

THE INDICATOR

Beckenham Methodist Church



*A Christ Centred Community Church
Summer 2026*

REAL FAITH

I am always on the hunt for ‘real’ faith. By real faith I mean that it’s not some sort of blind belief that all things are going to be OK in the end, but a faith that speaks to our human condition. What is our human condition, you may ask?

“[The phrase] was coined in 1958 by the political thinker Hanna Arendt, and summarizes for me the complexities, and both the rewarding and difficult experiences of being a human being. Of all earthly creatures, only we humans can describe through words our sensed perceptions, thoughts and feelings, and convey the touching stories of our lives. Our cognitive and verbal powers enable us to consciously experience, exult, and endure. Our life stories are unique and diverse yet they all contain compelling narratives of drama and romance, pain and disappointment, joys and achievements.”¹

This author, however, does not implicitly include the aspect of faith – something I believe to be an intrinsic part of our human condition. We are beings with a capacity to wonder, and that capacity to wonder has expressed itself most beautifully throughout human history in cave paintings, bone flutes, skin drums, temples, and sites of communal living. Along with these signs of budding cognisance has been the development of sites of worship. I have been fortunate to see some of these, most notably the Megalithic Temples on Malta and Gozo. The Megalithic Temples of Malta are significantly older than the Egyptian pyramids and Stonehenge. Key sites like Ġgantija (on Gozo), Hagar Qim, and Mnajdra were constructed between approximately 3600 BC and 2500 BC, predating the Great Pyramid of Giza by roughly 1,000 years. They are recognized as some of the oldest free-standing stone structures in the world.

My overwhelming feeling when I visited these sites was the sense of the deep need which people have always had to ‘mark’ their faith. It doesn’t matter to me that these temples weren’t erected to worship ‘our’ God. It

is the fact that people needed to mark their faith in something bigger than themselves, something that added a spiritual dimension to their earthly human condition that matters to me. We are, I believe, created to be ‘seekers after God’, not just believers in God. Faith is, I believe, found in the discoveries we make while we are searching for the reality of God.

The fullness of the human condition is found through our search for faith. It is faith which elevates how we understand art, music, literature, poetry, and so much more. It is faith which amplifies the human condition, adding something to our lives which lifts our eyes to the potential for ‘more’. It teases us with a not-fully-realised glimpse of eternity; with hope that cannot easily be defined. I believe that faith is the ingredient which, when added to the human condition, enables us to realise that our stardust frames are connected across unimaginable time and distance to things which are wilder than our wildest dreams. I believe that it is only when we exceed the limited scope of our human condition that we become fully human, that we come to fully inhabit our created being. Faith is not a retreat from reality, but a wild dance through our reality, constantly looking behind the doors and curtains of our earthly residence for glimpses of God. Finding glimpses of radical beauty and deep hope, we delight in our discovery of God and find ourselves hungering for more. It is not escapism, but rather a full-bodied expression of hope, a full embrace of what it is to be human.

Thank you to all those who have joined with me in this dance. I have been blessed and my imagination, faith and hope have been fed. I wish for you all the joy of the dance and of the discovery of God.

Love and peace,
Duncan

¹ From ‘Psychology Today’, October 3 2021, Saul Levine M.D.

FROM THE VESTRY

Hello again from the Vestry and the stewards.

We hope that everyone found something of use and interest during the service on 17th May on the theme of 'prayer'. We did enjoy putting the service together, but how preachers do that every week is beyond me. Christian Aid was once again very well supported by our congregation, including the making of some lovely cakes for sale. All donations will now be added up and the final total advised in due course.

From September, we are planning to increase the stewarding team to eight people, for just one year, to support whichever minister is looking after Beckenham. At the time of writing, that's Rev Karen George, however, recently, things have had a habit of changing quite rapidly, so please don't hold me to that, should there be yet more changes between writing this and publication. Thank you!

And finally, I can't end, without a special mention to our two departing South African friends – Deacon Laura Macbean and Rev Duncan Macbean.

We've known Laura since she joined the former Bromley circuit and looked after West Wickham Church in particular. After Covid, deploying both her enthusiasm and her commitment, she was instrumental in reinstating our community café at Beckenham, previously TCs and now known as Joy's Kitchen. I only went along to chat to customers and eat cake, but somehow, Laura persuaded me to join the Tuesday team proper and the rest is history.

Duncan has been with us for the last two years only, but it feels like a lot longer! Personally, I have found his sermons both challenging and inspiring. Perhaps we should skip over his crowd management skills at Communion services though? And most of his jokes too?

We will miss you both but also wish you well in the next stage of your respective ministries. And Broadstairs is only a train journey away, so I'm sure you haven't seen the last of us, or vice versa.

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.

PERSONALIA



Roger & Christine Truelove: We warmly welcome Roger & Christine who have transferred their membership from Sittingbourne.



ZIMBABWE VICTIMS' SUPPORT FUND

GOOD NEWS!

Maize meal distribution: At the beginning of 2025 ZVSF were delivering 30 tonnes of maize (mealie meal) per month to alleviate hunger caused by the widespread drought in Matabeleland. During the year, we decreased this to 10 tonnes per month as many areas received good rainfall and were able to plant and harvest crops. However, the feedback from our Zimbabwe team was that this food relief was still much needed, partly due to high rates of 'kinship care' (1.75 million children being cared for by relatives or family friends (often elderly) who are not their direct parents. Whilst continuing to deliver to our established areas, we are prioritising the Lupane area (on the road from Bulawayo to Victoria Falls) for the extra tonnage as the team have identified it as an area of great need and high food insecurity.



Other work – Seed maize: The team have also been busy with the annual distribution of seed maize (for planting) donated by the Mike Campbell Foundation, which, as one of our team described “brings hope to communities where most people are unemployed and barely getting by”.

Crocs for kids: In addition to food relief, the team were also able to distribute boxes of croc shoes kindly donated by the CURE Hospital in Bulawayo. Nine schools in our feeding programme each received a box of 50 pairs of crocs,

which were provided to children unable to afford school shoes for the often long walk to and from school.

IN ALL THESE ACTIVITIES, THE TRUSTEES AND OUR BULAWAYO TEAM (WHO CONTINUE THIS VITAL WORK IN INCREASINGLY DANGEROUS POLITICAL AND ROAD CONDITIONS) FEEL INCREDIBLY BLESSED TO HAVE YOUR PRAYERS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT SO PLEASE ACCEPT OUR HEARTFELT THANKS AS WE CONTINUE TO MINISTER TO THOSE EXPERIENCING EXTREME HARDSHIP IN ZIMBABWE.

The ZVSF Trustees and Bulawayo team
If anyone feels they would like to support this wonderful work please send cheques made out to ZVSF and send to the Treasurer - Caroline Hastie-Smith, 45 Barnsley, Cirencester, GL7 5EE Thank you.

Valerie

BIRTHDAYS

To all those celebrating a birthday in June, July and August we wish them a very enjoyable day.



MUSICAL NOTES BY DJ



Following a very successful joint concert with the South London Sinfonia, the other SLS, we return to Bromley Road for a lighter concert entitled "Music for Stage and Screen " on Saturday July 4th at 7pm. The programme will comprise favourite opera choruses and choral medleys of songs from Oliver, The Sound of Music and West Side Story. Sadly we will be marking the last appearance by our regular accompanist for the last few years, Jack Stone, and hope for a farewell solo contribution from him. Christopher Braime will conduct and tickets are available through the SLS website or at the door by cash or card.

DJ

LATEST NEWS FROM LIVING WELL

We are getting in touch with the local churches to thank you for your support for Living Well Bromley and to update you about what is going on with us.

As you know, we run the foodbank on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays- we give out an average of 210 adult food parcels and 20 family food parcels per week. Along with the foodbank, on Fridays we provide a hot lunch cooked from scratch for about 220 people and on Tuesdays and Saturdays we run a cafe. Our advocacy service, helping with welfare issues, housing, benefits and debt is an appointment-based service run on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. We also have a counsellor, a monthly clothes bank, the Blend Choir and a charity shop on Penge High St.

We can only run these services due to the generosity of the local community, and especially the local churches. We see this through your food donations (especially at harvest time), financial donations and the donations of time and energy from our volunteers, many of whom belong to local churches.

We are very grateful for all the support we get from the Christian community.

If you would like to know any more about our work and ways you can support us, please get in touch.

EASTER 2026



We are delighted to show you the Easter Cross that was displayed this year. As you know we have decorated a cross each year to display outside on Easter Sunday.

This year it was extra special as the decorating was done by members of our Girl Guiding groups who were:-

Guide - Amy, Brownie - Freya and Ranger - Hannah.

They did a great job so thank you to all of them from all of us.



CHURCHES TOGETHER in BECKENHAM

I am pleased to say that once again we were well represented at the annual walk of witness through Beckenham High Street. We estimate at least 250 + people attended. More about our own Easter celebrations elsewhere in the magazine.

On 5 July a picnic will be held in St Paul's Church garden, Brackley Road. As in previous years we hope everyone will come together after their own services in the morning. Please bring a folding chair if you have one and don't forget your lunch!

Outdoor games will be available for the children. I hope to see you there.

Christine - CTiB Treasurer

PASSIONATE ABOUT PENGUINS



SPECIES AND SUB-SPECIES OF PENGUIN

I have liked penguins since as early as 1952 when there was a children's programme called "Meet the Penguins" on television! It was about a family of penguins who lived in an igloo. The family included a baby penguin and I had a baby brother. On a summer holiday my father and young brother went to buy a newspaper and came back with a rubber penguin. They did not realise it squeaked when squashed! This was the first of my massive collection of model and soft toy penguins.

I retired in 2002 and following a trip around New Zealand in 2003 and my 'dream' holiday to Antarctica in 2004, I decided to base most of my future holidays around seeing penguins. In 2003 I discovered that the charity 'Earthwatch' had a South African Penguin Project on Robben Island. I was very nervous about booking this for 2004 to monitor penguins but somebody joined my birding group in Kelsey Park and he had done the same project! He was one of only a few people in the world to have done so. I immediately booked my place! So I did this in 2004 and then in 2005 and 2007. It included banding penguins, monitoring their nests, collecting band numbers of previously ringed penguins, doing penguin road crossing counts and even diet sampling them! We also entered data on the computer, did beach clean-ups and dug in artificial burrows. The Principal Investigator on the 2007 trip then invited me to go to Dassen Island to help her with her work on monitoring penguins. This I did in September 2008, March 2010, September 2014 and September 2016. She also worked with gannets on Bird Island, Lambert's Bay. On the 2010 trip she diet sampled 52 gannets and had to ring 300 gannet chicks. I helped her with recording the diet sampling data. I also held several gannet chicks whilst their ring

was put on. On Dassen Island she weighed and measured penguin chicks. If there were two chicks in the nest she removed both at the same time and so I often held one whilst she dealt with the other. Incidentally I also went to the Aquarium in Cape Town in 2010 and chatted to the person feeding the penguins. She was interested in what I had done on Dassen and invited me into the enclosure when she feed the Rockhoppers and even let me hold one called 'Bubbles'!

After my Sub-Antarctic Islands trip in 2005 I visited the Yellow-Eyed Penguin Trust Headquarters in Dunedin and paid for Life Membership. This fantastic trip meant that I added Erect Crested, Snares, Royal and Yellow-eyed to my penguin photographic record.

I have had interesting holidays to the Galapagos Islands for Galapagos penguins, Peru and Chile for Humboldt penguins, Snow Hill Island in Antarctica for Emperor penguins and Tristan da Cunha for Northern Rockhopper penguins. In 2011 I had a 'Penguin Experience' holiday in South Island, New Zealand and took excellent photos of Fiordland Crested penguins and White Flipped penguins but my Little penguin photographs were very poor and small.

I have been to four International Penguin conferences. Bristol in 2013, Cape Town in 2016, Dunedin in 2019 and near Santiago in 2023. In Cape Town we were able to go to the Aquarium and interact with the Rockhopper Penguins. I held 'Bubbles' for a second time.

We stopped twice in the Falkland Islands on my Antarctic trip in 2004. I stayed on them for a fortnight in 2015 and had a cruise round them in 2018. This gave me improved photos of Gentoo, King, Macraroni, Magellanic and Southern Rockhopper Penguins.

In 2017 I went to Tasmania and Melbourne in Australia in the hope of getting some Little Penguin photos. I did get some and they were an improvement on the ones from 2011 in New Zealand, To sum up I have seen and photographed 20 species and sub species of penguin in the wild over 20 years.

Brenda H

FUND FOR HUMAN NEED



2024-2025 review

Like almost all Methodist founded endeavours our year ends on 31st of August and in November the annual reports are presented at the AGM. The trustees wish to express their sincere thanks to all who have supported the Fund during the year. Despite ongoing financial pressures and a reduction in income compared with 2023-24, the generosity of donors enabled the Fund to increase its grant payments to the highest level in its' 65-year history.

During the year, 776 grants were made to individuals in need, benefiting 1,188 people and totalling £79,331. The trustees give heartfelt thanks to all whose generosity made this increased support possible.

Not just giving money, giving love, hope, trust, self-esteem and confidence and none of it possible without your continuing support. The amount we have raised for 2025-2026 will be reported in the Autumn Indicator.

Valerie

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.

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



NEWS FROM JOY'S KITCHEN – Summer 2026

Hello from a sunny Joy's Kitchen. Why not pop down and enjoy a cup of tea and a cake in the courtyard and enjoy the beautiful flowers too?

We will have our usual summer menu in June and July, including iced coffees and strawberries and cream or ice cream. If there is anything else you would like us to consider adding to the menu, either permanently or as a 'special', do have a word with me next time you're in.

Cakes at Joy's Kitchen are always popular and we would be happy to accept more donations of homemade cakes. There is a very simple form for occasional bakers to complete, showing ingredients, which means anyone can donate!

Joy's Kitchen will be very sad to say goodbye to Deacon Laura who, before my appointment, managed Joy's Kitchen and, is currently the chairperson for the Joy's Kitchen committee. Laura does so much for Joy's and the whole team will miss her greatly. We wish her and Rev. Duncan the best of luck in their next appointment.



Chloe, Joy's Kitchen Manager



ECO CHURCH GROUP NEWS

After what seems like ages, work on the installation of the solar panels will finally start on 27 May. The work will take place in two stages as follows:

- Phase 1 - 12 panels will be installed on the pitched roof of the Richmond Room, together with the inverter and all the cabling to connect to the 3 phase smart meter that was installed last year. This fully working installation should start benefitting church funds straight away
- Phase 2 - a further 18 panels will be installed on the south-facing pitched roof of the Bevington Hall and they will connect up to the Phase 1 system. It is hoped to do this work during the 2026 school summer holidays. Before this work can begin, however, the roof needs to be strengthened with extra purlins. A structural engineer is working on a plan for this. It is also hoped to insulate the underside of the Bevington Hall roof at the same time. We are seeking quotes for the internal scaffolding, which will need to be erected to enable this work to go ahead and also for the extra purlins and the insulation. We are still waiting for the structural engineer's report and are now rapidly running out of time to get organised for this August (e.g. builders already booked up for this August), so we may have to wait as much as a year or take the hit of doing the work in term time.

On Friday 12th June, Beckenham Methodist Church is hosting the showing of a climate change film about the effects of global warming. It is called "Peoples Emergency Briefing". Leaflets about this are up around the Church. The screening is free, however, you do need to reserve a spot in advance.

The weekly newsletter continues to include advice and tips on Eco matters and we hope this information is of interest ad use.



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 NATIONAL YEAR OF READING

A few book recommendations :-

Mere Christianity by CS Lewis
The Screwtape Letters, also by CS Lewis
Pain, the Gift Nobody Wants by Paul Brand
Another Gospel? by Alisa Childers
Knowing God by J I Packer
The Pursuit of God by A W Tozer
The Case for Christ by Lee Strobel
God's Smuggler by Brother Andrew
The Fight by John White

These are some book recommendations we have received. I can't say we have read many of these but perhaps someone in our Church family could offer to read and review one or more of the books for the Indicator

DATES TO NOTE IN JUNE

Wednesday 3 June: World Bicycle Day

An international event promoting the bicycle as a simple, affordable, reliable and environmentally sustainable mode of transport.

Friday 5 June: World Environment Day

A global call for climate action

Thursday 11 June: the FIFA World Cup starts (men's soccer)

Matches will take place in the US, Mexico and Canada

Friday 26 June: Take Your Dog to Work Day

An annual event encouraging dog owners to bring their pets into the office to raise money for animal welfare charities.

Monday 29 June: Wimbledon Tennis Championships begin in London

Sunday 21 June: Father's Day

Saturday 27 June: Armed Forces Day

FLOWERS IN CHURCH



ROTA for June, July and August

JUNE

Sunday 7th
Sunday 14th
Sunday 21st
Sunday 28th

Flowers provided by:

Comfort Lawson
Paulette Tomlinson
Margaret Cornwell
Barbara Kyei

Flowers arranged by:

Mary Jackson
Richard Phizacklea
Richard Phizacklea

JULY

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

Flowers provided by:

Ben Alcock
Ena Hamblyn
Sheila Priestman
Comfort Lawson

Flowers arranged by:

Mary Jackson
Margaret Hazlewood
Margaret Hazlewood

AUGUST

Sunday 2nd
Sunday 9th
Sunday 16th
Sunday 23rd
Sunday 30th

Flowers provided by:

Jenny Nichols
Margaret Cornwell

Brenda Hotham
Marie Gittings

Flowers arranged by:

Mary Jackson
Margaret Hazlewood
Richard Phizacklea
Margaret Hazlewood

Flowers arranged by providers unless otherwise stated.

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

Sunday 7th June	Rev Duncan MacBean + Holy Communion
Sunday 14th June	Rev David Morris
Sunday 21st June	Jim Holman
Sunday 28th June	Dr Clive Timehin
Sunday 5th July	Rev Duncan MacBean + Holy Communion
Sunday 12th July	Rev Karen George
Sunday 19th July	Ralph Brandhorst
Sunday 26th July	Deacon Laura MacBean
Sunday 2nd August	Rev Derek Stanworth + Holy Communion
Sunday 9th August	Bennie Harms
Sunday 16th August	Emmanuel Owusu-Sekyere
Sunday 23rd August	LA
Sunday 30th August	Roli Degazon-Johnson

USEFUL CONTACTS

Beckenham Methodist Church

(Registered Charity No. 1138006)

Bromley Road Church BR3 5JE

0208 650 2763

Minister: Rev Duncan MacBean until 31st July
Rev Karen George from 1st August – 31st August

Senior Steward: Sandra Storch

Church Administrator (including room bookings):

Sarah Reed

Tel: 07570 230555

Email:- office@bmcbr3.com

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

Website: <http://www.beckenhammethodistchurch.co.uk>

