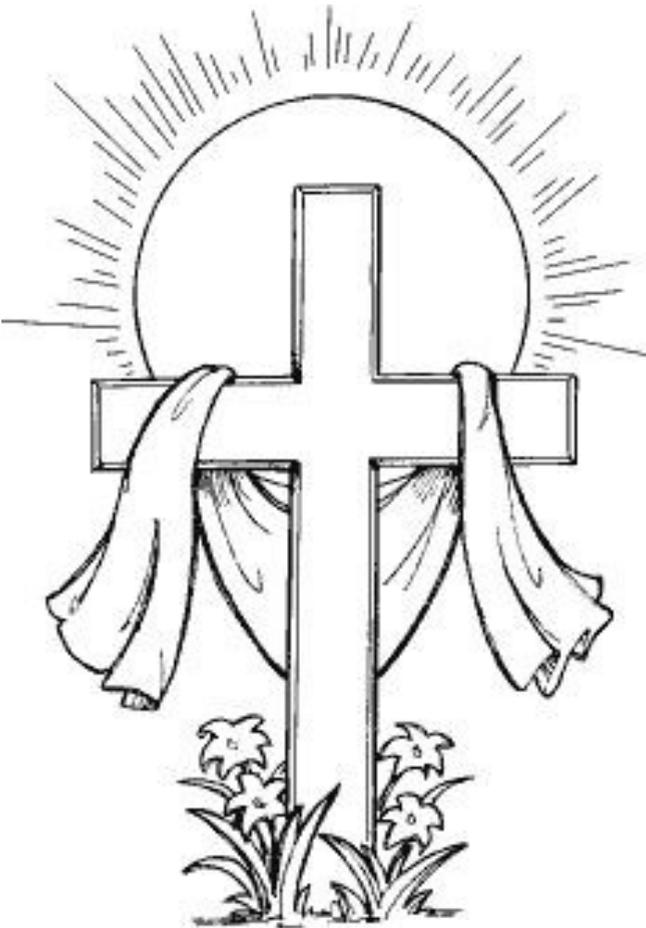


THE
OUTLOOK

MARCH TO MAY
2023



Emmanuel Church Sidcup
Methodist and United Reformed

Letter from the Interim Moderator

Let's begin with cold facts. If you access the web site "Why church – belonging and believing" you will find some depressing figures about church membership. Two comments which have been widely publicised and eagerly pounced on by agnostics and atheists.

There is no doubt that the long term *downward trend* in church attendance is continuing. This is linked to the *increase in average age* of churchgoers.

Sadly we know this from our own experience. The report goes on to suggest that nothing church leaders have done seems to have brought about any change in the decline that started in the 1950s. This decline forecasts a 55% fall from the 1980 level by 2025. From 1990 the decline in Church attendance is significantly higher than new membership.

Church closures are significantly less than that for membership suggesting that average congregations are growing smaller with many nearing the point when they will cease to be financially viable. We can witness this in many URC/ Methodist churches which are either struggling or have linked with another church.

The report ends on a very poignant note by declaring that if the Church of England was the national football team the manager would have been sacked long ago! But then the manager is only as good as the team. Should we hold our church leaders accountable for decreasing church attendances? If they fall by a certain percentage over three years then the leaders are shown the door. Or am I being too fanciful? It would certainly challenge the complacency that exists in many parts of the church.

YouGov is a very well known polling organisation. It has been in the news lately as it was founded by Zahim Nahawi, the disgraced politician. According to its latest survey 27% believe in God. Now that is a very low statistic even in this day and age. We watch Twickenham. 85,000 heartily sing "God save the King" (incidentally the only national anthem in the world which is dedicated to an individual). If the crowd is representative of the UK population then 73% are pure hypocrites asking God to save someone when they do not even believe in Him!

Moving continent - what is happening in Buenos Aires? A reporter from the Guardian newspaper was sent to witness Jesus rising again and again and again in the Tierra Santa theme park in Buenos Aires. She began "Roll up for the *hourly resurrection* of an eighteen feet Christ; watch the animatronic Genesis show then refresh with a bottle of Heineken and a kebab." The reporter's headlines are rather sarcastic but nevertheless relevant to a plastic imitation of Jesus' teaching and healing. How tacky *but it brings in the crowds*.

If Jesus were alive today I bet he'd be shaking His head in sorrow.

So what do people tell their friends, family, neighbours when they return home. Is it the presence of Jesus? The fact that He died to save us all. Or is it to illustrate the new T-shirt which they bought.

You cannot beat the real experience. Now sometimes you must accept simulation such as being propelled up into space in a rocket. Very, very few people will ever enjoy the real thing. But the real things (i.e. churches) are dotted all over the land. People can go into church. To hear the word, to pray, to join with others in actually hearing the word. There are no actors in the church although the antics of a few ministers sometimes make you wonder. The “actors” – the ministers - are real.

It may be pleasing to go round the theme park but to regard it as a substitution for attending church is somewhat bizarre.

We go to church for a number of reasons. Hopefully the sermon is at or near the top of the list although Roman Catholics would quote the Eucharist. We all know that prayer is a powerfully potent tool, wisely used by Christians. Vital in our daily Christian life. Many Christians pray to God on several occasions each day. They know how to pray. We pray to get close to God, to thank Him for all He has given us and to praise Him in His glory. To ask for strength to do His will so that through our actions people will see Him in us. To get so close in the quietness of the mind that God can tell us what He wants us to do for Him. To ask for help for ourselves and all our friends and family and for this world and its sin. To ask for forgiveness and strength not to sin again. To talk quietly with our Friend and God and tell Him all our inner feelings that we could never share with anyone else.

We all know that Jesus only rose *once* from the dead. There is no need to repeat the exercise. He rises time after time in the theme park. But may I ask. What transformed the disciples most? Was it the crucifixion? Perhaps the fact that He rose from the dead although very few actually witnessed the empty tomb. Or was it the fact that He appeared to roughly five hundred after rising from the dead. Now they knew he was the real-deal. Now they were transformed into fearless people, ready to die for Him.

There is only one Lord Jesus. He is the One to whom we offer up our prayers. He is the One we look to in times of trial and hopefully in times of joy. There are no imitations of Jesus. Many have tried but many have failed. Many will try in the future. No doubt many churches could try harder. Many churches do not even greet new visitors at the door. We do not need to be in a church to find Jesus or to pray to Jesus. But the church is the place to meet our Christian friends, to learn more about Christianity, to meet others to help our faith to grow.

To help to understand and put into practice such verses as Galatians 5, 22/3. “But the Spirit produces love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self-control. There is no law against such things as these.”

Colin Watson

Please Note

The closing date for copy for the **Jun / Jly / Aug** Outlook will be
Thursday 18th May

Earlier contributions will be welcomed.

Please plan ahead and make sure that I am aware of any events or
meetings that need to be included on the calendar.

If you can write anything that might interest others,
please do so and send it to me for publication.

Tony Howard

Emmanuel.church.outlook@gmail.com

Easter Prayer

When everything was dark
and it seemed that the sun would never shine again,
your love broke through.

Your love was too strong,
too wide,
too deep
for death to hold.

The sparks cast by your love
dance and spread
and burst forth
with resurrection light.

Gracious God,
We praise you for the light of new life
made possible through Jesus.
We praise you for the light of new life
that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection.
We praise you for the light of new life
that continues to shine in our hearts today.

We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy,
will live in us each day;
and that we will be bearers of that light
into the lives of others.

Amen.

Revd Michaela Youngson.

Women's Hour/Monday Club

I am sorry to inform all the people who normally come to the club that we can no longer meet. This is due to having no one able to arrange and lead the meetings.

If another Church Member is prepared to take over then that is the only way to keep it going.

Therefore, as from now there will be no more meetings until further notice. It is a shame that something that has been going for a hundred years has to finish, but times change.

Our Friday Coffee mornings are still going ahead, but we do need more people on the rota in order to continue.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us and also their friendship over the years.

Marion

Pastoral News

It was good to hear from Heather Phillips at Christmas. Heather sends her love to everyone at Emmanuel. We are still in her thoughts and prayers. She says Nantymoel is a happy place to live and be active in.

It was lovely to have a phone call from Anne Brunton who also sends her good wishes. Keith has now moved into a care home where he is well looked after. It is good to hear from former members of Emmanuel.

Congratulations to Ann and Kim Lewis who recently became grandparents. Their daughter, Helen gave birth to a son, Jacob in January. Helen was a member of the Sunday Club when she was younger.

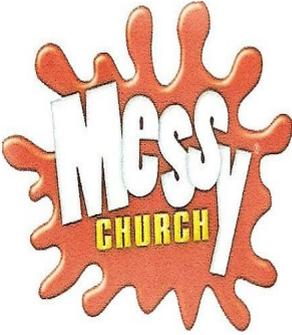
Colin Seal had an accident and broke his leg, but remained cheerful despite having to wear a cumbersome boot. Michael, and Marion Parfitt and Pat Brace have had various appointments regarding ongoing health issues.

Audrey Fish is not at all well and at present is staying with her daughter. Continue to think of her in your prayers.

We all think of Mandy Laundry who is unwell and remember her daughter Claire-Leigh too. We wish Mandy well as she undergoes treatment.

It was good to see Ruth Dunster with her granddaughter and great granddaughter at Christmas. Ruth's family are a great source of comfort and support to her.

Pray for Freda Skinner and Lorna New in St Margaret's care home and Elaine Smith in Northbourne Court.



**Emmanuel Church is excited to
bring to the Church again
Messy Church!!**

**April 15th 4.00 to 5.30pm
Easter**

Messy Church on February 11th.

There was a lovely atmosphere in the hall when I arrived to join the meeting. There is always a lot of love at Messy Church but on the 11th of February "Love was in the air". As it was just before Valentine's day the activities were all based on the theme "Love". There were hearts of all sizes on mobiles. Tree pictures had finger painted heart leaves. Heart shaped biscuits covered in sprinkles looked delicious and I noticed lots of tasting going on.

A large group picture reflecting LOVE was added to with messages of love during the afternoon and displayed in Church the following day. A table covered in boxes of all shapes and sizes was very popular and many tubes became rockets. Other creations included boats and robots . It's amazing what a bit of imagination and the use of Sellotape and stickers can turn junk material into!

2023 is the Chinese Year of the Rabbit. To celebrate that another activity involved using and decorating a spoon to make a rabbit. The finished rabbits in their colourful clothing looked very pretty.

As usual there was a toy corner for the younger children.

When the activities finished a service with a story, singing and a prayer were enjoyed in the Green Room

After the service it was time to sit and enjoy the food and drink which had been prepared and finally it was time to go home after another wonderful Messy Church.

Judith

Cradle Roll

Henry Clement will be 3 on May 8th
Happy birthday Henry !

Good Friday Walk of Witness

As usual the good Friday Walk of Witness will take place in Sidcup on April 7th.

It will start from St Johns at 9.30am with several stops along the High Street and finish on the green opposite St Lawrence's who will provide refreshments..

Fairtrade

We are now using Fairtrade Tea and Coffee on Sundays and the Friday Coffee Mornings.



Mothering Sunday

19th March

On this special day would you like to remember your mother by placing flowers and her photograph on a window sill in the Church?

Food Bank Report February 2023

Thank you to everyone who donates. It is very much appreciated by the Food Bank and the people who find themselves in a very difficult situation.

Their Current Needs Are:

Deodorants
Shampoo
Toilet Paper
Shower Gel
Washing Pods
Meat in tins
Tins of Fish
Long life milk and fruit juice
Fruit and veg in tins
Noodles

Sugar
Squash
Tinned spaghetti

They currently have plenty of:

Baby food and formula
Tampons
Pulses (chickpeas, lentils etc)
Tea
Cereal



Services for March

3	11.00am	World Day of Prayer	
5	10.30am	Mr Paul Ayliffe	
12	10.30am	Mrs Val Loader	
19	10.30am	Mrs Julie Gardner	Mothering Sunday
26	10.30am	Mr Martin Leonard	Communion. BST starts

Services for April

2	10.30am	10.30am	Mr David Ball
7	9.30am	Good Friday Walk of Witness	Start at St Johns
9	10.30am	Mr Ralph Brandhorst	Easter Sunday
16	10.30am	Elders	
23	10.30am	Rev Tony Windsor	St Georges day Parade
30	10.30am	Mrs Val Loader	

Services for May

7	10.30am	Mr Martin Leonard	Communion
14	10.30am	Mr John Twidale	
21	10.30am	Mr Alan Kienlen	
28	10.30am	Rev Tony Windsor	Family service

Revised Common Lectionary

Calendar Date	Liturgical Date	First Reading	Psalms
Mar-05	2nd Sun in Lent	Genesis 12:1-4a	Psalm 121
Mar-12	3rd Sun in Lent	Exodus 17:1-7	Psalm 95
Mar-19	4th Sun in Lent	1 Samuel 16:1-13	Psalm 23
Mar-25	Annunciation of the Lord	Isaiah 7:10-14	Psalm 45 or Psalm 40:5-10
Mar-26	5th Sun in Lent	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Psalm 130
Apr-02	Liturgy of the Passion	Isaiah 50:4-9a	Psalm 31:9-16
Apr-06	Maundy Thursday	Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14	Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
Apr-07	Good Friday	Isaiah 52:13-53:12	Psalm 22
Apr-09	Resurrection of the Lord	Acts 10:34-43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6	Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
Apr-16	2nd Sun of Easter	Acts 2:14a, 22-32	Psalm 16
Apr-23	3rd Sun of Easter	Acts 2:14a, 36-41	Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19
Apr-30	4th Sun of Easter	Acts 2:42-47	Psalm 23
May-07	5th Sun of Easter	Acts 7:55-60	Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
May-14	6th Sun of Easter	Acts 17:22-31	Psalm 66:8-20
May-18	Ascension of the Lord	Acts 1:1-11	Psalm 47 or Psalm 93
May-21	7th Sun of Easter	Acts 1:6-14	Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35
May-28	Day of Pentecost	Acts 2:1-21 or Numbers 11:24-30	Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

The full Lectionary can be accessed on line at
<https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/index.php>
 Make sure you select the correct year (A, B or C)

Revised Common Lectionary

Calendar Date	Second Reading	Gospel Reading
Mar-05	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9
Mar-12	Romans 5:1-11	John 4:5-42
Mar-19	Ephesians 5:8-14	John 9:1-41
Mar-25	Hebrews 10:4-10	Luke 1:26-38
Mar-26	Romans 8:6-11	Romans 8:6-11
Apr-02	Philippians 2:5-11	Matthew 26:14-27:66 or Matthew 27:11-54
Apr-06	1 Corinthians 11:23-26	John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Apr-07	Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9	John 18:1-19:42
Apr-09	Colossians 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43	John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10
Apr-16	1 Peter 1:3-9	John 20:19-31
Apr-23	1 Peter 1:17-23	Luke 24:13-35
Apr-30	1 Peter 2:19-25	John 10:1-10
May-07	1 Peter 2:2-10	John 14:1-14
May-14	1 Peter 3:13-22	John 14:15-21
May-18	Ephesians 1:15-23	Luke 24:44-53
May-21	1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11	John 17:1-11
May-28	1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21	John 20:19-23 or John 7:37-39

Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid Week is an annual event across the United Kingdom, a door-to-door fundraising drive takes place by the Christian Aid charity. Thousands of people take to the streets to post red collection envelopes to houses up and down the country.

Christian Aid is a charity who work with 700 local organisations in around 50 countries in the world. They help poor communities and enable them to deal with hardships, from climate change and the possible threat of natural disasters. Alongside this, Christian Aid also help with the education, sanitation, health, and reconciliation of certain communities.

In 2023, Christian Aid Week will take place from **15th to 21st May**.

This year Christian Aid Week will focus on the plight of drought which numerous countries around the world face. It recognises that droughts have become more intense and more common because of the changing climate. The impact on the world population is great, as it means that millions of people around the world struggle to get the food and water that they need.

Your gifts this Christian Aid Week could help farmers in Malawi plant better seeds, secure a fairer price for the crops, and build happier futures for their children.

Emmanuel does not have the resources to participate in the door to door collection as we used to, so if you wish to donate please use the internet and go to:-

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>
or by phoning **020 7523 2046**

Christmas Collections

The Christmas day collection, the money from December coffee mornings, the Christmas Card Tree donations and other kind donations amounted to £400 which was sent to Crisis, our Christmas charity.

Pastorate Lunch

On 24th January a group of members of the three churches of the Pastorate filled Sophie's Choice restaurant. Everyone agreed it was a very enjoyable and delicious meal, It was good to see the members of the thee churches enjoying time together, each table had members from all three churches.

Our thanks go to Paul Ayliffe for organising this special event.

Ferrier Operatic Society

PRINCESS IDA

by W S Gilbert & A Sullivan

25th-27th May

Bob Hope Theatre, Eltham

Evenings: 7.30pm Sat Matinee: 2.30pm

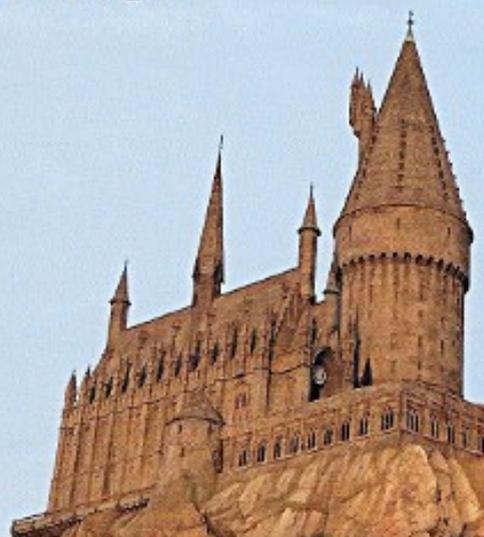
Tickets £13 Thurs / £15 Fri/Sat inc FREE programme

Musical Director: David Stevens

Director: Leon Berger



  www.ferrieroperatic.co.uk



Friday Coffee Morning

Every Friday in the Church Hall from 10.00am to Noon. Come in for a coffee & biscuit and have a chat with friends. On fine days there may also be a bric-a-brac stall outside. All for church funds.



Sunday Coffee

Coffee will continue to be served in the church after morning service every Sunday.

Donations to Church Funds



ROTA

Mar	5	Pat & Marion	Apr	23	Pam & Jennifer
	12	Pam & Jennifer		30	Ethel and Maureen
	19	Ethel and Maureen			
	26	Judith	May	7	Ann and Maryia
				14	Judith
Apr	2	Ann and Maryia		21	Roger & Christine
	9	Roger & Christine		28	Pat & Marion
	16	Pat & Marion			

On Easter Day

On Easter Day the lilies bloom,
Triumphant, risen from their tomb;
Their bulbs have undergone rebirth,
Born from the silence of the earth
Symbolically, to tell all men
That Christ, the Saviour, lives again.
The angels, pure and white as they,
Have come and rolled the stone away
And with the lifting of the stone,
The shadow of the cross is gone!

June Masters Bacher

Water Aid

Some statistics from the Water Aid website.

How many people don't have clean water?

1 in 10 people globally don't have clean water close to home. The hundreds of millions of people living without this everyday essential do not have an equal chance to lead a healthy life, to get an education or to earn a steady income.

How many people have no access to toilets?

Almost 1.7 billion people don't have their own toilet. Going to the loo outside is unsafe, especially for women and girls. And without proper waste management, germs get into water sources and food, spreading diseases like diarrhoea and cholera.

Why is good hygiene important?

Good hygiene behaviour - including handwashing, food hygiene and menstrual hygiene - is integral to keeping people clean and healthy and stopping diseases spreading, yet 2.3 billion people lack clean water and soap.

Every minute a new-born dies from infection caused by lack of clean water and an unclean environment.

Diarrhoea caused by dirty water and poor toilets kills a child under 5 every 2 minutes.

Basic water services alone could save women 77 million working days per year.

The World Bank says promoting good hygiene is one of the most cost effective health interventions.

If everyone, everywhere had clean water, the number of diarrhoeal deaths would be cut by a third.

Water Aid Appeal

During Lent I will be collecting any donations for this wonderful charity which helps so many people.

We are so lucky to get our water at the turn of our taps (just think how many times a day we use them).

Maybe you could think of giving up something, (like a cup of coffee or chocolate bar / biscuits) and pop that change into a jar, it quickly mounts up and every penny really counts.

Thank you so much for any donation that you can make. I will collect the money at the end of Lent and send it off on your behalf.

Pat George

Memories of Volunteering for Pets As Therapy

When I retired from teaching I decided to apply to become a Pets As Therapy volunteer with my Golden Retriever. I have found it a most rewarding experience. Since the pandemic both Jacob and I have missed our outings to see all the friends we have made in the nursing home. I am sure our visits have been missed too.

During the years since I started as a volunteer, firstly visiting the local hospital for the mentally ill which was a secure environment, I witnessed how therapeutic animals can be. It was my first experience of being with patients suffering with mental illness some of whom had been in prison, hence the need for a secure environment. I learnt so much about mental illness from the time I visited with Reuben, my previous dog. The patients tended to be very restless and Reuben always got lots pats, as well as far too many treats !

Shortly after these visits I was invited to the local nursing home which I continued to visit for the rest of Reuben's life and subsequently with Jacob our present dog until the Covid pandemic changed our lives. Just before Covid descended on us, we had started going to another local care home as well. During these years I have had the privilege of meeting so many residents in the latter stages of their lives, listening to their stories and hearing their memories. The smiles and the love which Jacob and I have shared has been wonderful. It has been a pleasure to meet so many different and interesting elderly people, to chat to them in the lounges and make a point of calling in the rooms of bedbound patients who loved to see a dog. The staff and the visitors also have welcomed us and benefitted from our visits wherever we have been.

I have met so many lovely people and have kept photographs of many of them, but certain names will always stand out in my memory.

I will never forget Sheila who needed so much help with everything but never complained about anything. When we went into her room Jacob rested his head on her bed. She thought he was wonderful and meeting her taught me how brave people can be in adversity.

Steve was suffering from MS and was confined to bed, but he had the biggest smile I have ever seen which greeted us as soon as we arrived in his doorway. The day there was no smile I knew it would be the last time I saw him, but I will never forget that smile and the moments Jacob and I shared with him.

Elsie adored Jacob. During the five years I visited Elsie I felt she regarded me as part of her family. She lived to the age of 106 ! She was a joy to know, very mentally alert and with a sense of humour. Although she was frail she always bounced back from the falls she suffered. When I informed her of a holiday in Cumbria she expressed disappointment that she would miss us. However she had shown me a postcard sent by her nephew who had been on a camping holiday in Keswick. That card, which she displayed on her wardrobe door, always helped me to show her where we were going on holiday. She

learned to recognise where we would be staying and where Jacob would be going for a walk. Each time we were coming to Keswick we looked at that card together and then I sent her a local postcard whilst we were away to keep us in touch.

Elsie preferred to stay in her own room, so recognising how much she loved to see Jacob, I always included her room on my schedule. The moment we entered her room I witnessed an amazing bond between the two. I will never forget the times I shared with such a special lady. At the wake following her funeral I met the nephew who had sent the holiday postcard from Keswick. That day I felt privileged to feel part of Elsie's family. Elsie had so loved seeing my dog each week. There will always be a place in my heart for her.

Jacob is getting towards the end of his life, and now as he slows down I feel he deserves to retire from visiting. The unconditional love still radiates from him. I feel so proud of Jacob and all the joy he has given to so many people during his years as a PAT dog and thankful that I, as a volunteer for the charity, have had the privilege of sharing his role.

Jacob still enjoys his life although it is at a very much slower pace at the age of 13 years. He has accepted a new puppy into our household and is happy to join her in her early training. I am hopeful that Martha will, once she has settled into our family routine, also be accepted as a suitable dog to follow in Jacob's footsteps as a PAT visitor. I look forward to continuing as a volunteer for such a wonderful charity which since it was founded in 1983 has proved what an important and therapeutic role dogs play in our lives.

Judith

LENT LUNCHES

During Lent at Christchurch Main Road Sidcup.

Every Wednesday 1st - 29th March 12-1.30

All are welcome.

No payment but donations for Christian Aid.

Emmanuel Church are providing / serving lunches on 29th March so we would be grateful for offers to make and serve soup etc.

Please contact the Elders if you can help.



OUR BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

MARCH

Hilda Morton-Hooper	1947
Charles Harrall	1959
Nigel Stuart Pont	1978
George Francis Fox	1981
Alice Annie Wilson	1984
Ada May Rippon	1984
Arthur Kenneth Mould	1984
Norman Fedrick	1985
Cecil Hastings Grimes	1988
Colin Liddicoat	1989
Lucy Irene Selvey	1991
Edith Clarke	1993
Peter Blades	1994
Eleanor Lilian Baker	1994
Marjorie May Gaunt	1994
Lily Sexton	1995
William Godfrey Howsam	2007
Ida Ramsey	2009
Bryn Williams	2011

APRIL

Percival Nathanielsz	1961
Gertrude Agnes Gennard	1973
Marjorie Jessie Verinder	1980
William Hutchinson	1986
James Herbert May	1986
Laura Ellen Barker	1988
Sydney Craford Barker	1988

MAY

John Stevenson Lawson Oswald	1981
Dorothea Pearl	1987
Alfred Sleeman Barnes	1989
Greville Millward	1989
Hubert Samuel Clarke	1993
Kathleen Carter	1994
Harry Cecil Parker	1998
Doreen Thompson	2000
Peter Geoffrey Hopkins	2007
Ethel Parker	2009

Weekday Activities

Monday	2.00pm 5.45pm 6.30pm 7.30pm	Monday Fellowship (except Bank Hols) 3 rd Sidcup Beavers 3 rd Sidcup Cub Scouts 3 rd Sidcup Scouts
Thursday	10. 00am	Ladies Morning Club
Friday	10.00am—noon 1.30pm 4.45pm 6.00pm 7.30pm	Coffee Morning Parents & Toddlers Club 6 th Sidcup Rainbows 6 th Sidcup Brownies 4 th Sidcup Guides



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Awaiting new Minister

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