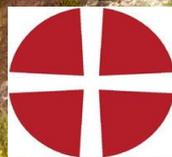


THE INDICATOR

Beckenham Methodist Church



A Christ Centred Community Church
Spring 2026

THE BEGINNINGS OF GRIEF

I am currently experiencing this as I prepare to finish in this circuit and move to another in August. Grief is such a complicated process, far more so than the Kubler-Ross model tries to explain. It lies in little things, sometimes sounds, sometimes smells, or tastes. We can be suddenly hurled back to our place of deep pain, taken off our feet by a sense of deep loss. Grief can also creep up on us, slow pins of pain, building up over time, until we suddenly feel overwhelmed, swamped under the sudden realization of loss.

This might sound a bit over-dramatic, and I am not currently bereft and weeping into my cup of Earl Grey, but I am certainly starting to feel the first prickles of loss. This has been an appointment which has been both challenging and immensely rewarding. It is during this appointment that Laura and I both lost our parents. We were carried in our grief by the gentle support of so many members of different congregations, and by the care of colleagues. The circuit merger, Covid 19, and the 2 curtailments (neither was my fault!) in the Orpington and Chislehurst Circuit posed a serious challenge to me. Yet, with the support of so many lovely, caring Christian people, we got through these challenges.

However, I am already starting to miss people, even though I am still some months away from leaving. I am already anticipating the loss of regular contact, and I should warn you that I am terrible at staying in touch. The loss I am anticipating is built on shared experiences, conversations, prayers, tears, laughter and an awful lot of tea and coffee. When you have shared someone's life, shared their joy and pain, there is a connection that forms which is deep and lasting. Add to this the constant seeking-after-God during these times, and it becomes something that forms deep roots. I have spent almost 19% of my life in this circuit with its people, and it has left an indelible impression on me. I have been loved and encouraged to a place of healing; I have been challenged to explore theology more deeply. All of this has grown me as a father, husband, and minister.

So, I thank all of you, here and now, before I get to weeping into my tea. I know you will be cared for after I leave, but I will miss so many of you. Through you, I have met with authentic faith and love, and my life has been made all the better for it. In the time we have left together, I will put the approaching grief to one side for now and celebrate the joy we have shared. My family and I have been blessed, and those blessings so often wore human faces, and bore the tea, coffee, and cake of fellowship.

I'd like to share a poem from the Iona Community about journeying with grief:

**Do not hurry as you walk with grief
It does not help the journey**

Walk slowly, pausing often

**Do not hurry as you walk with grief
Be not disturbed by memories
that come unbidden
Swiftly forgive and let
Unspoken words, unfinished conversations
be resolved in your memories**

**Be not disturbed.
Be gentle with the one who walks with grief**

**If it is you, be gentle with yourself
Swiftly forgive, walk slowly,
Pause often,
Take time**

Be gentle as you walk with grief

Love and peace,
Duncan

FROM THE VESTRY

Hello from the stewards.

It's been a busy few months in the life of our Church, which is a good thing.

We were very pleased to welcome the chair of the London District, Rev Dr Jonathan Dean, to preach on 29 November, which was also the first Sunday in Advent. During Advent, we held our annual Gift Service, on Sunday 14 December, when we collected goods for our local food bank, Living Well. Our regular Carol Service was then held on Sunday 21 December and we were fortunate to have a flame from the Peace Light of the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem with us at this service. Thank you to all the singers, readers, organ/piano player, audio visual team and of course, the post-service Christmas refreshment providers.

Into the New Year and we had a lovely Baptism service on 1 February for little Huxley. He and Duncan seemed to be best friends and we hope to see Huxley and his family back with us again soon.

There are various activities to join in during Lent, so do keep reading the weekly notices for more details. I'd particularly like to draw your attention to the Lent course Duncan is leading here at Beckenham on Wednesday lunchtimes, for five weeks from 25 February. It sounds very intriguing and very timely.

The stewards continue to meet regularly with Duncan and our next meeting is on 7 April, so as always, if there is anything you feel we should know about, or discuss, please do speak with any of the stewards.

As a reminder, congregation members can make requests for Prayers of Intercession on Sundays, by jotting down their prayer request in the blue book in the New Room, or by adding a request to The Prayer Tree (Atrium). Please remember to stick to GDPR guidelines, if mentioning specific people. Thank you.

Sandra – Senior Steward

EDITORS' NOTE



We hope you enjoy this copy of The Indicator. You will see that this quarter there are articles from some church members that will interest and inform and we hope you enjoy them. We are always pleased to receive contributions. Please speak to either of us if you would like to provide an article or suggestion for future magazines.

As usual our thanks to Sarah for all the help and support she provides towards the production.

Valerie and Christine



PRAYER TIME

Prayer Time meets on Sunday mornings before Service in the Wesley Lounge between 10.10 a.m. and 10.25 a.m.

A MIDWIFE

Call the midwife! Maybe a brilliant TV programme for you, with mums waiting for nuns on bicycles and all the drama of childbirth. Originally set in the East End of London in the 1950s, this too was the backdrop to my own experience as a midwife. And I can tell you: childbirth is that messy and noisy and terrifying, and yet it is also miraculous and joyful.

After years of training and a stint as a Staff Nurse, I was drawn to midwifery and chose the Mother's Hospital Salvation Army in London's Clapton to nurture my development. Surrounded by colleagues of many

different denominations, it seemed impossible to please everybody - a lesson I learned early! Why did I wear lipstick?



Later I found myself living in a council house in Bellingham, training up my own pupils in the arts and crafts of midwifery. One of these named my newly acquired dog, Puddah. A senior Salvation Army Officer, Sister Bridges, kept an eye on me. Keen to remark that I fed my pupils on sausages far too often! Daily devotions were in order, and we were checked up on: all that praying!

Doctors were on hand for antenatal clinics and for hospital births booked in when complications were expected. However, a home birth was entirely the responsibility of us midwives. Call a doctor at your peril! While at the house, we were always on call. Imagine this: as landlines were rare, the dad-to-be would often have to find a public telephone or come and fetch us from the house. We would chalk up our destination on the blackboard then head for the birth home at top bicycle speed! My shoulder could be tapped at any moment by someone needing a midwife, even in church. I attended Catford Methodist Church, where a very young local preacher, Maureen, would sometimes preside. She would much later become one of my best friends, Maureen Bull.

These were happy times of great responsibility. So rewarding. And all the different birth experiences were playing out in my hands, from that unexpected breech to the loving smiles on the new parents' faces. So much rich living and learning!

I left midwifery to get married and have my own children. Now, that's a whole new story!

Mary S



CHURCHES TOGETHER in BECKENHAM

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18th to 25th January

Beckenham hosted a morning of prayer and craft activities, on Monday 19th January, as our contribution to Churches Together in Beckenham's week of events, to mark this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Activities were spread across four tables and people were encouraged, among other things, to think about areas of the world where there are currently conflicts of one kind or another and to pray for peace.

The event was well attended, with representatives from various CTiB churches. Do take a look at the display board in the Church, to find out more about what happened.

On the same evening a Taize service was held at Beckenham Baptist Church. A beautiful, quiet and thoughtful service which was also well attended by various churches from around Beckenham. It was good to see 4 separate Ministers from across the Ecumenical spectrum leading the prayers.

Good Friday 3rd April

As usual Churches together in Beckenham have organised a Walk of Witness starting at St Edmunds and finishing at The Green where a short act of worship will take place.

As in previous years stewards will be needed for the event.

Their main role is to assist in ensuring our procession goes smoothly and safely (including when people will be crossing over to the Green), and in particular to help manage traffic sensitively and appropriately during the walk, Once on the Green, stewards will also be involved in the safe stewarding of the event, giving out service sheets, and generally welcoming any who come across our service when using the area. Stewards thus play a vital part in facilitating this time of witness.

Please speak to me as soon as possible if you can help, especially if you have acted as a steward in previous years please volunteer again. However new volunteers are important too. if new to this please do come and help. Hi-viz jackets will be available but if you already have one please do bring it with.

The walk starts with a short service at St Edmund's which starts at 11am, and afterwards we will form the procession and make our way to the Green. The Walk of Witness from St Edmund's should start around 11.15 and the open-air service at about 11.30. If wet, I understand the service will be indoors in St George's.

I hope to see as many as possible who are able as this is a very special event where we can show Beckenham a united Christian face.

Christine

BIRTHDAYS

To all those celebrating a birthday March, April and May
we wish them a very enjoyable day.

The greatest of all miracles is that we need not be tomorrow what we are today, but we can improve if we make use of the potential implanted in us by God.

Rabbi Samuel M Silver

The ideals which have lighted my way, and time after time have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been kindness, beauty, and truth.

Albert Einstein

EASTER



Good Friday 3rd April

11am As usual CTiB have arranged a Walk of Witness in the morning.

All details can be found on page 7.

3pm A Circuit service to be held at Bromley Methodist Church

Easter Saturday 4th April

We will, as in previous years, be decorating an Easter Cross to display outside the Church over Easter.

Please come along, bring some flowers (very important!) and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a hot cross bun. You can join in the decorating/ give advice (!) or just watch, have a

coffee and a chat. We hope to see you there.

Easter Sunday 5th April

Holy Communion Service led by our Minister Rev Duncan MacBean.

N.B. Our Easter Appeal this year will be for Living Well who are in need of as much help as possible.

Collection of food for this will begin on Sunday 29th March.

Requested items as follows:-

UHT milk
Tinned
vegetables./meat/fruit/soup/tomat
oes
Rice / Pasta
Biscuits
Cereal

Cooking oil
Shower gel & Shampoo
Toilet Rolls
Sanitary Towels
Pet Food (dogs & cats).

Thank you



NEWS FROM JOY'S KITCHEN – **Spring 2026**

Hello from Joy's Kitchen. We're looking forward to some warmer weather and welcoming you in to a brighter, sunnier café. We've been very busy over the last few weeks and have added baked potatoes as a permanent addition to our menu. Why not pop down and try one?

We will once again be serving homemade soup every day throughout Lent. If any of our occasional bakers or church members feel able to donate some homemade soup, it would be gratefully received. Please ensure it is meat free. Hot cross buns will also be back on the menu. When possible, a percentage of Joy's Kitchen's operating profits are donated to other charitable causes. At the end of 2025, we were able to send £200 each to Bromley Mencap, Bromley Dementia Hub, Mission Aviation Fellowship, Christian Blind Mission and Support Dogs UK. All these organisations were very grateful for their donations and we have received some lovely Thank You messages as follows:

- I am writing to say a huge thank you to you and the volunteers at Joy's Kitchen, Beckenham for choosing the Bromley Dementia Hub at South East London Mind as one of your charities in 2025 and for the generous donation of £200 sent to us in November.
- Thank you for the gift of £200 from Joy's Kitchen at Beckenham Methodist Church. This help keeps us flying in places such as Chad. From Mission Aviation Fellowship
- Thank you so much for the wonderful donation to Bromley Mencap. We really value our relationship with Joys Kitchen and the brilliant volunteering placements you are able to offer to our clients.
- Thank you so much for your email and for choosing Christian Blind Mission at this time. We are truly blessed by your generosity and care for those living with disabilities in the world's poorest places

- We're so delighted your community cafe has chosen to fundraise for us! It is so nice to hear from new people who have heard about our charity, and we are incredibly grateful for your support. From Support Dogs UK



Just before Christmas, representatives from Bromley Mencap popped to Joy's Kitchen to receive their cheque in person, from a couple of our Mencap volunteers – Ben and James.

And in February, Becky and Liz from South East London Mind called in to present us with a Certificate of Recognition and to also thank us in person. Photo shows the certificate being received by James, Edwin and Ben.



Looking ahead, we will close for Easter on Thursday 26th March and will reopen on Monday 20th April. Wishing everyone a very Happy Easter from us all at Joy's Kitchen.

Chloe, Joy's Kitchen Manager

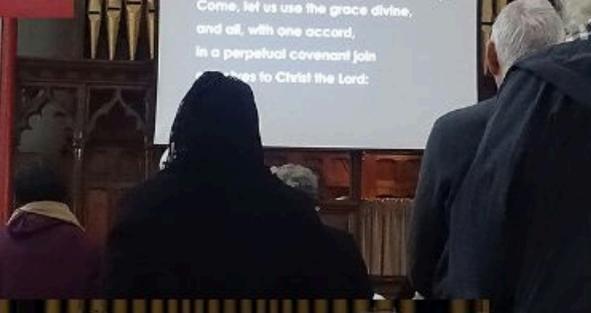


2025 in photos



PALM SUNDAY:
IN THE
SHADOW OF
THE CROSS.

Isaiah 50: 4 – 9a
Luke 22: 14 – 23: 56



BECKENHAM
METHODIST CHURCH
Covenant Sunday & Holy Communion Service
Sunday 5th January 2025
Preacher: Rev Duncan MacBean
Organist: Nehara Fernando



Volunteers Needed – Joy's Kitchen ☕ 🍰

Do you enjoy meeting people and serving your community? Joy's Kitchen is looking for friendly volunteers to join our team!

You'll help prepare food and drinks, including using our coffee machine – **full training provided**, so no experience needed. If you're happy to lend a hand, share a smile, and be part of a welcoming community space, we'd love to hear from you.

If you are unable to commit long term we also have some temporary vacancies available.

Interested? Please speak to Chloe in Joy's Kitchen. Sandra or Mimi in Church. Or email joyskitchenmanager@gmail.com

**THE BIG
PLASTIC
COUNT
9-15 MARCH**

Join in this year

WHAT?

Plastic is part of the climate change problem. Almost all plastics are made from fossil fuels – coal, oil or gas – and emit greenhouse gasses at every stage of their lifecycle. If less plastic is produced, harmful emissions can be reduced.

In 2017, one man, Daniel Webb, decided to see how much plastic he threw away for a whole year. Daniel counted every single piece of plastic waste and it totalled 4490 items. He then came up with a way of

working out how much of this waste was recycled, burned, buried or shipped abroad – his ‘plastic profile’.

Daniel’s one-man experiment led to a national campaign to count all of the UK’s household plastic waste, across one week a year and from these results, to calculate the ‘plastic profile’ of every household.

This campaign has become known as The Big Plastic Count. It was launched in 2022 by Greenpeace and Everyday Plastic and took place in 2024 and it’s happening again, in 2026.

This year, the people behind The Big Plastic Count will not only work out the nation’s ‘plastic profile’, they will also lobby plastic producers, supermarkets and the government, to take action on plastic waste, using the results of the count to push for urgent action to tackle the plastics crisis.

WHEN?

This year’s campaign will run from 9 to 15 March and everyone is asked to count their household plastic waste for seven days. So why not give it a go? It’s really easy and what you do can make a real difference.

HOW?

To take part, count all the plastic that you use between 9 and 15 March, including plastic that goes in the bin and to recycling and log your results, using the count sheet, shown at the end of this article. You can print off your own count sheet from The Big Plastic Count website thebigplasticcount.com/faq and there will also be copies available in Church, on Sundays 1st and 8th March, for anyone who doesn’t have access to a printer, for you to take home with you.

To reduce costs and unnecessary waste, The Big Plastic Count is completely digital this year, so results do have to be submitted online and this can be done by via the following link thebigplasticcount.com/submit and by 26 March at the latest.

If you miss logging an item, or miss a day, there’s no need to fret, although if everyone who takes part counts ALL their plastic waste, there’s better data. If you’re not sure how to classify an item, you can check via Plastic ID Tool, but generally, just use your instinct and judgement to categorise an item

Only count plastic packaging waste – no need to include dog poo bags or plastic cutlery, TetraPak juice cartons, Pringles tubes and takeaway coffee cups as they are made from a mix of materials. Additionally, don't include plastics that are essential for medical use or sanitary reasons. Once logged, dispose of your plastic waste in the usual way – reuse, recycle or throw away.

WHY?

The aim of the count is to gather plentiful and accurate evidence of what plastic waste is being produced in the UK and then to push specifically the government, but also big brands and supermarkets to do their bit, to reduce the use of plastic and thereby reduce harmful emissions.

The Big Plastic Count believe that only a small amount of our plastic waste is recycled and that the majority is either burned in the UK or sent overseas to landfill – causing more harmful emissions of course.

Simply put, too much single-use plastic is still being produced and there are not enough reusable alternatives to suit everyone's needs.

In the end, only the government can make the big changes needed to solve the plastic problem, by introducing policies that limit plastic production and prioritise the use of reusable packaging that caters for everyone's needs. Specifically, The Big Plastic Count is calling on the UK government to remove plastic packaging from all uncut fruit and vegetables by 2030.

The more people who count, the better the data and the greater the evidence to push for change. There's lots more information here thebigplasticcount.com/faq and if you want to sign up, do it via this link thebigplasticcount.com/sign-up?source=email-households&subsource=email-



MUSICAL NOTES BY DJ

After a year of working with our new Musical Director, Chris Braime, the SLS are in the process of rehearsing and planning a new venture. Chris also conducts the South London Sinfonia, an orchestra based in Addiscombe, and the two SLS's are putting on a performance of Brahms' German Requiem on Saturday March 28th at 7pm at St John's Church, Auckland Road, Upper Norwood. The concert will also include an orchestral work by local composer Samuel Coleridge Taylor and a choral piece specially composed for the choir's Silver Jubilee in 2007 by Geoffrey Lawrence. Geoff and his wife Joy were long term members of the choir and also, as it happens, members of the church where the concert will be held. Joy's brother, Adrian Adams, was organist there for many years, played a few times for the SLS and still lives in Beckenham following his retirement. Geoff and Joy have since died but are still fondly remembered by people at the church.

Tickets for the concert, priced £15, are available in the usual way via the website or by cash or card at the door. Advanced booking is highly recommended and expenses and takings will be shared by the two SLS groups.

Looking further ahead, the SLS will return to Bromley Road for their Summer Concert on Saturday 4th July, again at 7pm, for a programme of lighter music celebrating Stage and Screen. The first half of well-known Opera Choruses arranged by John Rutter will be followed by a selection of favourite songs from films and shows, something for everyone! Look out for the publicity with more details nearer the time but meanwhile come and join the choir for their first concert with a full orchestra.



DJ

**SOUTH
LONDON
SINFONIA**

**SOUTH
LONDON
SINGERS
SLS**

BRAHMS A GERMAN REQUIEM

Plus works by Samuel Coleridge Taylor and Geoffrey Lawrence

**SATURDAY 28 MARCH 2026
AT 7PM**

**ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST
SYLVAN ROAD UPPER NORWOOD SE19 2RX**

Conductor: Christopher Braime

Sinfonia lead: Brooke Day | Accompanist: Jack Stone



**DOORS FROM 6:30pm
TICKETS £15 | UNDER 18s FREE
BUY TICKETS IN ADVANCE ONLINE OR USING QR CODE ABOVE
SOUTHLONDONSINFONIA.CO.UK | SOUTHLONDONSINGERS.ORG.UK**

South London Singers | Registered Charity No. 800934 & South London Sinfonia | Registered Charity No. 1181893



SENsational Church News



Thank you to all those who have supported this new venture in the circuit as a New Places for New People (NPNP) project held at Bromley Methodist Church. As you may know, the aim of SENsational Church is to create a new and fully inclusive community primarily for families with children or adults with special educational needs, but with the aim of ensuring something for all ages and abilities.



We have held four taster sessions since December 2024. We were able to test out ideas and gather together a sufficient number of volunteers from across the circuit to be able to move forward with

plans for 2026. We also made contact with some families who came along and hope they will help us build up the community in the new year.

We have now launched monthly and our first meeting was on Sunday 18 January from 2 to 4pm. This included a 30-minute time of worship followed by activities in the various rooms we set up.

We have received some seed funding for some more resources from the London Methodist District's NPNP seed fund which supplements the funds raised by the sponsored walk that Jim and Sharon, our circuit stewards did in 2025.



At our last taster session on 16 November, it was lovely to welcome Andrea Campanale who is the NPNP enabler for the London Methodist District. The photos of our set-up were all taken by her for a grant application for further funds that will hopefully be available from September 2026. She is able to offer district support should we need it in other ways. This may well include helping us to make a promotional video.

If you are interested in joining the rota or would simply like to attend a session to see what SENSational Church is all about, we would love to see you.

We also need to create a regular prayer team who can meet on Zoom or WhatsApp video or in person and are looking for volunteers who might be interested in this aspect of the project rather than being hands on at Sunday sessions, although you could of course do both if you like.

For more information and a volunteer application form, please contact Ann Woollins via the Bromley Methodist Church office (tel 0208 3131029 or email office@bromleymethodist.org)

With every blessing,
Deacon Laura and the team

SENSational Church

A new SEND- friendly community
hosted by Widmore
Methodist Circuit

Monthly: 2-4pm
Every 3rd Sunday in 2026
Bromley Methodist Church,
Corner of College Rd
and North Street, BR1 1SB
Tel 0208 3131 029

For all ages & abilities
No need to sit still
and be quiet

30-min Service
+Café Space
+Craft and Play Time
+Sensory Room
+Music Room
+Chat & Chill

The central graphic is a purple cross. Inside the horizontal bar of the cross are several icons: a church building, a person with a speech bubble, a musical note, an eye, a person in a wheelchair, a paw print, a pair of scissors, and a person with a speech bubble.

WHAT MONEY CAN'T BUY

It can buy a house
but not a home.

It can buy a bed
but not sleep.

It can buy a clock
but not time.

It can buy you a book
but not knowledge.

It can buy you a position
but not respect.

It can buy you medicine
but not health.

It can buy you blood
but not life.

It can buy you sex
but not love.

So you see, money isn't everything.
And it often causes pain and suffering.

Source Unknown
from Bursting at the Seams by Killy John and Alie Stibbe

FLOWERS IN CHURCH



ROTA for March, April and May

MARCH

Sunday 1st
Sunday 8th
Sunday 15th
Sunday 22nd
Sunday 29th

Flowers provided by:
Margaret Hazlewood
Theo Farmer
Irene Antwi
Comfort Lawson
Christine Handel

Flowers arranged by:
Richard Phizacklea
Margaret Cornwell

APRIL

Sunday 5th
Sunday 12th
Sunday 19th
Sunday 26th

Flowers provided by:
Valerie Wilson - Easter

Mary Jackson
Diane Chorley

Flowers arranged by:
Richard Phizacklea

MAY

Sunday 3rd
Sunday 10th
Sunday 17th
Sunday 24th
Sunday 31st

Flowers provided by:
Christine Handel
Ena Hamblyn
Sandra Storch
June White

Flowers arranged by:
Richard Phizacklea
Margaret Cornwell

Flowers arranged by providers unless otherwise stated.

Beckenham Methodist Church, Bromley Road
at 10.30am (unless otherwise stated)

Sunday 1st March	Rev Duncan MacBean + Holy Communion
Sunday 8th March	Maggie Ayres
Sunday 15th March	Rev Karen George
Sunday 22nd March	Emmanuel Owusu-Sekyere
Sunday 29th March	Deacon Laura MacBean Palm Sunday
Sunday 5th April	Rev Duncan MacBean + Easter Holy Communion
Sunday 12th April	Jim Holman
Sunday 19th April	Ralph Brandhorst
Sunday 25th April	Rev Hannah Faal-Heim
Sunday 3rd May	Rev Duncan MacBean + Holy Communion
Sunday 10th May	Richard Baker (Christian Aid)
Sunday 17th May	Local Arrangement
Sunday 24th May	Rev Duncan MacBean Pentecost
Sunday 31st May	Rev Hannah Faal-Heim

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK This will be held from Sunday 10th May – Saturday 16th May. Envelopes for donations will be available from Sunday 3rd May.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Beckenham Methodist Church

(Registered Charity No. 1138006)

Bromley Road Church BR3 5JE

0208 650 2763

Minister: Rev Duncan MacBean

minister@bmcb3.com

Senior Steward: Sandra Storch

Church Administrator (including room bookings):

Sarah Reed

Tel: 07570 230555

Email:- office@bmcb3.com

*n.b. Normal working week is Tuesday to Thursday 10.30am to 2.30pm,
with Mondays from home.*

Web Site: <http://www.beckenhammethodistchurch.co.uk>

