

Family News

15th April 2023

Serendipity

I have been reading about and thinking about serendipity and grace.

The Oxford dictionary defines serendipity as:
"The occurrence and development of events by chance in a happy or beneficial way."

The definition of grace is:
"The free and unmerited favour of God, as manifested in the salvation of sinners and the bestowal of blessings."

In my experience the way some things just seem to happen, without explanation or any intervention is more often good rather than bad. It appears to me that grace and serendipity is incredibly closely linked and the way God looks after us, is nothing short of a miracle!

This seems very obvious when we look at babies and toddlers, but even looking at my own adult life; the fact that I wake up every morning is an act of God. Thinking about all the things that need to go right just so we can survive leaves me in no doubt that there is a Creator that is in charge.

Scientists refer to the habitable zone where earth orbits the sun, as the "Goldilocks zone" because planets orbiting at that "just right" distance from a star are not too hot or too cold to host liquid water. If planets are closer to their star, the water turns to steam; if they're farther, it freezes. In fact, everything needs to be just right, the speed of the earth's rotation, gravity and a multitude of other factors. To me that can only be because of our Creator God!

In the period after we have celebrated Easter, where God's grace is so abundantly displayed in Jesus, we can spend hours on our knees thanking God for the gift of grace.

"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God." - Ephesians 2:8 NLT

As we pray together today let us run through the goodness (serendipity) of God's hand in every aspect of our lives; the miracles; big and small - Amen.

Pieter

Orpington Gospel Choir (OGC) is back! 🎵🎶



Spring is in the air and we are back on **Monday 17th April at 7.45pm** in the main Church.

New singers welcome. If you like learning simple harmonies and the joy of expressive worship, come join us.

No audition, just a join of singing.

Contact: OrpingtonGospelChoir@gmail.com

Church Work Morning Saturday 22nd April, 9am till midday

We would love you to come and join us for the church work day. You truly only need enthusiasm and do not need any special skills.

Jobs on the day will include indoor and outdoor tasks and any time you can give to maintain and care for the church building and grounds will make such a big difference. Even if you cannot stay for the whole morning, just an hour is great!

Come pick a task, have some fun, meet new people and enjoy a bacon sandwich and coffee for your efforts.

Please put your name on the signup sheet at the back of the church. Thanks, Pieter

Northumbria Daily Prayer

You are invited to come along to Daily Prayer at 9.00-9.20am in the chapel on Mondays and Tuesdays.



There will be readings from Scripture, a short meditative reading, prayer, reflection and silence.

Dates for April and May are:
24th and 25th April; 9th, 15th and 16th May.

Sunday 16th April 2023

2nd Sunday of Easter

10.30am Morning Worship

Welcome, Notices

Opening Prayer, Confession

Worship

See what a morning
Strength will rise
Waiting here for you

Bible Reading

John 20 v 19-31

Sermon

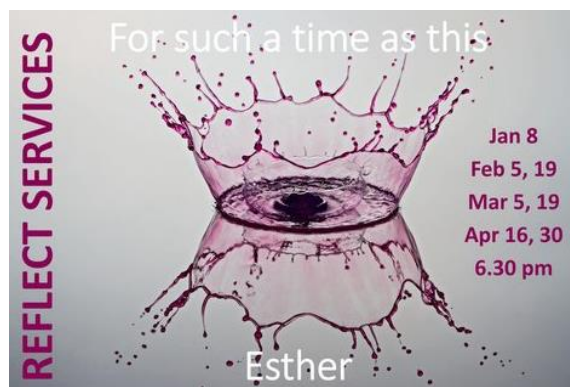
Intercessions

Worship

There is a truth (Jesus)
Living hope

Final Prayer & Blessing

6.30pm Holy Communion - Reflect



REFLECT SERVICES

For such a time as this

Jan 8
Feb 5, 19
Mar 5, 19
Apr 16, 30
6.30 pm

Esther

For online zoom coffee after morning church **today**
(Sunday 16th April 2023)
join Heather from 11.45am:



<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/84610974627?pwd=Z1g4TzIvVFVtcEUxeGRWb1FLUDVuZz09>

Meeting ID: 846 1097 4627

Passcode: R4V5My

For next issue of **Family News**

can you please send notices etc to Vernon by

Midday on **Saturday 22nd April please**

Email is vandjmapp@gmail.com

Electoral Roll

- Do you consider yourself to be a member of the congregation of this church?
- Would you like to enter more fully into the life of the church?
- Why not put your name on the church Electoral Roll as a commitment?

Application forms can be found at the back of church together with an explanatory leaflet 'Belonging and the Electoral Roll'. Complete the form and return it via a church officer or Roger Wilkinson

Closing date for applications is next Sunday,
23rd April 2023

NB It has been necessary to change the day of the week for this course which begins next week. It will start next Tuesday, 18th April and continue for 12 weeks omitting half-term week.

The Big Picture



12 Week Discipleship Course @ Christ Church

Tuesdays
7pm coffee,
7.30pm start

18th April to
11th July

(excluding half-term
30th May)

Sign up at Welcome Desk.

Course book £10.70

For more info, email ccorpington@talktalk.net

"If you would like to give to Christ's work here at Christ Church, the best way to give is via our bank account, Sort code 40 52 40, and account number 00095465, or by sending a cheque payable to 'Christ Church PCC Orpington'

to 165 Charterhouse Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9EP

With you on your jobseeking journey

Join a friendly community and gain skills to step confidently into employment.

christians
against
poverty

CAP

Starting Wednesday 3 May 10:30-13:00

Book your free place, contact:
Graham - 07341 369 943

Rye Crescent, Orpington, BR5 4NH
Hosted by Unity Church - includes free lunch

Find your nearest course at capjobclubs.org

Baptism?

Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows?

Confirmation?

Are you thinking about being baptised? If you would like to be baptised, then no matter what age you are, we would love to talk with you about baptism. Baptism is a once-in-a-lifetime commitment to follow Christ as your Lord and Saviour, and if you would like to know more, then we would love to speak with you.

If you would like to re-affirm your baptismal vows and make a fresh commitment to Christ, then we would love to speak with you.

If you would like to be confirmed, which involves a short course taking you deeper into discipleship of Christ and is the traditional way of being admitted to Holy Communion in the Church of England, then we would love to speak with you.

If you are interested in any of these, then please contact the office on ccorpington@talktalk.net and someone will get in contact with you. Thank you, Sharon

Rev'd Dr Sharon Smith
Vicar of Christ Church Orpington

The Data Protection Act 2018 is the **UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**. Everyone responsible for using personal data has to follow strict rules called 'data protection principles'. They must make sure the information is: used fairly, lawfully and transparently.

Meina is our GDPR representative and if anyone has any queries relating to GDPR to please contact her on: gdpr@ccorpington.org



WANTED

OUR MOST NEEDED ITEMS ARE:

Desserts
Squash/Cordial
Cooking Sauce
Cold Meats
Milk UHT
Fruit Juice UHT

PLEASE **DON'T** GIVE US **FROZEN** OR **CHILLED** ITEMS AS WE DON'T HAVE THE CORRECT STORAGE FOR THEM AND IT SPOILS BEFORE WE CAN DISTRIBUTE THEM

WE'VE GOT PLENTY OF:
PASTA, CEREAL, TEA & BISCUITS

**TAKE A PHOTO OF THIS LIST
WITH YOUR PHONE TO
REFER TO WHILE YOU SHOP!**

**IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF FOOD SUPPORT
PLEASE CONTACT US ON 0800 9 20 23 24**

Leadership Conference

Alpha (HTB) are running a Leadership Conference in May at the Royal Albert Hall, and here at Christ Church we are going to be showing their streamed conference highlights on **Thursday 25th May at 6.30pm** for refreshments for **7pm start**. All are welcome, and if you would like to have a look before you sign up, you can check it out on:

<https://www.leadershipconference.org.uk/book-now>

If you are interested, please let Sharon or Anna know. Again, all are welcome to come and hear their insights on leadership.

2023 Services at Christ Church Orpington

Sunday 23rd April

9.00am Holy Communion
10.30 am Morning Worship
6.30pm Evening Worship - Go Deeper

Sunday 30th April

9.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Morning Worship - **APCM**
6.30pm Evening Worship - Reflect



Paul and Sarah Tester

Link Letter no. 27 | March 2023

Contact details:
paulandsarahinlima@hotmail.com



Location: Peru



What we do: Paul is working to establish a truly Latin American mission movement for Latin America and Sarah serves in children's ministry.

Dear friends,

New things!

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." – Isaiah 43:19

This season has been and continues to be a season of new things.

New for CMS in Latin America:

Paul led the organisation of the first ever CMS in Latin America conference called "Refresh" (Matthew 11:28 – Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest). CMS's people in mission from across the region came together for a wonderful time of renewal in Jesus. It

was a multilingual event held in Ushuaia, Argentina, at the site of the first established SAMS mission among the indigenous Yaghan people. There were so many special joys, being blessed by the local church through their hospitality, an engagement and being together as a team for the first time ever. The rich mission history in the area, the beautiful surroundings and God's favour made this a wonderful time from which to be sent back out to serve across Latin America.

Straight afterwards Paul was at the other end of the country visiting the ongoing mission work of the indigenous church in the Argentine Chaco. Attending a leaders training conference of around 600 indigenous leaders was an incredible experience. How would we cope with hosting such a number? Food was prepared for everyone, people slept in homes and on floors and it was an incredible time for sharing, learning and continuing with the development of CMS's partnership with the indigenous church in mission.

New this (Peruvian) summer:

On Christmas Eve, just before we travelled to Argentina, Sophia tripped and fractured her arm, leaving her with a cast from the wrist up and over her elbow. Thankfully we were still all able to enjoy Christmas with friends and then on Boxing Day headed to Argentina together. We were able to take a few days as a family on the way to the Refresh conference to enjoy both Buenos Aires and Ushuaia together. On our return the girls have enjoyed summer clubs with Sophia in calligraphy, Emily in basketball and Annabelle in gymnastics. Now Sophia is out of her cast she is back swimming and all three are loving their activities. School restarted in March and they have been delighted to spend more time with friends and get back into their learning there.

Sarah celebrated her birthday in February and has continued with her discipleship and serving with children at church. Recently the key for the church building could not be found so Sunday school became an open air



Everyone enjoying "Refresh"



event, although to escape the worst of the heat beating down from the sun our car boot became the classroom! Numbers are growing again as are local leaders, so it is exciting to see.

News from Peru:

All of this has been in the context of a difficult period for Peru. An attempt by the then President Pedro Castillo to dissolve the congress was thwarted and he was impeached. However, protests in support of him and calling for fresh presidential and congressional elections have been both violent and violently suppressed. Well over 50 people have died as a result, roads have been blocked, airports occupied and

buildings burned. While things have calmed recently, no real resolution has been found.

The country's attention has since turned to coping with heavy rain, flooding and landslides brought by Cyclone Yaku. Over 50 people have died due to the rainy season and there is an alert that this year may bring an "El niño" with extended unusual weather patterns.

New for us as a family:

In among all of this we have been praying and reflecting, and have felt that now is also the time for us to begin our return to the UK after 16 years away. We have had an amazing time in God's service here in Peru, but particularly to give the girls better educational opportunities, as well as being closer to wider family, we believe it is the right time to move. It hasn't been an easy decision, but we are excited about the future. We will be leaving Peru at the beginning of July so that the girls will be ready to start the new UK school year in September. Paul will be continuing in his role but will now be based in the UK. Sarah will continue as a mission partner for these last months in Peru and for the few months of transition back into the UK, so we would ask that you continue to support us. We will look forward to visiting you all in the second half of 2023 and would particularly ask for your prayers as we take this big step. We'll send more news soon.

Praise God for:

- ▶ The joy of the Refresh conference and for a chance to visit Argentina together as a family
- ▶ The indigenous church in Latin America and our partnership together in God's mission
- ▶ For summer fun and for the growth in the Sunday school

Please pray for:

- ▶ Peru's political and social problems and all those affected by rains, flooding and landslides
- ▶ A good end to our time here in Peru and for good transitions to the UK
- ▶ Sophia, Emily and Annabelle as they leave the home where they have lived their whole lives
- ▶ Wisdom to know where to live and for the right school places to be available in the UK
- ▶ Jesus to be followed by all across this amazing region.

With our thanks, love and prayers,
Paul, Sarah, Sophia, Emily and Annabelle



Photos from top to bottom: With the amazing women of Barrio Obrero; First day back at school; Sunday school in our car boot; Greetings from Lima.



Going further with Church Mission Society

Jesus never gives up. Neither should we. We live in a fractured, hurting world. It can be tempting to give up: on hope, on people, on the idea that things can ever change. Yet, Jesus invites us to follow him on a journey to the edges. Find out more at churchmissionsociety.org/nevergiveup

Please note that opinions expressed in link letters are those of mission partners, not necessarily of Church Mission Society.

If you would like to discuss your mailings with us or to receive this link letter on a regular basis, please email supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org or call 01865 787400. Church Mission Society is a mission community acknowledged by the Church of England. Registered Company No. 6985330 and Registered Charity No. 1131655 (England and Wales) and SC047163 (Scotland).