

NEWS LETTER

Heath Street
Baptist Church
Hampstead



Minister: Ewan King

Minister's Letter

Dear all,

This Easter it was wonderful to be welcome friends from *Beheimgasse Baptistengemeinde*, Vienna, Austria, who all came over to help us out with our holy week arts mission. I believe I'm right in saying this was Heath Street's first ever community passion play. Certainly it was the first time in recent years we've tried something like this, and just accommodating all of these guests was a challenge in itself, for help in which I'm deeply grateful to the various local congregations who helped us out!

The shadow play itself was the moving and occasionally hilarious story of two quarrelsome detectives lumbered with an investigation into reports of the disappearance of a body – that of a Jewish malefactor crucified on an unknown charge. Their investigations led them into a series of encounters, firstly with people associated in various ways with the elusive subject of their investigations, later with the mystery man himself - and finally with one another.

New as all this was for me and for the present congregation, collaboration with German-speaking Christians is by no means a novelty for our church. Our second minister, Herbert Newton Marshall, studied in Halle, and in 1902 it was a Berlin printer who published a book that rejoiced in the snappy title *Die gegenwärtigen Richtungen der Religionsphilosophie in England und ihre erkenntnistheoretischen Grundlagen*. The book never made the best-seller lists, but together with his friend Rushbrooke (minister over the way in Hampstead Garden Suburb), Newton Marshall was instrumental in setting up the European Baptist Fellowship in the early years of the last century. In more recent times, many will remember Edwin Robertson's scholarly devotion to the legacy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. So it's good to have picked up the threads of this relationship, one which will, I hope, be reprised in the not too distant future.

This newsletter for the Easter season seems like the perfect place to share a poem I recently translated from the (infinitely better!) original Danish of N. F. S. Grundtvig.

much love,

Ewan

Daffodil

Daffodil! what brings you here?
spring-time's child, so pale and slender,
in this turning of the year,
without charm or grace or splendour?
who will weave your humble stem
in a rustic diadem?
which sweet-singing bird will carry
your renown through this green valley?

Crimson-petaled, silver-leaved,
in the breeze of soft midsummer,
rose and lily thrive and breathe:
frost nor snow shall never come there!
You sprang up on hill and plain,
in the chilly winter's rain;
none, save those, your praise have spoken,
who hold dear what you betoken.

Daffodil, but is it true,
do we hold some sacred mission?
dare we hope to meet anew

souls in dark earth long imprisoned?
did he rise, as runs the tale?
can his word again prevail,
cast aside death's tattered garments,
rise in us, and all his servants?

If within that narrow cell
evermore the dead shall linger,
we must bury hope as well:
no new spring will end our winter;
all must pass and be forgot,
if God's finger touch us not,
and this flesh, reforged, converted,
lamp-like shine, in gloomy church-yard.

Daffodil, a mighty drop,
from the rim of your bright chalice
touched my lips, and fills me up,
with strange comfort, hope, and solace;
matinsong, and cockcrow shrill,
seemed, I thought, from it to spill,
and - their ancient tombs forsaken -
I saw easter's dead awaken!

Even so! your word holds true -
from the dead Our Lord is woken!
walks alive in easter's dew -
that is each good friday's token;
He who swore all ills to cure
holds the key to every door;
what are sword, or shield, or seal?
Death itself to him must yield!

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Dear All,

I am your new Church Secretary, having taken over from Gaynor Humphreys.

The Church owes Gaynor an enormous debt of gratitude for managing the duties of Secretary and Treasurer so wonderfully for many years and I am personally indebted to her for all the help and advice she has given me as incoming Secretary.

Many of you will know me already from Church. I have been coming to Heath Street since 1981 and have been a member since 1985. I was elected Deacon last June and took over as Secretary at the end of September. I am a regular helper at Contact Club (our Sunday night drop in for the homeless, lonely and vulnerable people in our community).

I am aware that one of the most important functions of the Newsletter is to help keep those who are no longer able to worship with us, in touch with Church life, and to provide a means for you to keep in touch with us, so do send me your news and any changes of address, either by e mail (0) or by letter addressed to me at the Church.

One of my jobs as Secretary is to organise Church meetings and I would encourage all who are able, to attend these meetings, which provide a more detailed picture of Church life, including future plans and a forum for discussion.

Another responsibility I have is to liaise with other local churches through the ecumenical group: *Churches together in Hampstead*. I am really enjoying this as I am naturally ecumenical. I have visited a number of other churches in the group but have yet to tackle the local Quaker meeting as I have serious problems keeping quiet for any length of time!

Of course, we always need helpers, so do get in touch with me if you are able to help with stewarding, Saturday Coffee mornings or Contact Club

Do remember that you can check times of services and keep up with events at the Church by visiting our website at www.heathstreet.org

Finally, don't forget that Christian Aid Week is coming up (14th-20th May). Do contribute via the Church (Heath Street or your local church) or the charity's website and, if you can, go on one of their sponsored walks: they are great fun and help you to keep fit.

God Bless
Theresa Thom
Church Secretary

Fim Review: *Ecce Homo: Martin Scorsese's Silence* (James Cave)

There's a decisive moment towards the end of Martin Scorsese's latest film *Silence*, when a Catholic priest, Father Rodrigues, is urged by his Japanese inquisitors to renounce his faith, by stepping on a *fumi-e*, a crude wooden image of Christ. Rodrigues' - and the viewer's - anguish is heightened by the screams of tortured Christians that can be heard in the background. 'Renounce Christ' say his tormentors, 'and they will be free: it is only because of your selfishness that they suffer.'

What Rodrigues does next determines not only his own fate, but that of his fellow captives. Scorsese treats the priest's depth of faith - and the attendant moral gravity of his dilemma - with complete seriousness, and, in so doing, enables the viewer, whatever their personal belief, to enter fully into Rodrigues' predicament. Is it right, we ask ourselves, to renounce that which one holds most dear, in order to save others? Or should we hold fast to that which we consider sacred, no matter the cost?

Images of faith and doubt, depictions of doomed quests for self-discovery and spiritual fulfilment, and sudden reversals of fortune, have provided the substance of Scorsese's films from *Mean Streets* onwards. Watching Andrew Garfield's tortured Rodrigues, one thinks of Jake La-Motta in *GoodFellas*, as he makes his descent from heavyweight champion to punch-drunk deadbeat, and of *Taxi Driver*'s Travis Bickle, whose obsessive determination to 'wipe the scum off the streets' of New York turns him first into a criminal, then into a hero. In a recent interview with Father James Martin, editor of the *Jesuit Review*, Scorsese described *Silence* as a continuation of the spiritual journey that he has pursued throughout his body of work. If Scorsese's characters oscillate between hope and despair, perplexity and enlightenment, it is because the director himself has also traced this path, a path that 'never ends'.

Watching this pivotal scene in *Silence*, I was put in mind of a recent sermon by the Dean of York Minster, Vivian Faull, in which she explored two different ways of thinking about time, *chronos* and *kairos*. These concepts derive from Greek philosophy, and, therefore also heavily influenced the early fathers of the Christian church. *Chronos*, she explained, is simply time as it unfolds in a straight line; what we might think of as clock time. *Kairos*, on the other hand, describes those decisive moments in our lives at which something of great importance is decided. This could be something of superficial significance, like buying a house or changing job. But more often a *kairos* moment is one at which some kind of new spiritual realisation is achieved, where God's purpose can be seen to be directly at work, albeit often in a veiled manner. So, Faull argued, when the author of *Ecclesiastes* writes:

There is a time to live and a time to die...

he is commenting on the way in which *kairos* moments give shape and narrative to our lives.

I shan't provide any clues to the outcome of Rodrigues' own *kairos* moment, except to say that Rodrigues' actions simply present us with the question common to all of Scorsese's greatest films: are we looking

at a strong man or a weakling, a hero or an outcast? It is no coincidence that this is also one of the central questions of the Christian faith. For Scorsese is, at heart, a profoundly religious artist, albeit an unconventional one, like Palestrina with a switchblade, or Masaccio with a boxing-glove.

Reviewer's note: *Silence* (dir Martin Scorsese) is rated Cert 15 for strong, bloody violence. It's frequent scenes of torture and execution may be disturbing for some viewers.

Institution and Induction of a new Vicar at Hampstead Parish Church

Hampstead Parish Church has a new vicar: The Revd Jeremy Fletcher, previously Vicar of Beverley Minster. I was delighted to join a large and diverse congregation (including representatives of the local community and other local churches) for his service of Institution and Induction on 16th March.

As a Non-Conformist, I had never before witnessed such a ceremony and found it quite fascinating. As the title suggests, the ceremony comprised two distinct parts: the Induction, during which the Bishop of Edmonton, The Right Revd Robert Wickham, gave the new Vicar the 'cure of souls', then the Induction, during which the Archdeacon of Hampstead (The Ven. John Hawkins), mandated by the Bishop, inducted the Vicar 'into the real and actual possession' of the church 'with all the rights and responsibilities belonging to it'

The service commenced with a fulsome greeting from the Bishop, liberally peppered with applause from the congregation. The Church Wardens then presented the new Vicar to the Bishop for The Affirmation, during which the incoming Vicar gave assurance that he accepted his responsibilities towards those to whom he was sent and the people promised to encourage and support him.

There followed various declarations and oaths, including The Oath of Allegiance and The Oath of Canonical Obedience, a Collect (set prayer) and readings from the Old and New Testaments (The Liturgy of the Word). Those of you familiar with Church of England services will

be aware that the congregation is required to stand during the Gospel reading: fortunately this one, the story of Lazarus, from Luke 15, was not too long!

The Bishop then preached a sermon which addressed the particular challenges to ministry in Hampstead, with specific reference to social issues such as inflated property prices, inequality of wealth, long working hours for many, and loneliness (Hampstead having an unusually high proportion of single occupancy households).

The short ceremony of Institution then commenced. A legal document conferring the 'cure of souls', was read by the Bishop and delivered to the incoming Vicar. The ceremony concluded with prayer and blessing.

Then followed the Induction, which I found the most fascinating section of the service. The Bishop delivered the mandate of Induction to the Archdeacon who then took the Vicar's hand and marched him all the way down the aisle to the West Door (in his speech at the reception afterwards, Jeremy Fletcher said this bit reminded him somewhat of his wedding!).

Once at the door, the Archdeacon placed the Vicar's hand on the door handle, handed him the keys to the church building and inducted him into possession of the Church.

As if this was not dramatic enough, the Archdeacon and Vicar then ascended some stairs at the back of the church to toll the church bell (both were sadly out of sight for this bit so I cannot say whether any actual rope pulling was involved or just button pressing!). The Vicar and The Archdeacon then returned and marched back up the aisle (still hand in hand) to the front, where the Vicar was placed in his stall (which, admittedly makes him sound a bit like a horse: it was, nonetheless, quite moving). After leading the people in prayers of intercession, the new incumbent was greeted by the church wardens, welcomed by all, with more applause, and introduced to representatives of the local community (including the M.P.) and local churches.

We were then brought firmly down to earth as the new Vicar announced the times of services for the following Sunday and delivered another notices.

The service concluded with Holy Communion which, as the number of communicants was so large, was delivered not only at the High Altar, but also at two additional stations.

As I had expected, the service included a wide variety of excellent music, with contributions from the adult and junior church choirs and the choir of Hampstead Parochial School, as well as lusty congregational singing of favourite hymns.

The whole evening was rounded off with a Reception at University College School, which included less formal speeches and featured a splendid cake!

Theresa Thom

April 30th – May 6th

Acts 2.14a, 36-41

30th For all in hospital

(May) 1st Onome Okunlola

2nd Heini King

3rd Sharon Williams

4th Jan Cowen

5th Nesa Thorne

6th Paul Conrad

May 7th – 13th

Acts 2.42-47

7th Gaynor Humphreys

8th Ethan McLeod

9th John Baker

10th Thaddeus King

11th Edward Humphreys

12th For the Baptist Union of Great Britain

13th Lana Okunlola

May 14th – 20th

Acts 7.55-60

14th Frida King

15th Rebecca and Neil McLeod

16th For all who perform at and attend the lunchtime recitals

17th For the Ukraine

18th For the bereaved

19th For our church secretary

20th HM

May 21st – 27th21st For all in prison22nd Annie23rd Evelyn Baker24th Judith Peak25th *'Then up to heaven I did ascend,*26th *Where now I dwell in sure substance.'*27th Euan McLeod**Acts 17.22-31****May 28th – June 3rd**28th *'On the right hand of God, that man*29th *May come unto the general dance.'*30th Eri Okunlola31st John Walsh(June) 1st Feyi Okunlola2nd Margaret Smith3rd Nomsa Ndebele**Acts 1.6-14****June 4th – 10th**4th *'Listen sweet Dove unto my song,*5th *And spread thy golden wings in me;'*6th For our church treasurer7th Teni Okunlola8th Joachim King9th *'Hatching my tender heart so long,*10th *Till it get wing, and flie away with thee.'***Psalm 48****June 11th – 17th****Psalms 97, 98**11th *'Lord, though we change, thou art the same;*12th *The same sweet God of love and light.'*13th For the work of Henderson Court14th Lydia Baker15th Wilf Merttens16th Monsignor Phelim Rowland17th Sofia Clarkin**June 18th – 24th****Genesis 18.1-15**18th *'Restore this day, for thy great name,*19th *Unto his ancient and miraculous right.'*20th For all who sing in our Community Choir21st Hildegard Williams22nd Beryl Dowsett23rd Mysie Johnson24th Susan Le Quesne**June 25th – July 1st****Genesis 21.8-21**25th For children, parents and carers who attend Oldtime Nursery26th Stan Dorer27th Theresa Thom28th Andrea MacEachan29th For Panzi hospital30th For our Sunday club(July) 1st Nesa Thorne

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Sundays	11am-12 noon 7.30-9.30pm	Divine Worship (including Sunday Club for children) Contact Club
Mondays	7pm	Swing Patrol (Swing dancing)
Tuesday	10-11am 1-2pm	Oldtime Nursery Lunchtime recital
2 nd Tuesdays	7-9pm	Sacred Harp hymn singing
Wednesdays	8pm 4pm	Swing Train (fitness class) Storymakers Club
Thursdays	10.30am 7.30-9pm	Oldtime Nursery Heath Street Choir
Fridays	10am	Swing Train (fitness class)
Saturday		Coffee Morning (alternate Saturdays – see website for details)

Churches Together in Hampstead

invite you to a

SPRING QUIZ NIGHT

in aid of
Camden Churches Winter Night Shelter

on Saturday 13th May
at 7 pm for 7.30

at St Andrew's Church Hall, Frognal

(corner of Finchley Road and Frognal Lane, NW3)

Form a table team of six with old friends or come alone and
make new ones

Tickets (on the door) £12 (£10 Concessions): includes a glass of wine
or juice and a supper of bread, cheese and fruit
(further drinks available on payment)

Nearest Tubes Finchley Road or Hampstead;
Overground: Finchley Road and Frognal
Buses along Finchley Road 13, 113
or 139, C11 to West End Green

Church Officers: Gaynor Humphreys (Treasurer)
 Theresa Thom (Church Secretary)
 Annie Fang (Deacon)

To contact Ewan King
please email: ewan_king@mac.com

Copy for the summer newsletter should reach Ewan King
(ewan_king@mac.com)
Not later than Wednesday 10th May

*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.*

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