

Heath Street

BAPTIST CHURCH

Don't Quit



Baptist History in Hampstead

Excerpted from *The Annals of Hampstead* by
Thomas J. Barratt, published 1912

The beginning of Baptist history in Hampstead must always stand associated with the name of James Castleden. His grave lies near the front entrance to the Parish Churchyard, and the likeness of his shrewd and saintly face, bent over the Book which was his constant study, may still be seen in some of our older homes. Mr. Castleden came to Hampstead in the year 1817, "sent," as he said, "to preach Christ's Gospel"; and this he did with such good effect that in the following January a new meeting-house was opened, and in March a Christian Society was formed on Baptist principles. The ministry thus begun continued with much acceptance for nearly forty years. Mr. Castleden's preaching was quaint and original, rich in the exposition of Scripture, and emphatic on the "doctrines of grace." His fine spirit may be felt in the words that follow. They were occasioned by a change in the constitution of the Society in 1825 from close to open communion, and the withdrawal of some of the members who conscientiously adhered to the stricter view. The seceders formed themselves into a Strict Baptist Church, and found a home in Ebenezer Chapel, New End, which is still occupied by their successors. Mr. Castleden parted from them with

perfect goodwill, but he placed on record his own convictions in a letter to his people. "I wish," he writes, "to see the followers of the Lamb united. I am not a strict, rigid Baptist, for I meet with many who have not been baptized with water, who are blessedly baptized with the Holy Ghost; and to all such I can give my heart and my hand." It was amid tokens of universal regard, and with the vicar of the parish officiating, that James Castleden was laid to rest in June 1855.

He was succeeded by a man like-minded, the Rev. William Radburn, who, however, remained only until 1860, when he removed to Henley-in-Arden; there he maintained a long and honourable ministry, and died in a good old age. Shortly after his departure, the Church was, by consent of the members, dissolved, and the Chapel was closed. It stood in an obscure position on Holly Bush Hill, and it was no longer adapted to the needs of the neighbourhood. The old building became used as a printing-office, and it is now in private occupation. Of the congregation, some met for a time at Montagu Grove, the private residence of Mr. Burdon Sanderson, who himself acted as their minister, while others connected themselves with the new Chapel which

had risen on the east side of Heath Street, and promised a wider scope for Christian thought and action. This place had an interesting origin.

A London merchant, Mr. James Harvey, had been left a widower, with an infant child, in whom all his hopes became centred. The boy's health was delicate, and the doctors recommended the bracing air of Hampstead. The change proved of the greatest benefit; the father believed that it had saved his child's life, and as one token of his gratitude, he resolved, being himself a Baptist, to become responsible for the erection of a new Baptist Chapel on the spot to which he owed so much. It was with no little difficulty that he secured a plot of ground suited to the purpose, but he was a man not easily thwarted; and in July 1861 he had the satisfaction of seeing Heath Street Chapel opened for worship. The preachers on the occasion were Dr. Brock of Bloomsbury, and the Rev. Newman Hall, LL.B., then of Surrey Chapel. Much interest, and even excitement, were aroused by the event. There was the stirring sense of a forward movement. Nonconformists had so far been content to remain in the background; now, for the first time in Hampstead, they were seen advancing to the front, and claiming to take their full share in the privileges and obligations of Christian citizens.

The history of the Heath Street congregation has been one of steady and gradual development. Its first minister, the Rev. William Brock, entered on his duties on the Sunday immediately succeeding the opening, and with twelve months' leave of

absence generously given him in 1889, was enabled to sustain the office for forty-four years—until 1905. He was followed, after a short interval, by the present minister, Dr. Newton Marshall, already well known by his good work at New Barnet, and his valuable services to the Baptist cause, both at home and on the Continent. The ministers have been sustained in all their efforts by a succession of able leaders, in whose hands the peace of the congregation has been preserved unbroken, and its progress assured. The little group of thirty-four men and women, who signed the original Church covenant in 1862, has grown to a membership of over 500; there is a Sunday-School with 330 scholars, a Men's Brotherhood, a Women's Guild, clubs for men, boys, and girls, and other agencies for good, linking the place with the needs and interests of the people.

A few of the more prominent points in the annals of the congregation are all that can be noted here. In 1862 a British Day School was begun in the schoolroom, which grew till it was recognised as a valuable institution in the town, and became merged at last in the new Council School in Flask Walk. In 1866 a Mission Hall was opened at Child's Hill, and as the result of successful labour carried on there by the Rev. W. Rickard, a Baptist Chapel was built in 1870. The first Temperance Society in Hampstead was launched in Heath Street Schoolroom in 1870. In 1879 Heath Street sent one of the first four missionaries to the Congo, and others of its members followed to that field, to India, and to China. The twentieth anniversary of

the opening in 1881 was marked by the addition to the chapel premises of a Lecture Hall and Infants' Schoolroom. The erection in more recent years of a Club Room and of the Rickett Hall for the Men's Institute, have completed the equipment.

While the church life thus outlined was proceeding in the older part of the parish, another Hampstead was springing up on the west, and solid blocks of houses were rapidly covering the meadows, where the lark had so lately been wont to sing, and the hawthorn to blossom, undisturbed. The new district known as Brondesbury lay partly in Willesden, but the rest belonged to Hampstead, and was soon met by the population advancing with equal speed from the Finchley Road. The Baptists were on the alert, and in 1879, under the auspices of the London Association, and through the exertions of the Revs. J. P. Chown and W. Stott, a spacious Chapel was opened in an excellent position in the High Road. The first minister, the Rev. W. Scriven, remained only for a short time. In 1881 he was succeeded by the Rev. J. C. Thompson, who laboured strenuously against serious difficulties for eleven years, and laid strong foundations for future growth. In his time the fine Hall was erected in Iverson Road. The congregation which gathered in the place has become a centre of light and life to the whole neighbourhood. Under the ministry of the Rev. C. W. Vick, who came from Loughborough in 1893, the church membership has risen to 468, and there are 454

scholars in the Sunday School. A strong and active Brotherhood attracts many of the men of Kilburn, and the wants of the women are met by the varied ministries of the Mothers' Meeting. Temperance and its claims are kept well to the front. There are few good causes that have not found a sympathetic hearing in the Chapel or its adjacent Hall.

The Baptists of Hampstead have striven to keep true to the note of warm Christian liberality which was sounded by James Castleden ninety years ago. They welcome all who love their Lord, baptized or unbaptized, to the full privileges of membership in their churches. They have no other ambition than to play their part as one company in the great Christian host. It was a gratifying proof that their aim and spirit had won recognition, when, on Mr. Brock's retirement from the pastorate in 1905, the Mayor of Hampstead, Alderman Donald McMillan, convened a meeting in the Town Hall, for the purpose of bidding a public farewell to him and Mrs. Brock, when ministers of other churches, Established and Free, united with the civic authorities in expressions of goodwill. The happy omens of that evening are being fulfilled. The sense of the underlying oneness is growing stronger in Hampstead, as elsewhere; and the truth of Harnack's words is being illustrated: "A real, spiritual community of evangelical Christians has arisen, and is in full force and vigour."



Bible Verses Selected by Friends of Heath Street



One of my personal favourite verses is taken from **Proverbs 1:33**.

but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm.

After 21 years in Germany, we still struggle with the language, the bureaucracy and general things that, as foreigners, we don't always understand. Without the Lord leading us and guiding us, we would never have made it through. He has opened amazing doors for us and always had our backs. We are almost forced to live by faith because, left to ourselves, things would be very different! Praise You Lord Jesus!

God bless,
Dave, Michelle & Matthew Homersham
Paderborn, Germany



I was given a RSV bible by my grandparents, Frank and Dorothy Buffard (Frank was the Minister at Heath Street in the early 1900's) for my birthday and baptism in 1974. In the front of it, he wrote **Philippians 4:6-7**.

Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The attached photo shows Janet, me and Ruth (née Ikin), who all grew up at Heath Street. Sadly our brother David died 15 years ago.

With very best wishes,
Gill Crabtree



Matthew 5:14-16

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

In the world we are living in, it is so tempting to hide away and pretend nothing is wrong. And while at times this is important, I am so grateful that here in Sydney I am able to be part of a team of creative people who use their gifts to heal each other and grow closer to God. I pray that I am not afraid to sing and dance in the name of God.

Aimee Brown



Hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entangles us, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us

When I read this verse, I think in particular of the time I spent with you over 20 years ago. Some of the church members and guests I had the privilege of getting to know back then were powerful witnesses to me at the time and have already gone to be with Jesus. They are part of the cloud of witnesses now—how encouraging. Therefore, let us run with perseverance ...

Blessings,
Lilli Schott

Easter Play 2026

A REVIEW

On Palm Sunday I went to morning service at Heath Street, a visit that proved doubly fortuitous. Not only did I coincide with church lunch, but over lunch I learned that other visitors were about to arrive for a week-long event due to begin next day: 'an Easter Holiday Theatre Workshop' (as I found it billed on the church website): a collaboration between Heath Street Baptist Church, Emmanuel Church West Hampstead, and visiting students from Vienna Baptisten Gemeinde, to devise and produce an Easter Play to be performed at Emmanuel on the evening of Good Friday and the afternoon of Holy Saturday. Intrigued by the prospect, I put the Friday performance in my diary and looked forward to it during the week.

Determined not to be late, and allowing for an unpredictable Bank Holiday bus service, I arrived more than half an hour early and sat at the back to watch the final rehearsal. I had an immediate impression of energy and purpose, though the trajectory of the action wasn't immediately clear to me. The various gaps were, I surmised, an indication that the actors were not yet quite on top of their entrance cues. But I had a sense it was all about to come together, and I was not disappointed. At seven o'clock the actors took possession of the space

and began to deliver their lines with conviction.

The setting was a graveyard. The scenery consisted mainly of numerous cardboard cut-out gravestones and trees of various shapes and sizes, the gravestones painted dark grey and looking quite gloomy, the trees painted bright green and looking quite cheerful. A great deal of cutting, gluing, and painting had obviously gone on during the week in the various side rooms at Emmanuel, and the result was a simple but useful set giving openings for multiple entrances, exits, disappearances and surprising reappearances.

One of the trees, clad not in painted card but in a green cord shirt and dark grey trousers, had a human face and the power of speech. This tree knew a lot about what had gone on in the graveyard, and indicated that we were about to see extraordinary outcomes unfolding. One of the gravestones, we were told, marked the tomb of Jesus. It turned out that this was not in itself to be the focus of the action, though as the play developed we understood that its presence had a pervasive effect on what was happening.

The structure of the action had evidently been designed to maximise the potential of the workshop situation, enabling small groups of actors to work together intensively to create their own particular scenarios.

It began with two gravediggers setting resignedly about their daily task and breaking off in expectation of trouble. We then witnessed a series of encounters between people visiting one or another of the graves, each group drawn there by some trouble or conflict. For example, a recently bereaved young widow came face to face with her estranged adult step-daughters, the two sides locked into a seemingly irresolvable conflict over the dead man's inheritance. The graveyard was also home to two animals, a cat and a fox, played by the two smallest of the actors, appealingly masked, who scampered through the scene, leading their own energetic animal lives, though at one point impacting the plot through the propensity of certain animals to pick up things from one place and drop them in another. Three very agile and very under-age drunkards, cast, presumably, for their ability to fall over repeatedly without hurting themselves, reeled their way through the action until they collapsed in unison behind one of the larger gravestones and remained out of sight for some time, during a second set of visits by the various troubled mourners. On this second occasion, however, each of the parties has gained some insight which shows them a way out of their deadlocked situation. So, for example, the widow and daughters each recognise that the other was loved by the dead man, and they decide to share the inheritance.

The theme that emerged was the possibility of transformation and reconciliation in the midst of hostility and confusion. And the

drunkards emerged with a very chastening hangover just in time to be able to join with good humour in the final tableau.

Two able instrumentalists—Indian harmonium and cello—provided very effective 'mood music' which modulated occasionally into well-known Taizé chants, in which, by implication, the audience was invited to join. We played our part, trying to emulate the actors by coming in on cue and performing to the best of our ability.

I came away not only feeling very glad to have seen the performance, but pleased to think that it would be repeated the following afternoon, so that another audience would have the opportunity to be part of this unusual and engaging dramatic event. As I pondered it from time to time during the following week the words of the ancient night prayer came to my mind: 'O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who at the sad hour of Compline didst rest in the sepulchre, and didst thereby sanctify the grave to be a bed of hope to thy people . . .'. It's said that a Sunday-morning sermon which people are discussing over coffee has been a good sermon, and if anyone is still discussing it over lunch it has been a very good one. Suffice it to say that I was still giving an account of this play at a dinner party a week later, and I hope to attend a similar event next year. This ad hoc example of community theatre, giving to the mystery of the Easter story 'a local habitation and a name', sets a local tradition which deserves to be continued. — Janet Cowen

A player's perspective

This report is about a play that I played a part in and helped with called the passion play. The passion play was a play that was put on and prepared over the course of a week. The atmosphere was amazing since there were so many different types of people who helped each other and worked with each other even though they had never met! The days were structured so that everyone would be able to make the set and practice their role as well.

Everyone had made up a part they wanted to play for it. This was because the manager, Wilf, wanted everyone to get to do a part they made up.

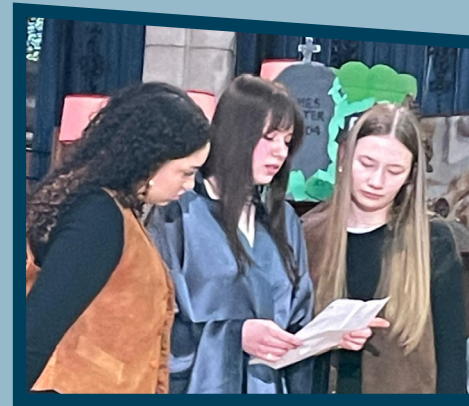
This performance was about a series of conversations in a graveyard which were based on orphans, silly drunks, gravediggers and many more! My part was about a girl and her sister who were looking for their father and found a note in this graveyard which led them to him. The person who was playing my sister was called Aureilia in the play and named Laia in real life. Another person who really helped make the show wonderful was Nicole, who was my set partner and really helped make awesome pieces of set. But overall the person who really made everything work was Wilf from Heath Street Baptist Church and

everyone who acted and performed in this unbelievably great play! So anyone who did a single thing, thank you for making this show shine!!!

To finish off, I would like to give the whole production five stars out of five!

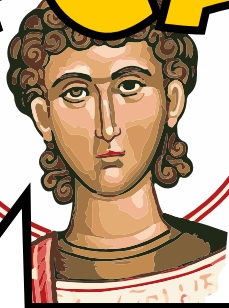
Thanks for reading.

Report by Leila—Flavia in the play!



A CALL FOR

HELP & IDEAS!



FOUR YEARS AGO, THE CHURCH TACKLED **A BIG AND DEMANDING PROJECT**. WE DECIDED IT WAS A PRIORITY TO CLEAN AND RESTORE THE STONE FAÇADE THAT FACES ON TO HEATH STREET. LITTLE FALLING CRUMBS OF STONE WERE A SPUR TO ACTION: WE WANTED TO GET ON WITH IT BEFORE THERE WAS ANY **DANGER** FROM THE WEAR AND TEAR (AND INCREASING AIR POLLUTION) OF **160 YEARS!** BUT THE DRAB AND GRUBBY EXTERIOR WAS SUCH A CONTRAST TO THE VIVACITY AND ENTHUSIASM AND TUNEFULNESS OF WHAT GOES ON INSIDE THE DOORS THAT THERE WERE MORE REASONS TO WANT A FACELIFT.

EVEN THOSE OF US WHO THOUGHT WE KNEW THE BUILDING WELL WERE **ASTONISHED** AT THE LOVELINESS OF THE DETAIL REVEALED THROUGH CAREFUL CLEANING AND CONSERVATION WORK BY THE TEAM FROM **PERMANENS** AND WE WERE DELIGHTED AT THE RESPONSE FROM OUR NEIGHBOURS AND VISITORS ONCE THE REFRESHED FAÇADE WAS VISIBLE. WE HAD MANY **WONDERFUL** DONORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE COST. WE ALSO HAD HELP FROM A GOVERNMENT FUND THAT COVERED THE VAT ON ALL THE BILLS, AND WE DUG INTO THE CHURCH'S SAVINGS, BUT BEFORE WE COULD COMPLETE IT ALL WE HAD TO ADMIT **WE COULDN'T AFFORD TO CARRY ON!** SO FROM JUST ABOVE THE MAIN DOOR UP TO THE TOP OF THE SPIRES THE WORK IS COMPLETE, BUT AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL WE HAVE WEATHERED DECORATIVE FEATURES, MISSING CHUNKS OF BATH STONE, AND STILL A LOTS OF GRIME.

WE VERY MUCH WANT TO FINISH THE WORK AND WE STILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF CONTRACTING WITH **PERMANENS** WHOSE METICULOUS WORK MADE PHASE 1 SUCH A SUCCESS. IF WE CLEAN AND RESTORE EVERY INCH OF STONE WE SHALL NEED JUST ABOUT **£100,000**. WE WON'T, THIS TIME, NEED TO SHROUD THE BUILDING IN SCAFFOLDING - A TOWER SHOULD BE ALL WE NEED - AND WE CAN DIVIDE THE WORK UP INTO THREE CHUNKS, ALIGNED WITH THE THREE DOORS, TO KEEP ACCESS AS EASY AS POSSIBLE AND HAVE **NO DISRUPTION** TO ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES.

WE PLAN TO START IN **JULY** AND BY THEN TO KNOW IF WE HAVE RAISED ENOUGH MONEY TO DO ALL THE WORK IN ONE PROJECT, OR WHETHER WE WILL NEED TO STOP AND START WITH AN EYE ON BEING ABLE TO PAY THE BILLS AS WE GO ALONG.

THE BAD NEWS! ON RAISING MONEY IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT FUND THAT WAS CRUCIAL LAST TIME HAS BEEN CLOSED DOWN, SO WE WILL HAVE TO BEAR THE WHOLE WEIGHT OF VAT. **THE GOOD NEWS!** SO FAR, EVEN BEFORE WE HAVE GOT GOING ON ASKING FOR MONEY, IS THAT WE HAVE RAISED **£14,687.50** FROM FOUR INDIVIDUALS AND ONE CHARITABLE TRUST - **THE BENEFACT TRUST--** AND SOME GIFT AID ALREADY CLAIMED.

PLEASE START THINKING ABOUT HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE. LAST TIME WE HAD DONATIONS **FROM £10 TO £10,000** AND EVERY ONE WAS VERY WELCOME. OUR DONORS WERE NOT JUST PEOPLE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE CHURCH BUT SOME WHO ENJOY OUR EVENTS, OR WHO SIMPLY LOVE IT AS ONE OF HAMPSTEAD'S **VERY GOOD BUILDINGS**.

HOW TO GIVE: IDEALLY STRAIGHT INTO OUR BANK ACCOUNT-- TELLING US WHO YOU ARE AND THAT THE DONATION IS FOR OUR STONEMASONRY. WE WILL KEEP IT CAREFULLY EARMARKED FOR THIS PURPOSE. TALK TO ME FOR OTHER WAYS TO GIVE OR IF YOU HAVE IDEAS OF WHO ELSE TO ASK AND HOW TO PUBLICISE THE CAMPAIGN.

GIFT AID CAN BE CLAIMED ON TOP OF YOUR DONATION IF YOU ARE A UK TAXPAYER -- THAT'S 25% BACK FROM HMRC ON TOP OF WHAT YOU GIVE. IF YOU HAVEN'T SIGNED UP FOR GIFT AID JUST LET ME KNOW (GAYNORHUMPHREYS143@OUTLOOK.COM): THERE IS A VERY SIMPLE FORM TO COMPLETE.

**BANK : CAF BANK LTD
ACCOUNT NAME :
HEATH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH
SORT CODE : 40-52-40
ACCOUNT NO : 00014178**

IN PHASE 1, TO RAISE SUPPORT FOR THE RESTORATION WORKS AND SAVE THE CHURCH FROM DEPLETING ITS RESERVES ENTIRELY, WE ENLISTED THE HELP OF **ST STEPHEN AND ST CECILIA**. ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NOT USUAL NON-CONFORMIST ALLIES, **ST STEPHEN**, WHO WAS STONED TO DEATH, IS THE **PATRON SAINT OF STONEMASONS**. **ST CECILIA** IS THE **PATRON SAINT OF MUSIC**, AND THE CHURCH IS MUCH USED FOR CONCERTS AND AS REHEARSAL SPACE FOR MUSICIANS.



Readings

MAY 31-JUNE 6

GENESIS 6.9-19

31st Laura Somers
1st June Gaynor Humphreys
2nd Hyun Ju Lee
3rd Babak Agin
4th Coco Ellenbogen
5th Susan Le Quesne
6th Rhona MacEachen

JUNE 7-13

GENESIS 12.1-9

7th Otilie Johnson
8th Theresa Thom
9th for our deacons
10th Juno Lee
11th Edward Humphreys
12th Phoebe Jiang
13th Thaddeus King

JUNE 14-20

GENESIS 18.1-15

14th Zahra Safaryazdi
15th for Kasai Province, DRC
16th Mysie Johnson
17th Robin Thorne
18th Ali Ghasempour
19th Julie Benoit
20th Kylo Layton

& Prayers

JUNE 21-27

GENESIS 21.8-21

21st Fiona Ranford
22nd Anselm King
23rd Esme Baker
24th Josh Somers
25th John-Henry Baker
26th for the life and ministry of St. Mary's Hampstead
27th Nesa Thorne

JUNE 28-JULY 4

GENESIS 22.1-14

28th Evelyn Baker
29th Grace Jiang
30th Tom Somers
1st July Frida King
2nd Emad Eisapour
3rd Ilia Ghasempour
4th for all who attend Contact Club

JULY 5-11

GENESIS 24.34-67

5th Maral Agin
6th Jen Finamore
7th Leila Ranjbar
8th HK
9th for the parents, carers and children who attend Oldtime Nursery
10th Selena Barrera
11th Cole Ellenbogen

PTO
for more Readings & Prayers

Readings & Prayers Continued

JULY 12-18

GENESIS 25.19-34

12th Dusol Lee
13th Lydia Baker
14th Elisa Ghasempour
15th for all who sing in our community choir
16th Thomas Roy
17th Isabel Somers
18th Christina Cairns

JULY 19-25

GENESIS 28.10-19

19th Ewan King
20th Wilf Merttens
21st Victoria Tjirimuje
22nd Nathalia Bell
23rd Andrea MacEachen
24th Genna Naccache
25th Annie Fang

JULY 26-AUGUST 1

GENESIS 29.15-28

26th Joachim King
27th Nomsa Ndebele
28th Gabrielle Falardeau
29th Leo Patterson
30th Sarah Harper
31st Birgit Leuppert
1st August Beryl Dowsett

Weekly Activities

Sundays	11:00am	DIVINE WORSHIP Including our Children's Sunday Club stories, crafts, drama and play for all ages Live stream also available on request by emailing johnhenry@heathstreet.org at least 24 hours in advance
	7:00pm	CONTACT CLUB
Mondays	4:30 pm	STORYMAKERS CLUB An after-school club aimed at children between the ages of 7 and 13.
Tuesdays	9:30am	OLDTIME NURSERY Introducing old melodies and traditional stories to a new generation of children
Wednesdays	3:30 pm	PRAYER MEETING
Thursdays	10:30am	OLDTIME NURSERY
	7:30pm	HEATH STREET CHOIR REHEARSALS
Fridays	3:30pm	STORYMAKERS CLUB



GIVE
LIGHT TO
EVERYONE

Thank

TO GIVE TO THE BUILDING WORK

BANK : CAF BANK LTD

ACCOUNT NAME : HEATH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

SORT CODE : 40-52-40 ACCOUNT NO : 00014178

You ♥



Please see the church website for updates

heathstreet.org

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

Copy for the next Newsletter

should reach Eleanor Patterson

(eleonorlaise@gmail.com)

not later than Wednesday 15 July

Church Officers

Gaynor Humphreys (*Treasurer*)

Wilf Merttens (*Church Secretary*)

Annie Fang (*Deacon*)

Minister Ewan King

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minister@heathstreet.org

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