

NEWS & VIEWS

The Free Church Hampstead Garden Suburb



OCTOBER 2020

PLEASE TAKE ONE

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB FREE CHURCH

(United Reformed and Baptist)
Central Square, London, NW11 7AG
www.hgsfreechurch.org.uk

Sunday Services: *(When services resume) 11 a.m. (and 6.30 p.m. when announced)*
Holy Communion is celebrated at Morning Worship on the first Sunday of every month.
The Junior Church meets at 11am every Sunday

Minister: **Revd Dr Ian Tutton**
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Safeguarding Statement

Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church believes that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all those who are vulnerable (children, young people and vulnerable adults). We expect all of our leaders, volunteers and those who use our premises to share this commitment and value the support of those who worship here in achieving this.

The Elders (Trustees), Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church
January 2016

NEWS & VIEWS

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB
FREE CHURCH
Central Square,
London NW11 7AG



NO 763

OCTOBER 2020

Dear **F**riends,

We are living through ‘strange’ times. Although some of us are getting so used to it by now that it isn’t even ‘strange’ anymore. But there will be others who will never be able to ‘get used to it’ – whatever ‘it’ is...

...Even though we are presently experiencing a resurgence in cases of Covid-19 – the so-called ‘second wave’ – and as a result the (re)imposition of a number of ‘lockdown’ restrictions, only a relatively small proportion of the population have actually been infected. This is one reason why many people question the wisdom of ‘lockdown’, given its impact on the nation’s economic well-being. That is for another time. ...But an awful lot of people have suffered, are suffering and continue to suffer indirectly as a result of the pandemic, including many of us...

...The most obvious example is financial hardship. The government has been generous in its protection of many but there will always be those who ‘miss out’. Alongside which there is the threat of redundancy, or short time working, or lack of job opportunities. Then there is education. Many children and young people, pupils and students have been denied opportunities for learning; not just in the classroom, but wider social interaction too. The ‘knock-on’ effect of home ‘education’ has also taken its toll on many parents, usually the mums...

...But there are altogether deeper, more profound forces at work during times such as these. All of these have the capacity to wreak havoc in the lives of so many and which therefore demand our ongoing, particular and undivided attention, precisely because their impact can be unpredictable, long lasting, even life changing....

... The emotional fall-out is likely to be immense. Relationships strained to the limit; destabilized, disrupted, even destroyed. Raised voices, frayed tempers, abusive behaviour. Instances of domestic violence on the increase, all because established patterns of relating to one another, of sharing one’s

lives together, of supporting each other, have become distorted due to pressures exerted by restrictions placed on our otherwise straightforward way of life. When folk are stressed out, relationships are often stretched beyond breaking point...

...And then there is our spiritual life. Just as relationships between each other have been under great strain, so too for many has their relationship with God. We find ourselves asking questions, wondering 'out loud', daring to doubt. We keep coming back to asking God, Why? Why now? Why us? Why me? Why not me? Our minds stray into that 'far country', beyond the horizon framed by scientific certainty, rational explanation, and logical argument. We hear all of this, but it isn't enough. Why can't we hear the voice of God? It is as if God has retreated in the face of a tidal wave of existential angst; as if 'the heavens are shut up like brass'...

...There are no easy answers. Over time, no doubt, a vaccine will be discovered allowing us to live our lives free from the threat of Covid-19. But some will be scarred for life by their experience of it. The economy will 'bounce back' and for most people their financial well-being will be secured. But some will be condemned to poverty and hardship through no fault of their own. Children and young people will 'catch up' with their learning, will resume their 'growing up' into responsible adulthood. But for some, the lost ground will be too much to make up and they will be denied the opportunity to be the person they could have been. Interpersonal relationships will mend and emotional equilibrium restored; 'peace, harmony and mutual flourishing' will again be the order of the day. But for some it will have been all too much, broken beyond repair. Faith in God will again become a way of living. We will have learned to live in the light of what this experience has taught us about ourselves, about others and about God. But for some, believing in the same way, in the same God will prove impossible...

...Whatever else the future will require of us, it will demand that we be patient with each other, and that perhaps is the hardest challenge of all.

Ian Tutton



Computers for Barnet Refugee Service

During the pandemic, Barnet Refugee Service (BRS) has continued to be available to refugees and asylum seekers. Obviously the services have had to be quickly adapted and it has become an online service rather than face to face. However, some workshops in small groups have occurred in the local park and on their allotment, and young people had outings around London during the summer. Food parcels are being delivered fortnightly to those in need.



The problem with much of the advice and guidance and zoom workshops being on-line, is that this way of communicating excludes many of those needing help, who do not have access to the internet without a laptop.

Has anyone any netbooks, pads or laptops (not desktops) which are no longer being used at home? Have you updated yours but have an old system which is still useable?

Hossein is willing to refurbish old ones (up to 10yrs old), so long as they do not require too much spending on them. A 5 year old laptop we had, Hossein got in working order, and it has gone to a Syrian family with four children. Farida Stanikzai (the operations manager), who spoke about the work of BRS in one of our services a few years ago, allocates the refurbished computers to families.

Please contact us if you can help.

Penny Trafford & Hossein Nejad



Bible Study: Joshua

Last time we learned from the first section of Joshua chapter 10 how the 'five Amorite Kings' and their armies had banded together to confront Joshua and the advancing Israelite forces. The battle was fought out at Gibeon, and the Amorite confederacy was routed.



Following their victory, the Israelites returned to Gilgal. The next part of the chapter describes the aftermath. It is not an 'easy read'. (But then again, the Bible, in so many ways, was never meant to be an 'easy' read). *'...Now the five kings had fled and hidden in the cave at Makkedah. When Joshua was told that the five kings had been found hiding in the cave at Makkedah, he said, "Roll large rocks up to the mouth of the cave, and post some men there to guard it. But don't stop; pursue your enemies! Attack them from the rear and don't let them reach their cities, for the LORD your God has given them into your hand." So, Joshua and the Israelites defeated them completely, but a few survivors managed to reach their fortified cities. The whole army then returned safely to Joshua in the camp at Makkedah, and no one uttered a word against the Israelites...'* (Joshua 10, verses 16 – 21). 'Makkedah' translates as 'place of shepherds'. It is not easy to locate precisely but recent exploration of an area in the Palestinian Plain suggests it might be what is known today as 'El-Moghar', or 'El-Mughar', some 25 miles north west of Jerusalem; one of very few places throughout the whole area where a cave system has been found. There are no other references to Makkedah in the Old Testament...

...And so, the time came for Joshua to confront his prisoners... '...Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out to me." So, they brought the five kings out of the cave - the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon. When they had brought these kings to Joshua, he summoned all the men of Israel and said to the army commanders who had come with him, "Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings." So, they came forward and placed their feet on their necks. Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Be strong and courageous. This is what the LORD will do to all the enemies you are going to fight." Then Joshua put the kings to death and exposed their bodies on five poles, and they were left hanging on the poles until evening. At sunset Joshua gave the order and they took them down from the poles and threw them into the cave where they had been hiding. At the mouth of the

cave they placed large rocks, which are there to this day... ' (Joshua 10, 22 – 27)... A grizzly, if not unexpected, conclusion. No doubt the kings, as soon as they realised that their hiding place had been discovered, knew that there was only one way it would end. As surely as they heard the sound of the cave entrance being sealed, entombing them in the darkness, they knew they would never get out alive...

...But every now and again when we read an otherwise 'obscure' passage such as this, (because I doubt if many of us, me included, are that familiar with the details of the events described) suddenly, because of what is happening at the present time it has a particular resonance; it leaps off the page as it were. So, consider again... *"Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings." So, they came forward and placed their feet on their necks.* It wasn't that long ago, although with all that is happening it seems like it, when on May 25th of this year, George Floyd was arrested, pushed to the ground and the arresting officer sought to 'subdue' him by placing his knee on his neck. Because George Floyd had a health condition that made breathing difficult, doing this to him for over eight minutes resulted in his death. As a result, the 'Black Lives Matter' movement was born, and 'taking the knee' became a powerful and evocative statement for many; a (re)awakening of a collective conscience concerning the institutionalised racism perceived to be at the heart of our political, religious and cultural identity. Without dwelling on the merits of this particular campaign, we should note that such ritual humiliation when a person is restrained in this way is an age-old practice perpetrated by people of power across the centuries...

...Moreover, in the case of the five kings this was merely a precursor to their execution; but thought necessary in the circumstances. The description of what happened to their corpses after they had been 'killed' was even more grizzly, *'...Then Joshua put the kings to death and exposed their bodies on five poles, and they were left hanging on the poles until evening. At sunset Joshua gave the order and they took them down from the poles and threw them into the cave where they had been hiding. At the mouth of the cave they placed large rocks, which are there to this day...'* The carrying out of the death penalty has always involved elements of ritual humiliation, both before and after the actual putting to death, the most powerful example being the drama that played out during the crucifixion, amply illustrated in the accounts we have in the Gospels of Jesus' post trial humiliation at the hands of the soldiers, the having to carry one's own cross etc...

...But if that were not enough, what happened next also has an unpleasant parallel with recent events... *'... That day Joshua took Makkedah. He put the city and its king to the sword and totally destroyed everyone in it. He left no survivors. And he did to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of*

Jericho. Then Joshua and all Israel with him moved on from Makkedah to Libnah and attacked it. The LORD also gave that city and its king into Israel's hand. The city and everyone in it Joshua put to the sword. He left no survivors there. And he did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho. Then Joshua and all Israel with him moved on from Libnah to Lachish; he took up positions against it and attacked it. The LORD gave Lachish into Israel's hands, and Joshua took it on the second day. The city and everyone in it he put to the sword, just as he had done to Libnah. Meanwhile, Horam king of Gezer had come up to help Lachish, but Joshua defeated him and his army—until no survivors were left. Then Joshua and all Israel with him moved on from Lachish to Eglon; they took up positions against it and attacked it. They captured it that same day and put it to the sword and totally destroyed everyone in it, just as they had done to Lachish. Then Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron and attacked it. They took the city and put it to the sword, together with its king, its villages and everyone in it. They left no survivors. Just as at Eglon, they totally destroyed it and everyone in it. Then Joshua and all Israel with him turned around and attacked Debir. They took the city, its king and its villages, and put them to the sword. Everyone in it they totally destroyed. They did to Debir and its king as they had done to Libnah and its king and to Hebron. So, Joshua subdued the whole region, including the hill country, the Negev, the western foothills and the mountain slopes, together with all their kings. He left no survivors. He totally destroyed all who breathed, just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded. Joshua subdued them from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza and from the whole region of Goshen to Gibeon. All these kings and their lands Joshua conquered in one campaign, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel. Then Joshua returned with all Israel to the camp at Gilgal. (Joshua 10, 28 – 43). I have reproduced the whole text to allow it to have maximum impact. Wholesale slaughter described in 'matter of fact' terms. No hint of remorse. Nothing less than 'Divinely Sanctioned Ethnic Cleansing'. Ethnic Cleansing – whether for religious, political or cultural motives – has been a blight upon humanity from the very beginning, it continues unabated, and shows no sign of ending. There are many who would describe the actions of the present Israeli Government in what is known as the 'West Bank' as 'ethnic cleansing' although others would regard any such suggestion as being 'anti-Semitic'. Whatever. The West Bank of the 21st Century is the same ground cleared by Joshua and his army all those years ago...'

Ian Tutton

NEWS OF PEOPLE

Ailie Draper (1933-2020) A tribute by her husband, Don Draper



Ailie Draper, or as many in the suburb knew her, Ailie Worster, died peacefully in the Marie Curie Hospice in Belsize Park on 2nd February. Ailie lived in the Suburb for sixty years. She was educated at Long Dene, a progressive boarding school, worked briefly in children's television and advertising before becoming a full-time homemaker. She moved to the suburb in 1960 shortly after her marriage to Alec. She and Alec lived first in Westholm and later in Southway. They had four daughters – Alison, Susie, Emma and Celia, all of whom were educated at Henrietta Barnet, ten grandchildren and five step grandchildren. After Alec's death Ailie moved to Temple Fortune Lane.

Ailie was adopted and had wonderful parents. Her father was a BBC newsreader. Her early years were not uneventful. Like many who grew up in wartime, there were frequent changes of address and bombing raids, which sometimes came too close for comfort. She had a bad car accident in her teenage years and was told that she might never walk again. She did, and loved riding on the Heath Extension.

She loved music and art. For many years she sang with the Bach Choir, including at Charles and Diana's wedding, and later with the Highgate Choral Society and briefly with the Free Church choir. Having missed out on a university education, she studied art history at Birkbeck College as a mature student.

We met in 2007 and I was privileged to have shared twelve years of her life, ten of them as her husband. They have been an amazing twelve years and I still can't quite believe they have come to an end. For most of these twelve years we lived both in Devon and London, changing over each week. We both became members of the Free Church in 2011.

It was a challenging but rewarding experience for us both as we immersed ourselves in each other's life. For me there were Highgate concerts, annual visits to the Royal Festival Hall for the Matthew Passion, numerous visits to the Hampstead Theatre and local cinemas. There were visits to the V and A which she so much loved and where she worked as a volunteer. I never imagined that one day I would become a regular at the Wigmore Hall or go to Glyndebourne.

For her there was sport and country life. I managed to take her to Queens and Wimbledon, which she thought quite civilised. She had more difficulty with a Davis Cup match in Naples, which involved a lot of crowd participation. She went to see Arsenal at the Emirates Stadium.

Ailie was adopted. Her birth mother was a farmer's daughter. What a coincidence it was that she was born in a "mother and child" home in Belsize Park where she died. She discovered her half-brother and in another odd coincidence, found that both her mother's and her birth mother's families came from the same part of Scotland.

The last six months of 2019 were a whirl. In July we were in the Highlands. I had had a hip operation and had been over ambitious in how far I could walk. It was Ailie who had to get me back to the car. It was Ailie who wanted to get up at six o'clock to be taken out on Loch Tay to see ospreys and beavers.

I still can't believe that my adorable Ailie - as I loved to call her - is no longer here. The choir at her funeral was made up of members of the Bach Choir, the Highgate Choral Society and the Free Church choir. Ian Tutton took the service and Ronald Corp, the conductor and composer, conducted the combined choir. Her ashes are to be interred in a Devon churchyard and scattered on one of her favourite Dorset beauty spots. There is to be a memorial service in Devon when singing is again permitted in churches.

Don Draper

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Taken from the BBC Radio 4 Sunday Morning service on 13th September 2020 when Liliane Uwimana, a Rwandan refugee, who fled the genocide with her four children, came to the UK, knowing no language and having to adapt to the culture, language and weather of this country, said that the Bible verse that kept her going through that most difficult journey was from Jeremiah: 'I know the plans I have for you.....plans to give you hope and a future.' We too can also hold on to that promise finding our way through such unknown territory.



Sourced by Rosemary Birch

SEA

The setting sun suffuses the West
Reflecting rhythms from the silent sea.
Looking, I see many miles of flow and
crest.

There are others on the beach but now
just me.



I walk. My feet do not impress. Hard sand.
No permanency though, as tides come and go
Rhythms not controlled by man but by moon stand.
This is a Spring tide with many feet high and low.

The sea is a universe master of itself.
I think, but ocean floods to all parts now.
I walk. I enjoy, but sea heeds nothing else.
Under the waves much happens high and low.

Moon, tides, winds prevail. Man is nought,
Just a user, a client of the elements.
Show respect and be as you ought.
Marvel, Enjoy. The ocean reigns. No settlements.

John Birch

*The rain it raineth on the just
And also on the unjust feller,
But more upon the just
because,
The unjust steals the just's
umbrella.*



Contributed by Joe Fryer

From the Archives

OCTOBER 1920

From Work and Worship October 1920

DAME CLARA BUTT and MR KENNERLEY RUMFORD have promised a sacred concert in the Free Church in Mid-December on behalf of our School Building Fund. Such generous aid on the part of these most eminent artists imposes a serious obligation. We have to justify our acceptance of their kindness and to show our appreciation by raising for the occasion a sum that is worthy of them. It is not enough to say that it must run into four figures, nor even that the £1,000 must be duplicated or triplicated. We shall "let down" such visitors as these unless we do the biggest thing in our history. Full particulars as to the scope of the new effort which the Church is undertaking, the date fixed for the concert, etc, will shortly be issued.



Dame Clara Butt and Kennerley Rumford

(The School referred to for fundraising is known to us now as the Free Church Hall. The Foundation Stones were laid at the New Church Hall and School on January 17th 1925. The completed building was officially declared open on September 26th 1925 by Rt Hon J H Whitley MP, Speaker of the House of Commons).

24 SEPTEMBER 1940

The last issue of News and Views contained excerpts from the August and September 1940 Newsletters, which tracked how the Battle of Britain and then the Blitz affected the Suburb. The September and October Newsletters continue their coverage of the Blitz, this time from a Suburb that has been damaged by bombing and then (a week later on 1st October) from a Suburb that records both damage and civilian casualties.

My Dear People

This is the fourteenth of these wartime letters and it is likely to be rather different from all its predecessors. They were written as from a Base to a scattered congregation, and especially to men in HM Forces. Some of whom

might be in positions of hardship and peril. This is written as from the fighting line - the London Front. It will not be a panicky letter. It is disturbing when a considerable part of the night is spent listening for bombs and shells, but there is something of the eternal youth that rises even in the sedate ministerial mind when one sallies forth with buckets of sand to deal with potential fires.....

It will appear from what has just been said that damage has been done to this beautiful Suburb. The censor would not approve if I were to give particulars. One or two things, however, may fittingly be said. The first is that the bombing has been indiscriminate. At first one felt that the enemy were attempting to reach military objectives but that mistakes were made, as they must always be made in such kinds of warfare. Later, however, it became clear that bombs were just being dropped to terrify the civilian population

The second thing that can properly be said is that some of our members have been rendered temporarily homeless, but all of them, I believe, have been welcomed into the homes of personal friends. This led me to preach last Sunday morning, at the Harvest Festival, on the subject of sharing (based on the Feeding of the Five Thousand in the wilderness). I said that as long as there is a roof over our heads and some food in the larder, the Manse is open to members of the congregation who may suddenly find themselves destitute. I also said that if demand were more than one household could meet I hoped that we should be able to take destitute people to other members of the Church with the assurance that they would be heartily welcomed. You will be glad to know that there has been an immediate response

Not that we wish to create an exclusive spirit And here let me refer with fraternal regard to the Vicar of this Parish and Mrs Rennie who have suffered so heavy a blow. Their son Michael, who was preparing himself for the Christian ministry, offered his services as an escort for children being evacuated to Canada. The ship was torpedoed and his life was lost. In some little way we wish to share their sorrow, and also their pride in the sacrifice of so good a life in so great a cause.

One thing more about activities on the London Front. So far our Church premises have been spared. The Central Square makes an easy target, and on at least two occasions we seem to have been deliberately aimed at, but so far we have been untouched except for incendiary bombs in the surrounding grounds and a few scratches from our own guns. Not only do the buildings stand, but congregations are assembling. Sometimes the siren goes at

inconvenient times and the service has to be curtailed or the sermon preached down the corridors of the Institute: sometimes we make a start 20 minutes after the stated time; but the people come and enter heartily into the worship. The scattered congregation would have been proud if they could have seen us last Sunday. The fruit, the flowers and the vegetables were there, not in the same quantity, but in undiminished quality. It has been a wonderful Harvest and we enjoyed the day in spite of two warnings limiting the evening service. We are very grateful to all who, in spite of many pre-occupations, remembered to send gifts.....Frank J Ballard

1 OCTOBER 1940

P.S.

1st October 1940

The foregoing was written a week ago in the expectation that it would be distributed last Sunday. Hardly had it been sent to the printer when news from Cambridge caused my wife and me to go there. On my return I found that unpleasant things had happened in the Suburb and that we as a congregation had suffered. A strict censorship cramps my style and makes it impossible for me to write as I should like to do. I may, however, mention the death of Mrs A L Hughes, one of the most cheerful of Christians and one of the most devoted members of the Free Church. It is hardly necessary to assure her son, Douglas, of the deep sympathy of us all, for I am sure he knows that he is and will continue to be surrounded by friendship. He will have returned to his duties with the RAF before these words are widely read, but I hope that he will realise that there will always be a place to which he can return and feel sure of an affectionate welcome.

Then last night came the tragic death of the Hunter family. Again I must not give details but must be content to express our sorrow and the deep sense of loss with which I write these words. Mr and Mrs WA Hunter were, I believe, foundation members of the Church. Mr Hunter served for a time as an Elder and in the early days as an organist. Mrs Hunter was closely identified with the work of the BWTAU and was a willing worker in many good causes. Mr and



Willifield Green



Temple Fortune Hill

Mrs Harry Hunter, and their little boy Douglas, had many friends amongst us and took their places in different organisations. And now they have gone and we shall see them no more. I have tried to express to Mr AW Hunter our sympathy with him in this great shock. Truly war, as it is now fought, is no respecter of persons. After the war of 1914-18 it was comparatively easy to compile our rolls of honour. It may be difficult after this war. We shall continue to think with special concern of those who are in the fighting forces, but we are all in positions of danger. May we so conduct ourselves that we shall do nothing to

disseminate fear or cause us to feel ashamed if we are spared to look back in days of peace upon these troubled times.

More people are leaving the Suburb and going to places of greater safety. If I have not acknowledged all of the messages that have reached me, I hope that the senders of them will think charitably of my silence. Each day brings its new calls and it is impossible to write all the letters I should like to write. Two requests I should like to make. The first is that those who go will do their best to keep in touch with us. We shall always be glad to hear from them and to share as far as we can their joys and sorrows. The other is that those who remain will do all in their



Brookland Rise

power to maintain the unity and to deepen the fellowship of the Church. The Christian Faith remains. Some of us are more certain than ever of that. Day and night let us remind ourselves that "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Frank J Ballard

(Another casualty at this time were the Emmony family of Coleridge Walk. Husband and wife and four daughters 1-11 years old - Margaret, Janet, Ann and Sally - were killed as well as their grandfather who was with them. A family well known by all, they are commemorated on a plaque inside the church)

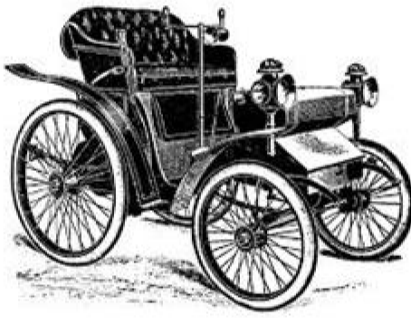
Anne Lowe

JOHN BIRCH'S DIARY

What's in a name? "Nothing much really" would be an initial thought excepting that, quite possibly subconsciously, particular names might suggest a definite area of interest and work. There have long been theories about what is termed "nominative determinism", people with what turn out to be appropriate names for their jobs. Way back in 1974, Inspector Barker was ensconced as Head of Dogs section at Merseyside Police and Mrs Serff was teaching Medieval History at University College Dublin. In 2013, Lord Judge retired as Lord Chief Justice and a former surveyor of fabric at Westminster Abbey was Donald Buttress. It's therefore no surprise to read that the new President of the Royal Horticultural Society is Keith Weed. On a recent check - prior to elevating a Weed - the RHS had employees called Heather Shears, Moss Gardiner and several variations of Rose. Mr Weed's mother's maiden name was Hedges.

And "Roll out the barrel". If you know someone called Cooper, he/she will regale you with the fact that their ancestors were the makers of oak casks used - and still employed traditionally - as barrels for ale. As with many such jobs, there are now few coopers still working. In Masham, North Yorkshire, Theakstons, a local brewery whose ales are appreciated throughout the county (and beyond) an employee Jonathan Manby is still making the casks, 25 years after he started and over 150 years since Theakston commenced producing their barrels. With new demands and modern methods, traditional crafts have slowly faded - although in recent years there has been increased interest in retaining these skills with the realization that well-established products are still economic and "fit for purpose" in our high-tech times. Long may this continue.

Summer holiday: A holiday is what you make it - which means change and "making do" if you have to! Even when things do not go to plan, it doesn't mean disaster, just adapting. Our visit to the cottage in Wales was scheduled from Friday 7th August for eight days. All went well, M1, M6 and then the M54, until we got to Telford in Shropshire. The vehicle gradually achieved no more than 40 mph and with that rapidly decreasing even more, we pulled onto the hard-shoulder and contacted the RAC. That was our first encounter with someone who went beyond "just doing a job"- an RAC man who checked us out, discovered a major fault and took us one by one, to the service area in Telford and then returned to hitch up the car onto a towing-bar. Whilst he was making his assessment, an ambulance pulled up with a female crew (two people). Again, great that someone cared, as they had been alerted from a passing car who had seen someone leaning on two sticks



awaiting help!! At the service station one of the assistants, a young man from Waitrose, was a great help. He contacted a local hotel and the RAC then took us, with car attached safely behind, into what turned out to be a converted manor house. (Even this had a funny side as John had reassured the Waitrose man that £65 for the night would do - but as we drove up a beautifully

kept, very long drive, Rosemary was convinced that John had misheard the 1 in front of £65 - but no - again great care - even to the extent of connecting our laptop to their hub! All socially distancing with pristine white gloves!) Again everyone was very pleasant and helpful. I don't think that it's too much of a "stretch" to suggest that this spirit of helpfulness might well have been the result of everyone being affected in some way by the pandemic and realising, possibly subconsciously, that some extra effort was being called for - and made.

Having hired a car, we finally reached our destination. The week passed quickly and on the Thursday we took a trip - about 60 miles each way - to visit Robin, Hayley and their young family in Swansea. All went well until about 20 miles from journey's end when we pulled over for a "leg-stretch." I caught my toe, hit the ground hard and made a heavily-bleeding cut on my left leg (Rosemary having been a Guide with a 'be prepared' motto, and expecting to do some washing-up, had a large tea-cloth on board which acted as a ready bandage). My natural aversion to any sort of health issue meant that when we arrived at Robin's, I was convinced that a 'clean-up' and a bandage would be fine. Robin and Rosemary differed. I concurred only when they pointed out that the bone could be seen. For the first time in my life, since I was born, I was in hospital. Major city, very busy, but after four hours and five stitches, saw me up and away. Again, everyone - ambulance crew, nursing staff and the surgeon - were all helpful and understanding over and above "just doing their job." The cut healed well and the stitches are now out. Thank you, Finchley Memorial.

Miscellany. There are always new items which are interesting and worth noting. This month involves Stonehenge: loos and Rembrandt: **Stonehenge:** In 1958, work was carried out which involved removing pieces of stone. They remained with the repair firm involved but have recently been returned to English Heritage. It was established years ago that the smaller stones originated from the Preseli hills in mid-Wales. But comparison now suggests that stone came also from about 20 different sites,

stretching from Devon to Norfolk. All the stone was initially taken to West Woods near Marlborough in Wiltshire and was then transferred as needed to the Stonehenge site.

Ladies' Loos: Two ladies' loos which still exist in Berwick-on-Tweed and Seaburn (Sunderland) have been given Grade 2 listings. The Berwick loo was designed to resemble a rustic cottage:-



Rembrandt: A small painting (6" by 5") in the Ashmolean (Oxford), attributed to the Master, has now taken a considerable step to confirmation. The wood of the frame is oak and has been fully identified as coming from the same oak tree as used in another Rembrandt painting and was also found as part of a painting by his pupil Jan Lievens. **John Birch**

The Importance of A Name.

The giving of names comes from way back in civilization. When farming developed some 10,000 to 12,000 years ago, with the development of larger communities and more complex organisations, there also developed a need to distinguish between individuals. The oldest known writing of a name dates back to 1450 BC when Knossos Linear B tablet mentions people by name. Many names became linked with peoples' jobs in the community, or by the place they lived, or by family relationships, or by the meaning behind the name. With many modern names the origin is far more difficult to fathom or perhaps a more simple concept is simply liking the sound of a name. Having personally been giving only one Christian name (which was decided one day before the registration date), I understand something of the dilemma of choosing the right name.

The Times has just published the official top 10 picks for girls and boys:

GIRLS 1. Olivia (no change in rank from 2018), 2. Amelia (no change), 3. Isla (+1), 4. Ava (+1), 5. Mia (+1), 6. Isabella (+1), 7. Sophia (+1), 8. Grace (+2), 9. Lily (+4), 10. Freya (+8).

BOYS 1. Oliver (no change), 2. George (no change), 3. Noah (+1), 4. Arthur (+3), 5. Harry (-2), 6. Leo (no change), 7. Muhammad (+1), 8. Jack (-3), 9. Charlie (+1), 10. Oscar (-1).

The Times continues: 'Norse goddesses and Star Wars characters are in and apostles are on their way out... Dua and Kylo proved the surprise hits after pop stars or actors. Freya (the goddess) entered the top 10 and squeezed out Emily, which has been in the top 10 for 35 years. Norse names proved much less popular for boys with 95 named Loki and 90 named Odin. Biblical names such as Matthew and Luke continued on a decline, clinging on to the last two spots in the top 100... Older mothers were more likely to pick traditional names that have been in the top 100 for some time, such as Jack or Charlotte, whilst younger mothers were more likely to be influenced by pop culture or to choose shortened names ... We found younger mothers opted for more modern girls' names such as Harper and shortened names such as Freddie.'

'For boys Alfred, Chester, Hudson, Ibrahim, and Oakley entered the top 100 replacing Alex, Dexter, Sonny and Tobias. Tommy rose the most between the rankings, moving up 24 places to 26th, whilst Alfred entered the top 100 for the first time. Among the most unusual choices, were 56 boys called Tudor and 43 called Bowie. Among girls, 20 were called Cleopatra and four were named Betsy-Blu' (a shortened form of Elizabeth)' Whatever the name, they all have one important thing in common - each one

is a beloved child of God whether they recognise the fact or not. And as they grow up they will develop different personalities and display different talents and gifts. I was reminded of this in a recent Morning Service when Bishop Chris Edmondson (reflecting on the first letter of Peter), mentioned the large extent and variety of the gifts we'd been given. He enumerated different people he had known, some with very obvious gifts such as many of those in teaching, hospitality, caring etc, and then he mentioned the few that thought they had no gifts to offer, or were too shy to put them to use. For example, he mentioned a lady called Beryl who can't get out and about any more but is known in her church and community as being a 'prayer warrior,' ie she has a list of her 'poorlies' that she prays for each day with love and without grumbling for the 'glory of God'.

Sometimes we get so bogged down, so inward-looking, with all our worries and anxieties about the strangeness of the present that we tend to forget that some things stay the same, that while they may feel different, there is still a need to show even more concern and love towards others. We all have gifts whether dormant and recognized or not, but they are there and we can all make the world a slighter better place. All our gifts, however small and insignificant, are needed. George Herbert's hymn puts it very simply:

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things thee to see,
And what I do in anything
To do it as for thee.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine.

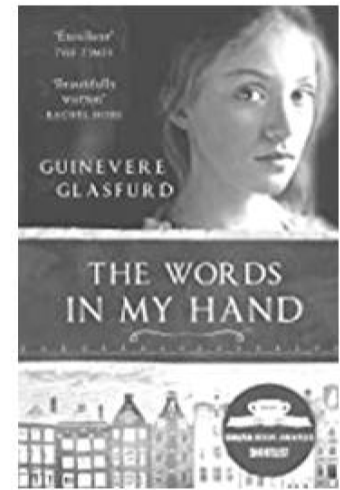
Perhaps a modern concept could be:

'A shopper with his load
Can help along the way;
A phone call brightening up a day
Will show God's love the more.'

Rosemary Birch

Book Review

The Words In My Hand: A Novel of 17th Century Amsterdam and a Woman Hidden from History by Guinevere Glasfurd



This book belongs to the same ‘re-creation’ genre as Tracy Chevalier’s “Girl with a Pearl Earring” in that it ‘re-creates’ the life and thoughts of a servant girl, Helena, who was associated with the philosopher, mathematician and scientist, Rene Descartes (1596-1650). The book is true to the scanty facts we do have of her, ie that she was the only servant in the household where Descartes lived for a while, and that they had a daughter, Francine, (born in July 1635), who died aged five from scarlet fever (we know Descartes was the father, as he left a note to this effect on the christening certificate!). In addition, we know that Descartes and Helena wrote letters to each other, though the letters themselves are lost. In fact, it was unusual for a woman of Helena’s social standing at that time to be able to write at all.

Two further documents (of 1644) refer to Helena. The first is a notice of her marriage to one Jan van Wel. For this, Descartes provided Helena with a substantial dowry, believed to be a thousand guilders. Then in June (after the marriage), her name appears again, this time at the head of an inventory that lists jewels and other items belonging to her at Descartes’ house. There is also a reasonably reliable report that Descartes wept upon the death of their young child Francine in 1640 and that, unlike many moralists of the time, he did not deprecate the passions, but rather defended them.

The book re-creates or re-imagines Helena’s daily life and thoughts, and like Chevalier’s novel, ascribes or infers an important role to the protagonist in the life and works of the men they are employed by or interact with, ie a proto-feminist approach to past history. Of course we can only surmise what a young servant girl would feel in 17th century Holland, but within these limitations, and using the scant facts available, Glasfurd does an admirable and entertaining job of reimagining the life of a servant girl circa 1635 working in the same household as Rene Descartes. For example, there is a fascinating description of how Helena might have taught herself to write using onion juice and her own skin. Indeed, the facts of a servant girl’s life in the 1600’s, even with a kind employer, were bleak. Fire laying was a very laborious process, done in the very early hours of the morning; washing, drying, ironing and cooking were all much more back to the basics than now. Even water had to be drawn from a pump in the yard for any of these processes to begin. Glasfurd imagines Helena sleeping on a shelf in the kitchen working seven days a week and having little time off.

Descartes is represented to us via the eyes of Helena of course. Thus Helena is



intrigued by her discoveries in Descartes' room of pieces of animals, candle wax and substances 'stolen' from her kitchen in the pursuit of his experiments. She is disturbed in the kitchen when he comes in search of some candles, and he shows her how the melted wax and the candle are the same substance. Thus through Helena we get an idea of some of Descartes' projects and experiments as they're spliced skilfully into the narrative. (They're fascinating but not the sort of thing anyone should try today for fear of legal repercussions and health and safety!) She brilliantly dissects the complex frustrations of a woman in love with a man

consumed by intellectual obsessions. Descartes himself comes over as a driven, self-centred man for whom work is everything and people are there to be studied, to serve him or for use as sounding boards. This makes the love story and the affair itself unusual. Needless to say Helena yearns for something more conventional but must accept the form it takes.

One also learns a great deal about the philosopher that puts some flesh on the bones of the little we commonly know about him, ie that he was a philosopher and mathematician and (Macmillan Encyclopedia) "one of the most original thinkers of all time." And, of course, the one who wrote "Cogito, ergo sum". But we tend to forget, or be ignorant of, the more or less permanent problems he had of keeping a low profile from the authorities, in particular the Inquisition that had condemned Galileo in 1633. In fact he had been warned (by friends in the Church) that if he wanted to write about his philosophical ideas he should do so somewhere beyond the reach of the Inquisition and, in fact, all his major work was undertaken during the 20 or so years he spent in the Netherlands. During this time he took considerable care to keep his correspondence with friends and scholars below the radar, moving frequently and using different names to confuse the authorities. Thus the book imagines how Helena is asked to take letters discreetly to the library and give them only to one person there. Another day, a visitor leaves a book in a plain wrapper with instructions that Descartes is to read the book quickly. She notices that Descartes loses a lot of sleep in order to do so. It emerges that the book is by Galileo, with his observations that the solar system is heliocentric, ie the earth goes round the sun and not the reverse. All this is well imagined and perfectly justified - in fact, despite all his precautions, Cartesian philosophy was condemned by the University of Utrecht in 1643 and Descartes was obliged to move to the Hague.

The novel was shortlisted for a Costa prize and there is no doubt that Glasfurd has written an intriguing 'romance' which, with its spare prose and her narrative ability, never becomes sentimental or unbelievable. I always wanted to know 'what would happen next' and had no difficulty identifying with the heroine. It's a great first novel and highly recommended.

Marion Ditchfield

THE PLEASURE OF ELIZA LYNCH (2002) BY ANNE ENRIGHT: THE RISE OF THE ADVENTUROUS LADY AND OF THE ADVENTURESS.

The 19th century in Europe saw a fistful of bold women emerge from the kitchen, the salon (supposing they had one) and the bedroom to occupy positions of prominence in the public sphere. There were proto-feminists like Harriet Taylor Mill; social and prison reformers such as Octavia Hill and Elizabeth Fry, and an immensely influential writer in the shape of Mary Shelley. The last of these was still a teenager when she wrote *Dr Frankenstein* and submitted it as her “entry” in an informal competition she had entered with her bored companions - who included her husband



Percy Bysshe and Lord Byron - during the disastrous summer of 1816. There were also adventurous travellers such as Marianne North whose exquisite paintings of tropical flowers are in Kew Gardens and the archaeologist Gertrude Bell, who also acted as a secret agent for the British in Iraq during World War I. However, the story told by Anne Enright is not of any respectable, adventurous 19th Century European female but, instead, of her disreputable sister, the adventuress.

Anne Enright has earned herself a reputation as one of contemporary Ireland’s most prominent writers, having won both the Booker and the Orange prizes for fiction; however, *The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch* does not figure among her best-known novels. I would say this is because you need to have an interest in both Ireland and South America to appreciate just how extraordinary is the story of Eliza Lynch. Clearly an interest in Ireland may be taken for granted among us, particularly in the sphere of literature where the Irish punch way, way above their weight. This said, though, how many of us can even place Paraguay on the map of South America?

Eliza Lynch was born in County Cork in 1833 to a middle-class family which left Ireland when Eliza was ten, in flight from the Irish Potato Famine. They settled in Paris where Eliza married (or was married to) a French veterinary surgeon when she was only seventeen. Her husband worked in the army and was posted to Algeria, but at the age of eighteen Eliza left him and returned to Paris where she became a courtesan. Enter now the figure of Francisco Solano Lopez, the son of the then dictator of

Paraguay, who had come to Europe to learn military strategy and to spend considerable sums on guns, military supplies and several steamers. He also planned to create a railway system in Paraguay. It's worth bearing in mind at this early stage of his career that Francisco Solano venerated Napoleon Bonaparte. The young dictator-in-waiting was smitten by Eliza and they toured Europe together before embarking for Paraguay. By this time she was pregnant with the first of six children she bore him. The couple never married and this meant that the "high society" of Asuncion – Paraguay's capital – would have nothing to do with Eliza Lynch whom they dubbed "la Lincha." Secretly, of course, they were jealous of her because of her golden hair, green eyes and the cachet that coming from Europe automatically bestowed on her.



Francisco Solano

Anne Enright does not write straightforward prose or tell a story in linear fashion: hers is a poetic approach to prose. Thus this novel does not provide us with an account of events in Paraguay from the time of Eliza's arrival there up to the catastrophic War of The Triple Alliance which ruined the country's economy and left them virtually without any men. (Apparently there were only around 37,000 men left in Paraguay at war's end). Instead, Enright gives us a series of impressions which tend to highlight Eliza's isolation from the society ladies of Asuncion. Thus her home, a place of European taste and refinements, is at a distance from the city and visited only by the Scottish doctor and the English engineer imported by Francisco Solano to bring modernity to his country. One of the finest episodes in the novel occurs when Eliza is given the opportunity to take her revenge on the ladies of Asuncion. This is how it happens: a group of Basque immigrants has just arrived in the country and there is to be a celebration for them to be held at their fledgling community up-river from the capital. The male guests are to travel there on horseback but the ladies in their corsets and crinolines are to reach their destination by boat. Eliza stands at the top of the gangway to greet her guests but they all snub her. She then sits on the shady side of the vessel and this prompts her guests to sit on the sunny side. A grand European repast is laid before them and it includes something novel and most exotic for the Paraguayan ladies, namely asparagus. How they long to try it! Eliza stands up to encourage her guests to begin their meal and



First Lady of Paraguay 1862-1870

they ignore her and push her aside. At this point, Eliza tells the servants to throw all the food overboard – including, of course, the precious asparagus. Then, by sitting again on the shady side of the boat, she forces her guests to sit in the sun for several hours before giving the instruction to turn the boat round and return to Asuncion. Surely a most exquisite revenge, whether it is historically accurate or not.

What is historically accurate is the account of the War of the Triple Alliance. Francisco Solano Lopez, aggressive by nature, committed the folly of angering Paraguay's two mighty neighbours, Brazil and Argentina. Uruguay, a country of the same weight as Paraguay, added herself to the total of her enemies. The result, as I have already mentioned, was catastrophe. Eliza was true to Lopez until the end. She faithfully followed him and his increasingly bedraggled troops to the final battle at Cerro Cora (March 1870). Before then she had had to abandon her piano and there is a small village in Paraguay that bears the name Piano. At the final battle Eliza's lifetime companion was killed and their eldest son, Panchito, then fifteen, refused to surrender whereupon he was shot by Brazilian troops. Eliza scooped up enough earth, using only her hands, to give rough burial to Francisco and Panchito. This may sound far-fetched – a scene from an opera or melodrama – but it had many witnesses and no doubt Eliza was helped by a tropical downpour that softened the earth.

Eliza was captured but released after a few weeks and promptly expelled from the country. She returned to Paris and lived there quietly until her death in 1886. At the time of the War of The Triple Alliance she was reviled and, like Eve with the apple, she was made responsible for the disastrous war. It was she, said the misogynists, who pushed Francisco Solano into pursuing a bellicose policy that would spell ruin for his country. But the official line changed over the years and during the "reign" of a later dictator, Alfredo Stroessner (he who sheltered Nazi criminals after World War II), Eliza's remains were exhumed and taken to Paraguay where she was proclaimed a heroine of the nation.

And the above serves as yet another illustration of how reality readily exceeds the wilder shores of fiction.

Verity Smith

A personal reflection on the first nine months of 2020

Who could have predicted on New Year's Day 2020 that a deadly, imported enemy was about to close down our country, curtail our freedom, so long taken for granted, and ultimately kill one million people worldwide?

We who have survived have been robbed of many pleasures from that day to this, including outings to places of entertainment and sport and flights to holiday destinations. We have been told by government ministers, scientific advisers and those who strive to keep us safe and well, to stay at home and wear face coverings in public indoor spaces and on public transport. Daily life has been more difficult and we have deserted shops we have depended upon all our lives. Online shopping has become the new and convenient way to buy our food and supplies. Some of the older generation have sought help from neighbours, family and friends to deliver weekly shopping to their homes in a socially distanced way. It has perhaps been easier for those used to living alone to adapt to restrictions on their movements. I lived alone for 16 years until one fine day I was reunited with an old friend who became my companion and together we have supported one another through the dark days of lockdown.

We are now six months down the line from 23rd March and the PM's announcement, telling the nation that the country was about to shut down and explaining the need for such a drastic course of action. Back then I could cross the road outside our flat in NW6 without fear of being knocked down because all but service vehicles had disappeared. Workers had left their offices and began working from home. A school nearby was silent during the week and a pair of foxes could be seen lying on next door's lawn enjoying the tranquillity of early mornings. Squirrels delighted us as they jumped through trees and blackbirds sang lustily in our abandoned city. The air we breathed was noticeably cleaner and the sour smell of pollution was suddenly gone. This for many a city dweller was a very happy improvement to our lives.

Now, it's autumn and commuters are back on the busy road outside our flat. We are protected from noise and pollution by triple glazing and a whirring table fan has kept us cool during a few days of late summer heat.

I have become excited in recent weeks receiving news of a return to live music at the Coliseum which is treating audiences to performances of Mozart's Requiem. Tennis fans can look forward to indoor sport in November. Television has been a constant friend during the crisis, offering better than ever quality content to keep us cheerful and distracted. Church services provide an opportunity for safe social mingling and garden lunch and tea parties have been enjoyed over the summer months. But our new way of living means keeping up to date with changing rules and doing as we are told! From spring to autumn we have felt the impact of fewer face to face meetings with others but at the same time we have come to appreciate those we love more due to the need for social distancing. We don't know how long the war will last but we put our faith in God to defeat the invisible attacker.

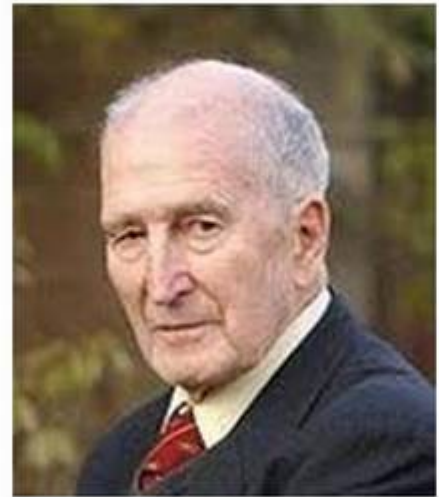
I would like to see more spending generally to support our ailing hospitality and leisure sectors. Let's book tickets for the latest Bond film due for release on 12th November. We cannot let cinemas close forever and be denied visits to them. Let's eat out to help out and save young people's jobs. Be brave my friends! Seek out and support planned theatre and concert offerings being staged next year. Let's start to live again by taking a few careful steps into enclosed public spaces. Together we can revive our places of entertainment, resume an enriching cultural life, and save vital jobs for those currently unemployed through no fault of their own. As Ian recently reminded us in church, "we are all responsible for each other".

Julia Levis



Does God Exist Etc

Long, long ago, in the upper paleolithic period, ie when I was at university, I remember going to a debate about the existence of God. The debate was between Anthony Flew, who was professor of philosophy at the university and a 'leading Jesuit theologian' whose name, to my shame, I cannot now recall. Anthony Flew was a well-known exponent of 'logical positivism', which, according to Wikipedia, is 'a 20th century philosophical movement holding that all



Anthony Flew (1923-2010)

meaningful statements are either analytic or conclusively verifiable or at least confirmable by observation and experiment and that metaphysical theories are therefore strictly meaningless.' I also read that logical positivism, also called logical empiricism, was a philosophical movement that arose in Vienna in the 1920s and was characterized by the view that scientific knowledge is the only kind of factual knowledge and that all traditional metaphysical doctrines are to be rejected as meaningless.

Held in a crowded students' union, it was a wonderful 'no holds barred' confrontation between two formidable minds on the simple proposition 'Does God Exist'. It started early and went on all evening until late. There were plenty of contributions by audience and staff, particularly by the moral philosophers, with their own take on 'metaphysical doctrines', but I can remember few details. There was a vote at the end of it but, again, I can't remember the outcome - except it was pretty close. Which was fair enough as the general opinion seemed to be that the protagonists had argued each other into the ground, a sort of intellectual stalemate. Being new to this kind of stuff, I probably understood only one word out of ten; it really was way above my head and I just enjoyed the gladiatorial confrontation. *

It was much the same at school - though obviously on a much lower level. One or two of the staff could always be encouraged to digress into a philosophical debate which, more or often than not circled around the existence of God. The science teacher was favourite for this (as well as political discussions). In these digressions, the concept of God was usually dismissed as some kind of pre-Enlightenment nonsense but at least we were taught the rudiments of logical debate - flip or dismissive remarks were out and assertions had to be backed up with evidence and/or reasoned arguments. Imagine teachers trying to do that now!

Looking back, all these debates usually circled around the age-old problem

of the unprovability of God in any scientific or empirical sense. One can understand the frustration of the empiricist. Where the empiricist is concerned, agnosticism is not an acceptable stance - after all one can neither prove nor disprove the existence of pink elephants but we see no reason to believe in pink elephants. On the other hand, the moral philosopher argues that the concept of God is of an entirely different order from pink elephants; it is the product of thousands of years of consideration of the question, of the existence of countless religions, and is grounded in the very nature of our existence. Indeed, a Jungian psychologist might well argue that the inclination to believe is instinctive, that it evolved alongside the development of consciousness itself, and is embedded somewhere (or perhaps everywhere) in our DNA. To which the empiricist might well retort that even if that were the case, it is still no evidence that God actually exists - which is true enough.

Somewhere, in the midst of these sorts of discussions, there inevitably emerges the age-old problem of the existence of evil, the existence of disasters, etc and whether these things can be reconciled with the existence of a 'Loving' God at all. (With the God of the Old Testament, the job was slightly easier, as that God was always up for punishing the slightest moral turpitude with whole batteries of plagues and disasters and curses unto the nth generation etc). The reconciliation of the two concepts - the existence of a loving God and the existence of evil, disasters etc - is usually achieved by the idea of Free Will which is a notoriously difficult and slippery concept. At its simplest, it proposes that if God (vengeful, loving or otherwise) were to interfere in the running of his Universe at either the general or individual level, then his Creation would have no point, no existential purpose. It would be game over. The slightest interference by God in the affairs of man would mean that man no longer had any control over his destiny and therefore no responsibility for it. He would have no moral agency. There can be no possibility of doing 'good' in this world without the possibility or capacity for doing evil either - it is the nature of consciousness itself.

However, the Free Will argument is somewhat tangential to the 'Does God Exist?' debate. The fact that we do, for everyday purposes, feel and act as if we have free will, neither proves nor disproves the existence of God. It is simply a condition of our existence. (The definitive discussion of Free Will is the discussion between Jesus and the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevsky's 'The Brothers Karamazov' discussed in the last News and Views). Thus, in the end, all these debates end up in the same philosophical cul de sac - ie the existence of God can neither be 'proved' nor 'disproved' in any scientific or empirical sense. On a personal level, I have always found it more helpful to

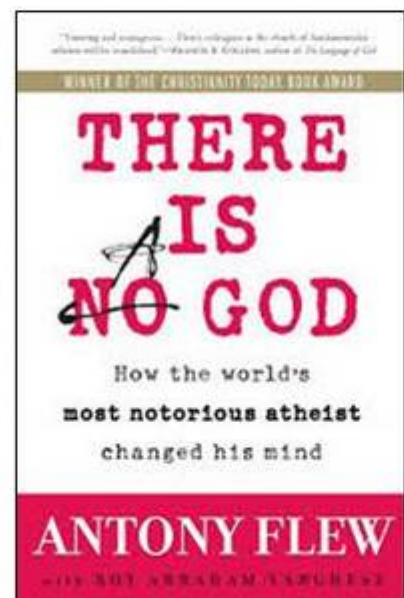
recast the debate in terms of whether or not one believes in an 'intrinsic' or an 'extrinsic' universe. The intrinsic universe is a universe which is completely self-contained and explicable only in terms of itself. What you see is what you get. All our thoughts, feelings, experiences etc belong to this universe and only make sense within that universe. Even the 'search' or 'instinct' to look for a creator God is entirely a phenomenon belonging to this universe and only makes sense within it. There is no Archimedian point whereby we can understand or look at this universe from 'outside' so to speak. Thus there is no possibility of a final, objective explanation of our existence. We are forever doomed to talk and argue at the parish pump of our own universe.

The extrinsic view holds that while we are prisoners of our intrinsic world, this neither proves nor disproves the existence of something outside of it (even if we can say nothing meaningful about it). The intrinsic universe is not necessarily the last word in the debate, the only reality, the only thing that exists. The sharp eyed will have noticed that this reformulation does not take the 'Does God exist' debate any further forward. It simply recasts it in other terms. We still end up debating whether or not there exists anything extrinsic to our intrinsic universe, in much the same way as whether God exists or not.

The advantage of this reformulation is that enables one to address the 'Does God Exist?' problem in a slightly different way, one that focuses more on the ethical implications of our actual existence, irrespective of, or separate from, the involvement of an outside agency in that existence. More of this later.

John Ditchfield

**Much later we heard a rumour that Professor Flew had relented from his extreme views on this subject and now held a more agnostic position. In fact, this rumour turned out to be correct as he later published books explaining how he had come to hold a more 'anthropic' position on the subject. According - once again- to Wikipedia: "The anthropic principle is the philosophical premise that any data we collect about the universe is filtered by the fact that, in order for it to be observable at all, the universe must have been compatible with the emergence of conscious and sapient life that observes it. In other words, scientific observation of the universe would not even be possible if the laws of the universe had been*



incompatible with the development of sentient life. Proponents of the anthropic principle argue that it explains why this universe has the age and the fundamental physical constants necessary to accommodate conscious life, since if either had been different, we would not be around to make observations in the first place. As a result, outside the narrow range thought to be compatible with life it would seem impossible that life (in particular, intelligent life) could develop.” Needless to say, not everyone accepts these arguments and the anthropic position has had many critics. Once again, it seems that existence or non-existence of God is unprovable.

John Ditchfield



JOHN BIRCH'S COMPETITION

*Competition No.29. Places of Interest in the UK (part 11)
(All begin with 'T' except last two which begin with 'V')*

1. This little railway of Wales ends at Abergynolyn.
2. London's public modern art gallery.
3. Keeping London safe from flooding.
4. A Surrey amusement park.
5. A car racing circuit close to Andover.
6. A Belfast museum remembering a famous ship.
7. The only lifting London bridge.
8. National Trust property on outskirts of Newport (South Wales).
9. A Staffordshire amusement park.
10. Abbey garden on England's largest offshore island group.
11. Mountain range north of Loch Katrine.
12. An abbey close to Llangollen.
13. Design museum (Scotland)



Answers to competition no. 28 Places of Interest in the U.K. part 10

1. Silverstone
2. Skara Brae
3. Skakholm and Skomer
4. Slimbridge
5. Snaefell
6. Snowdonia
7. Spurn Head
8. Swindon
9. Stirling
10. Stonehenge
11. Sutton Hoo
12. Swallow Falls
13. Syon Park.

*We look forward to your answers - send them either by email to
jbirch1821@gmail.com or by post to John Birch, 26 Holden Road, London N12
8HT*



WORDSEARCH: GIRLS' NAMES

B				E	T	T	O	L	R	A	H	C	L
	E				I			B		H		A	
D	F	R	E	Y	A	L	E		O		C	E	
N	Y		N		E	T	L	P		E		C	
I	S	L	A	A	S	N	E	A	Y		A	I	
H			I	Y	D	N	I	G	H	A	I	D	E
T		O	B	M	I	E	R	H	R		H	U	N
E	A	L	L	R	E	A	T	T	P	R	P	O	I
B	U	A	O	I	C	C	A	T		E	O	B	M
A	D	H	X	E	V	P	A	M	E	P	S		S
Z	T			E	O	I	A	R	I	R	L	O	A
I		A	M	E	L	I	A	V	G	A	I		J
L	A	L	L	E	B	A	S	I	A	H	L		
E		C	A	T	H	E	R	I	N	E	Y		

ALEXA AMELIA AVA BERNADETTE BETSY-BLU BOUDICEA
 CATHERINE CHARLOTTE CLEOPATRA DUA ELIZABETH EMILY
 FREYA GRACE HALLIE HARPER HIND ISLA ISABELLA JASMINE
 JOSEPHINE LILY LACEY-GRACE
 MIA OLIVIA SOPHIA THORIN



(Put the remaining 4 letters together for a girl's name meaning something we should all have and need - the same answer as last month's Butterfly Wordsearch)

(And which of the above names do these two very famous people have?) Answers next month.



DIARY

The church has opened again. Following a Risk Assessment, the Trustees of the Church have implemented Health & Safety protocols in line with Government and Denominational advice.

Please observe:

- Two metre social distancing.
- Sanitise your hands on entry and exit.
- Wear a mask.
- Give your contact details.
- After the service exit the church and talk outside.

Guidance will be updated as new advice becomes available.

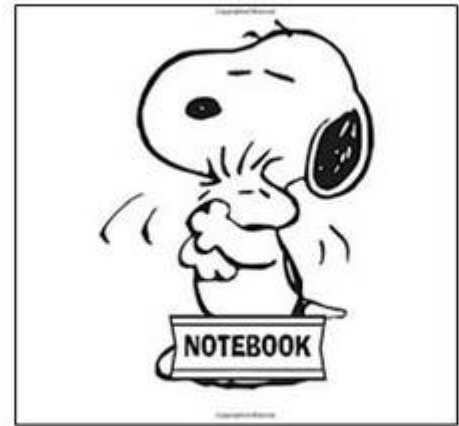
All services taken by Revd Dr Ian Tutton unless indicated

Monday 10.30am to 11.30am Studying together in Church

Tuesday 10.00am to 12.00noon Private Prayer

Thursday 10.00am to 12.00noon Private Prayer

Christian Meditation - Meditators meet here. For further information, contact: Georgia gmrtutton@aol.com



OCTOBER

4	11.00 am	Harvest Family Communion Service
10	10.00 – 12.00	Church Meeting
11	11.00 am	Family Service
18	11.00 am	Family Service
20	7.30 pm	Elders Court
25	11.00 am	Family Service
30	1.00 pm	Piano Recital by David Trafford in Church. No lunch

NOVEMBER

1	11.00 am	Family Communion Service
	3.00 pm	Bereavement Service
8	10.45 am	Remembrance Sunday Family Service
10	7.30 pm	Deacons Court
15	11.00 am	Family Service
17	7.30 pm	Trustee Meeting

22 1.00 am Family Service
 27 1.00 pm Recital in Church. No lunch
29 11.00 am Advent Family Service



'There's no hurry. People won't be ready to travel back to their offices by 2026'



NEWS AND VIEWS



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 TYPESETTER
 EDITOR

John Ditchfield
 Jill Purdie and others
 Joan Holton and Marion Ditchfield
 John Ditchfield
 Marion Ditchfield

The November edition of News and Views will be published on Sunday 8th November. Articles should therefore be delivered to the editor, Joan Holton or the typesetter, John Ditchfield, (john_ditchfield@hotmail.com) by Sunday 18th October

We welcome articles, as well as reviews of books, films, plays etc. from members and friends. These will not always represent the views of the editorial panel or of the Church. Publication is at the discretion of the Editors.

Remember - we are on line at www.hgsfreechurch.org.uk where you will find past issues of News and Views.

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