (time to be announced on The Drive WhatsApp group). We will be discussing 1 Peter ch. 1 on the 8<sup>th</sup> and ch. 2 on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

Do please contact Jan or John if you would like to join these meetings.



## ***Christmas in the New Normal***

I was very grateful that Thea was able to come home from Uni for Christmas. Especially as one of her friends waited and then was told to stay in Southampton when her home county entered a higher tier.

Our Christmas day was quieter than previously, but we enjoyed the time spent with my mum, and scaring all the neighbours when we sang the descants along with the TV service!

Work has been tough this year, I've had to go out and do visits both locally and further afield when I'd rather stay safe and work from home. But I also know others would like to be working under any circumstances. Some of the simplest things have given the greatest pleasure, including seeing family and friends after lock down and friends making the effort to visit me at home or drop by and make a choir recording!

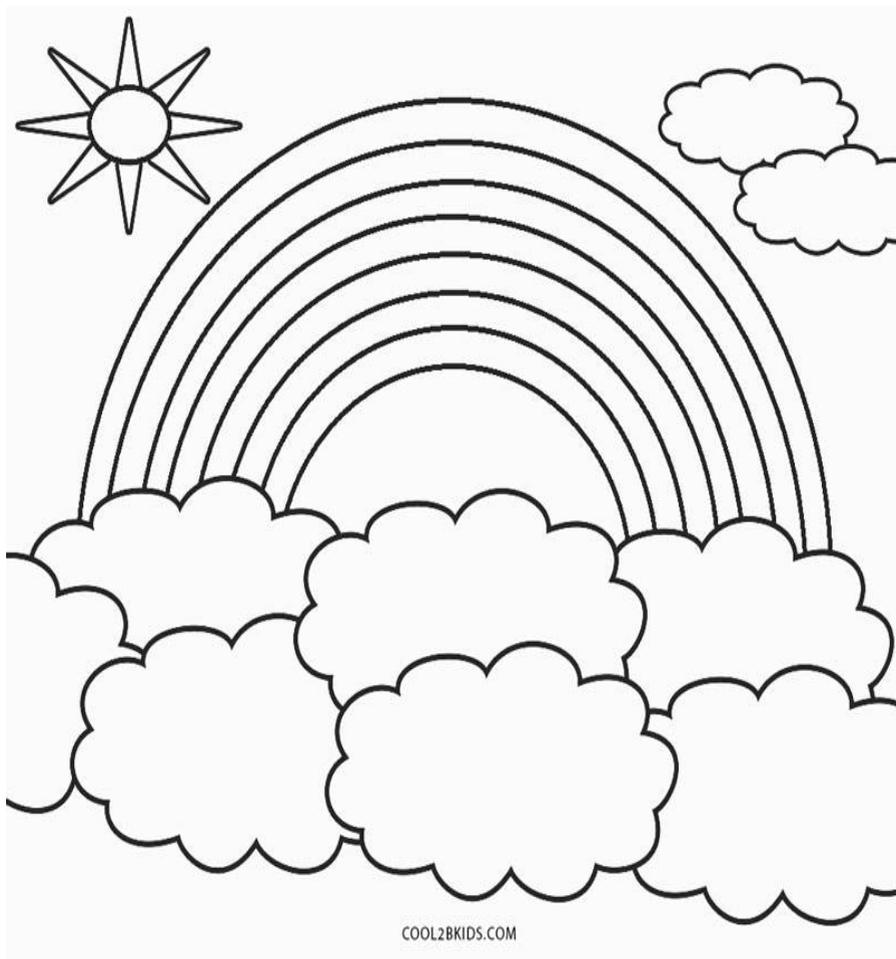
In 2020 we had time to put some energy into sorting out various rooms at home and that felt good. Health has been a major talking point and in 2021 I am planning to take better care of myself. Creativity has been important, Thea learnt to embroider, and I have a rag-rug project that would love me to give it some attention. I started to play my CDs again and have a loud sing and a dance - very good for de-stressing! I want to keep 'an attitude of gratitude' and remember to be grateful for all the things I have and can still do. I also want to do better at staying in touch with people and that has become very important now we're not seeing each other, and I know myself how lovely it is to hear from others and to know they are thinking of you.

I have been missing seeing you all and I'm hoping to see you this year at church! **Michelle**

We miss you too Michelle and the amazing work of Social Workers is much appreciated. **LB**

## Colouring Page

### Gods Rainbow of Hope and Promise



Putting the choir back together... 🎵 🎵 🎵

There have been no choir practices since March – and only a few opportunities since then to sing together in church. It has been playing on my mind that apart from a choir WhatsApp group I have done little to keep the choir together during the pandemic.

Anyone with access to social media in the last nine months will have seen many films of choirs and other groups of musicians seemingly performing together from their own homes. In reality these films take much time and effort to create. A backing track is sent to each musician, which they listen to through headphones as they record their individual part at home. The separate recordings are then sent to an editor whose job it is to stitch them all together to make it look and sound like everyone was performing at the same time.

This is not something we have attempted at The Drive (yet...!). At the school where I work, we have been filming some end of term performances from the children to share with parents and carers at home, as they are unable to come in to watch as normal. This gave me the idea to do a film with the school's staff singing "The 12 Days of Christmas" - and that in turn gave me an idea about a film I could do with the church choir.

The plan was to film choir members on their own doorsteps singing a Christmas Carol. Trying to record individual voices with a background of street noise was going to be impossible, so we used a recording of "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" from the 2017 Carol Service. I drove round to each house, set up my tripod at the end of the path, played the recording to myself and sang along with the choir members to ensure their mouths were moving at the right time for the film edit later! Then they were required to be filmed coming out of their doors, opening their carol books, closing their carol books and going back inside. Most people had to deal with the door themselves, but if you look closely you might notice that Diane had a hidden Jeremy behind her door, opening

and closing it unseen like they do in 10 Downing Street. There was an extra idea of having everybody waving and saying, "Merry Christmas!", but after the first few attempts that was soon dropped!

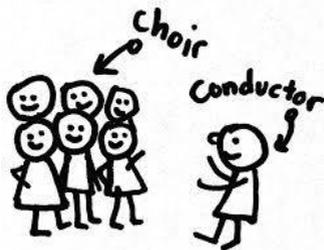
The actual filming took only 5-10 minutes at each house, but it was great to be able to have a socially distanced chat with people as well. Back at home on the computer, the editing was considerably more time-consuming than the filming, but each new film I do teaches me more about the iMovie programme!

So now 2021 has come and it is evident that things will not be back to "normal" for a long time yet. What next for our choir and all our other Drive musicians?

I'm thinking about it; ideas welcome.....

Andrew

**BRAVO**, it was splendid 



## **New Years Resolutions!**

**The ancient Babylonians** are said to have been the first people to make New Year's resolutions, some 4,000 years ago. They were also the first to hold recorded celebrations in honour of the new year—though for them the year began not in January but in mid-March, when the crops were planted. During a massive 12-day religious festival known as Akitu, the Babylonians crowned a new king or reaffirmed their loyalty to the reigning king. They also made promises to the gods to pay their debts and return any objects they had borrowed. These promises could be considered the forerunners of our New Year's resolutions. If the Babylonians kept to their word, their (pagan) gods would bestow favour on them for the coming year. If not, they would fall out of the gods' favour—a place no one wanted to be.

**For early Christians**, the first day of the New Year became the traditional occasion for thinking about one's past mistakes and resolving to do and be better in the future. In 1740, the English clergyman John Wesley, founder of Methodism, created the Covenant Renewal Service, most commonly held on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day. Also known as Watch Night Services, they included readings from Scriptures and hymn singing, and served as a spiritual alternative to the raucous celebrations normally held to celebrate the coming of the new year.

**My New Year Resolution, not to eat chocolate..... when I'm asleep.**

**LB**

## **Take my Son. A contribution from Brian Grinham**

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect works of art. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael and they would often sit together and admire the great works of art.

When the Vietnam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door where a young man stood with a large package in his hands. He said "Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love of art." The young man held out the package. "I know this isn't much as I'm really not a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this."

It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears.

He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. "Oh no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift."

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having the opportunity to purchase one for their collection.

On the platform sat the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. "We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?" There was silence.

Then a voice from the back of the room shouted, "We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one." But the auctioneer persisted. "Will somebody bid for this painting. Who will start the bidding? £100, £200?"

Another voice angrily. "We didn't come to see this painting. We want to see the Van Goghs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids!"

But still the auctioneer continued: "The son! The son! Who'll take the son?"

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the long-time gardener of the man and his son. "I'll give £10 for the painting." Being a poor man, it was all he could afford.

"We have £10, who will bid £20?" "Give it to him for £10. Let's see the masters." "£10 is the bid, won't someone bid £20?"

The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections.

The auctioneer pounded his gavel. "Going once, going twice, SOLD for £10.!" A man sitting on the second row shouted, "Now let's get on with the real collection!"

The auctioneer laid down his gavel. "I'm sorry the auction is over. I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son was to be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything!"

God gave His son 2,000 years ago to die on the cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is: **“The son, the son, who’ll take the son? Because, you see, whoever takes the Son gets everything”**

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, WHO SO EVER BELIEVETH, SHALL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE...THAT’S LOVE!!!

**SUPPORT REDBRIDGE FOOD BANK**

**Jubilee Church - 14 Granville Road Ilford IG1 4JY**

020 8518 0056

Website <http://redbridge.foodbank.org.uk/>

While we are unable to use the foodbank box in the church foyer. Please take donations to Granville Road.

**Apart from food- Urgently needed are toilet rolls, shampoo, shower gel, size 5 & 6 nappies.**

**Praise My Soul** – A favourite Hymn of Elise (Michelle's Mum)

1. *Praise, my soul, the King of heaven, to his feet your tribute bring; ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, who like you his praise should sing?*

*Alleluia, alleluia! praise the everlasting King.*

2. *Praise him for his grace and favour to our fathers in distress; praise him, still the same as ever, slow to blame and swift to bless;*

*Alleluia, alleluia! glorious in his faithfulness.*

3. *Father-like, he tends and spares us, All our hopes and fears he knows; in his hands he gently bears us, rescues us from all our foes:*

*Alleluia, alleluia! widely as his mercy flows.*

4. *Angels, help us to adore him; you behold him face to face; sun and moon, bow down before him, praise him all in time and space.*

*Alleluia, alleluia! praise with us the God of grace.*

Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847) (adapted) Based on Psalm 103

## **A Poem about a little house built for children by their parents**

*When strong young hands first built your frame  
Around the place where children came  
A sapling struggled to firm its root  
Our future memories were yet to fruit.*

*A tiny patch of make believe  
Where childhood waited to conceive  
The adult yet to come  
And loving work of parents, just begun.*

*When safe inside, their dreams unfurled  
With borrowed time from another world  
They captured precious moments there  
And stored for grown up minds to share.*

*The place where fun and joy were free  
Now sits preserved beneath a tree  
Whose roots are firm and strong  
And adults gaze to where their hearts belong.*



Anon

## **Our friends Betty and Elsie**

As so many were unable to attend the services for our dear departed friends Elsie and Betty, I thought the newsletter would be the ideal vehicle to share the Eulogies that were read at their services. **LB**

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## **A Eulogy for Betty Griffiths**

**Written by her cousin Richard and read by her friend Hilary.**

Betty was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1928. her father Edward was a Stockbrokers Clerk, and her mother, Ethel, a waitress in Lyons.

Wartime separation from her father who was in the RAF, ended her parent's marriage, although they never divorced. Betty was very upset by the separation as she loved her father deeply and only saw him again once, very briefly before he died in 1966. Betty cared for her mother until her passing in 1986. That, and caring for an elderly aunt made Bettys life very stressful over a long period especially as she had a demanding fulltime job.

Schooling started at St Josephs Convent in Wanstead. Then at the outbreak of war she and her mother were evacuated to Devon. Betty again attended a Convent School there until bombing in Exmouth meant it was safer to be back in Ilford. They returned home in 1943 where Betty continued her education at Pitman's College, Forest Gate to learn secretarial skills, although she really wanted to be a Nanny or Veterinary Nurse.

Her work life was in the city for 43 years, starting as a Junior Shorthand Typist in Guinness Mahon in 1945. she steadily progressed working initially for one of the managers and then for Dudley Scholey one of the partners. Besides being a

banker, he was also the chairman of Orion Insurance company. During the years she worked for him she regularly spent time, both at Eyhurst, his Surrey Estate and at Orion's offices where, she joined their staff full time. She remained there for the rest of her working life until she retired in 1987.

Retirement was the happiest time of her whole life. Free from family responsibilities, she was able to enjoy her home, her garden see more of friends and, at long last work with children and animals. Betty was able to join many of the church activities including volunteering at The Drive Playgroup and running The Mother and Toddler group with her friend Jane Shields. At long last she was able to give a home to two dogs.

From being the first baby to be christened at The Drive Church, Betty had a lifelong connection here, apart from 1948 to 1952, when she became a member of Westminster Central Hall because she very much admired the Minister Dr Sangster.

During the war, and after returning from Devon, the Griffiths family home in Windermere Gardens was destroyed by a Doodlebug (flying bomb) and for a while Betty and her Mum took shelter in the Church Hall.

Betty was not afraid to go to other places of worship and she occasionally went to the Salvationists (too noisy) and the Quakers whom she admired, but for which she said she had the wrong temperament – no music, no set service, no colour or beauty. Methodism "fitted" her best (even if inwardly she tailored it a bit)

There was so much information in the notes Betty left, that it would take the whole service to recall it all. Typically, they included many reminiscences and references to other important people in her life, rather than herself. Until the very last

moments she was concerned for others and asking how they were faring.

At the end of the notes there is a paragraph she headed "I would like to be remembered as". I think that its contents sum up Betty very well. "One who always tried to follow Jesus – rather than the teachings of the church – was truly grateful for all her many blessings and the priceless gift of friendship. Loved kids, dogs, music, flowers, laughter and beauty in all its forms. was never Particularly good at anything but loved having a bash at everything. Always tried, like Thoreau, to keep in step with the music she had in her own heart and mind, even if at times it really made her out of step with everybody else! failed miserably in so many ways, but really did TRY!"

It has been so evident from the very many messages that both I and her friend Kaye have received during the past two weeks, just how much love and affection Betty gave to all her friends during her life. Almost everyone who has made contact wanted to take the time to reminisce about the thoughtfulness, care and kindness that Betty had always shown to her friends. Several spoke about her regular telephone calls and the caring way she would remember important dates in her friends lives (both the happy and the sad ones) often sending little commemorative gifts. She wrote beautifully crafted letter which were always a joy to receive and which she used lovely turns of phrase and wonderful `Bettyisms`

This is a time to remember our Betty, her generosity, her loyalty and especially her warmth. It is so sad that, because of the present situation, only a few family and friends are able to be present to give thanks for her life. ♥

## **A Eulogy for Elsie Blanchard**

This special tribute written about Elsie by her nephew Geoff and read by his son Ben. **LB**

**Hello, I'm Ben, Elsie's great nephew.** I would like to thank you all for coming, either in person or on webcast, to celebrate the life of Elsie and to say a fond farewell.

I will now read you the words of my father Geoff, who is sadly unable to be here to pay tribute to his Aunt Elsie himself.

*Today we celebrate the life of Elsie May Blanchard, someone who was close to me from the day I was born; a true gentlewoman, small of stature but a radiant presence.*

*The virus which so cruelly took her from us also prevents my being here in person, which causes me great distress. Without fail, I will be at the memorial service when circumstances allow.*

*That will be held at the Methodist landmark on The Drive, Ilford, the church Elsie attended for more than 40 years, usually with her sister Ella, my late mother.*

*She drew great strength, comfort and inspiration from her faith and from the strong bonds of fellowship within the congregation -- she cherished the many lasting friendships she made over the decades.*

*As she helped those less fortunate than herself in her younger years, so church members became her lifeline in old age.*

*Mentioning a few, in no particular order, I'm thinking of Anne Dellow, Ruth Joyce, Jo Wright and her lovely family, and a host of others. I call them Elsie's Angels. Their devotion to her, their support and countless good deeds, really defy description. To me, this selfless support sums up what the Christian teachings are all about.*

*There are many who lament Elsie's passing, some as far away as Australia and America. For me, her departure means the loss of a central figure in my life.*

*You'll see on the back cover of the order-of-service a photo of me aged two with Elsie, who was then 23. She had no children herself and it's fair to say she rather spoiled me. Over time, my own wonderful children and grandchildren became her extended family.*

*She and my mother Ella were inseparable, more like twins, and Elsie was always there for me, almost like a second mother. She offered guidance, wisdom, reassurance, and love. And a great deal of laughter.*

*She was not only a mine of information; she also possessed a photographic memory, which didn't fade with age. This gift was invaluable when I started putting together a family history. I was forever phoning to ask her for obscure details and dates. With her amazing power of recall she invariably had the answer.*

*Naturally, her own exploits have a special place in the family story, and what a fascinating tale it is. For her generation, the Second World War was the pivotal event. Elsie was working as a shorthand typist when it started, and later became a nurse.*

*During air raids she and the other nurses were required to stay on the wards with patients who couldn't be moved, even when the hospital itself was shaking from the bomb blasts.*

*She was never daunted by the danger but her wage was just a few shillings for a 72-hour-week, and she simply couldn't make ends meet.*

*Because of her phenomenal typing speed she was accepted at the country's top telegraphy school and became proficient in all forms of secret communication, Morse code and other cyphers.*

*She was posted to the island of Malta, which was under constant German attack. Even getting there was hazardous: the British aircraft ahead of hers was shot down by an enemy fighter. Transmitting top-secret messages to our allies, she held the rank of lieutenant. It may be hard to imagine my little aunt as an officer, but that's what she was, probably the most petite officer in the British army.*

*When peace finally came, she transferred to Germany and worked for the British Control Commission, helping to reconstruct that devastated nation.*

*She was there for five years, again with officer's rank, and spent her time travelling around the country with a military escort, compiling reports on the conditions and needs of the population.*

*In her leisure hours she indulged one of her hidden talents: horse-riding. Yes, she was an accomplished rider; her commanding officer would ask her to test-ride horses to see if they were okay for his 14-year-old daughter.*

*It was the start of the Cold War, and Elsie became involved in cloak-and-dagger adventures worthy of a John le Carre novel. There was romance, too. It was a deep comfort to her to discover, quite recently, that the Polish war hero with whom she fell in love had gone on to have a successful and fulfilling life.*

*Back in the UK she spent some years in Fleet Street, witnessing at first-hand the habits of national newspaper journalists. Having been one myself, I can tell you that it's not always edifying!*

*In the Sixties she worked for Minister of Technology Frank Cousins who, some of you may remember, was once Britain's most powerful trade union leader. Written English was not Frank's strong point, and Elsie gave him lots of help when he was drafting speeches.*

*Her final job was with Britain's Atomic Power Authority, for which she was bound by the Official Secrets Act. After retirement, until her eyesight failed, she remained in regular correspondence with one of the leading figures in atomic science.*

*I think you'll agree, Elsie lived a hugely eventful life. She was always known for her unassuming dignity, strength of character and sense of duty. She was unflagging in her devotion to her parents, constantly putting their needs before her own. Above all, she never allowed herself to become dispirited by the inevitable setbacks of life.*

*In her later years she bore her ailments and increasing blindness with immense fortitude and cheerfulness. And she was blessed by having so many wonderful friends who were always on hand to help.*

*I've lived abroad for some years but I never felt distanced from Elsie. We spoke on the phone regularly and it was always a joy. There have been times recently when I've thought "I must phone Elsie", momentarily forgetting that she is no longer at the other end of the line.*

*I miss her more than words can say. I console myself by conjuring up an image of Elsie and Ella together again, enjoying one of their laughter-filled chinwags over a nice cup of tea with bourbon biscuits.*

*Until the memorial service...God bless you all, and my never-to-be-forgotten, irreplaceable Aunt Elsie.*

*Thank you.*

**Wasn't that marvellous! Two amazing accounts of the lives of two very special ladies. LB**



## **Advice and Support**

The Redbridge Handyperson Scheme carries out odd jobs around the home for vulnerable residents, free of charge or at a low cost, depending on your eligibility. This includes fitting locks and security chains and key safes.

Phone 020 8501 7778 or

email [handyperson@atlantic-housing.com](mailto:handyperson@atlantic-housing.com).

### **NHS VOLUNTEER RESPONDER**

#### **DELIVERED BY THE ROYAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

Do you need some help at this time?

Do you need help to isolate due to a health condition?

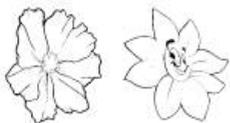
If you need a hand with collecting shopping or prescriptions, or just want someone to talk to:

our **NHS VOLUNTEER RESPONDERS** are here to help.

**CALL 0808 196 3646**

or go to

[nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk](http://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk)



# Spring



W H M Z A L K R S G U B E C H T Q I  
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|-----------|-------------|---------|--------|--------|
| BIRDS     | CALF        | GARDEN  | LAMB   | SNAIL  |
| BLOSSOM   | CATERPILLAR | GRASS   | NATURE | SPRING |
| BUGS      | CHICKS      | HATCH   | NEST   | SPROUT |
| BUNNY     | FLOWERS     | INSECTS | RABBIT | TULIP  |
| BUTTERFLY | FROG        | LADYBUG | ROBIN  | WORM   |



## Helplines and Support

**Victim Support** is here to help anyone affected by crime. Because we're an independent charity, you can talk to us whether or not you've reported the crime to the police. We are here just to support you. Freephone **08 08 16 89 111**

[www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/support-near-you/east-england/essex](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/support-near-you/east-england/essex)

**Domestic Abuse** Call Refuge's National Domestic Abuse free 24 hr helpline for confidential advice, on **0808 2000 247**. To access further information, and the live chat service [www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk). If you are in immediate danger, call 999.

**Mind for mental health support** Infoline: 03001233393  
Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

**Samaritans** If you need someone to talk to urgently and in confidence — the Samaritans are able to offer 24hr emotional support. 08457 90 90 90, for the cost of a local call, or alternatively visit their website at

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

### **Childline**

You can talk to us about anything. No problem is too big or too small.

Call 0800 1111 or via 1-2-1 chat between 7.30am and 3.30am every day.

## *A Blessing*

*See that ye be at peace among yourselves,  
my children and love one another.  
follow the example of the wise and good  
and God will comfort you and help you,  
both in this world and in the world which  
is to come.*

*In the name of the Father, and of the son  
and of the Holy Spirit.*

*Amen*

## *Northumbria Community*

During the restrictions, our church remains closed for services. Please check on the church website or call one of the church stewards to be updated.