



## ST PANCRAS NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2021

*Dear friends,*

I was speaking with a friend this week who said they were feeling a bit flat. They didn't have much energy, were finding it difficult to concentrate and to make simple choices or decisions. I wonder if you have sometimes been feeling the same recently. We've all been living in a long health crisis so we will all feel some strain. Many of us are already living with long term medical need and the pandemic has only made treatment more difficult to access or much-needed operations postponed.

We can all look forward to more uplifting times this summer. Already it has been good to welcome people back into our homes and to begin to share more time outside (where possible and when it hasn't been raining!). I reminded my friend that life will feel a bit more normal again in June.

*But what is it that will truly lift our spirits?*

A good chat with a friend, going on a bike-ride together, sharing a meal, catching up with children and grandchildren. What do all these have in common? Connection. Connection with others, being recognised and appreciated as a friend, family member or colleague. A bit like an electrical circuit, our spirits are made to be connected.

Which is why the gift of God's Spirit is so important. God's Spirit connects us with God, helps us to recognise Jesus as our friend and saviour and reassures us that we are God's children.

We see the effect of God's Spirit all through the Bible, but especially at the time of Pentecost. Jesus' friends were 'all gathered in one place', waiting and praying. As they were waiting, God pours out His Spirit on them, which to them is like a great wind and like tongues of flame touching each one. They experience the power of God and the love of God. The Spirit connects God and His people.

**“Our spirits are made to be connected.”**

I hope you have had similar experiences, which are often beyond words. The experience of being completely overawed by God's power is like a rushing wind. Wind blows the cobwebs away, clears the atmosphere, creates a new climate. God's breath provides us with life and allows us to look at things in a new way.

The experience of God's love is also like a fire. Warming us up from the inside, bringing a crackling light into the darkness of our hearts. The action of the Holy Spirit can also be like a cleansing fire, burning away what is impure or not useful, refining and strengthening who we are.

And the gift of God's Spirit leads to new connections with others. The people at the first Pentecost suddenly found themselves outside, talking with people from all sorts of different backgrounds.

In this newsletter you'll see a gentler expression of that first Pentecost in the update from the Knitting Group. In it we still see God's power and love at work, warming people's hearts, and connecting them with people on the other side of the world.

There will be growing opportunities this summer to connect and re-connect with people. Let us allow our connection with God to raise our spirits and to help us look outward.

Every blessing in Jesus Christ,

*Lawrence*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**6 June Walking Church on the theme of a Church Fair, 12pm-1pm.**

Activities for families and opportunities to think and pray. Talk to Mariska or one of the team for more details. Volunteers welcome.

**12 June Confirmation Service at Exeter Cathedral, 4pm.**

Ian Leworthy from St Pancras will be being confirmed. Attendance is limited to invitation only but the service will be live-streamed. Please do pray for Ian as he prepares for confirmation.

**18 June Duncan and Beckie Hollands move down to Plymouth.**

Duncan will be joining us as curate. Please do pray for them and their young family.

**11 July Churches Together on the Hoe, 10:30am.**

As part of the delayed Mayflower 400 Celebrations, the churches of Plymouth will be gathering together on The Hoe for a service of praise and prayer for our city. **There will be no 10.30am service at St Pancras on the 11 July.**

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## THANK YOUs

*Thank you* to Jean Cudlip who is stepping down after many years coordinating the Welcome Team. Jean has been an amazing servant to St Pancras in coordinating and helping the Welcome Teams for each service. Please let her know how grateful you are for her help.

*Thank you* to Ali Dixon who will take on the coordinating role and please do speak with her if you're interested in joining the welcome teams.

*Thank you* also to Colin and Vanessa Steer who planted the area next to the Church Hall entrance with a lovely variety of grasses, flowers and shrubs. If there has been only one good side to all the recent rain it is that all the plants have bedded in very happily (see below).



**This is another step towards the Living Churchyard project, which will also allow some more natural growth in the churchyard. Look out for the Leucanthemum daisies which are coming into bloom.**

## KNITTING NEWSLETTER



*Hi all you wonderful St Pancras Knitters!  
Our latest Update!*

**So, we usually try to start with some positive news and here it is!! The best news ever!!**

**As long as restrictions don't change and all is well, we will be restarting the knitting afternoons on Wednesday 28th July 2-4pm!!! Whoop Whoop!!!!**

We have so much to catch up on. It will be amazing to be able to meet again and share all our stories. We will however be meeting in the church lounge and not the café area, where we will be able to spread out and be comfortable. We will have use of the kitchen facilities there so it will be tea and biscuits/cake as usual! We will update you before then to confirm and check out any concerns you may have.

**Further good news:** Just before the start of the pandemic we were planning a celebration, having sent our 500<sup>th</sup> blanket. This unfortunately couldn't happen. So... we have a celebration to plan too.....! Only it will be to celebrate over 600 blankets being sent! In fact, to date we have sent 640 blankets! On top of that there are all the hats, handwarmers and toys we've included in the parcels!

We will plan this together on our return and will keep those of you in the community, who aren't able to meet with us on a regular basis but contribute along with us, informed of the plans.

**Another surprise!!** I was checking my Facebook page and saw the latest post relating to 'Knit-a-square' and thought I recognised the photo! When I opened it and scrolled down, look what I saw, with this caption:



*'We loved the way Trish Gribble packed the two bundles of squares with this dearest little face peeping out.'*



All credit to Joan who has kept us topped up with little toys to pop in the parcels!

He wouldn't have had such a cosy adventurous journey without all those amazing squares to snuggle into! So, thank you everyone for your continued support and commitment throughout what has seemed a life time. Also, for those who have given financial support which has enabled us to continue sending them all as well as paying for them to receive the parcels from us.



## NOW NEWS FROM KNIT-A-SQUARE SOUTH AFRICA



Firstly **'The Barn'** where it has been extremely busy having been able to gradually open up more:

..."Opening day at the KAS Barn is all about opening parcels and sorting the squares. Bundling the squares to be sewn into blankets and then preparing blankets for distributions."

Then as I was looking on their website for news and I found this this...

..."Two gorgeous soft toys and 70 squares from Trish Gribble. We receive one or two parcels from Trish every week. We all know exactly how she packs them and that there will be 70 beautifully knitted squares and a couple of toys or hat or a set of hand warmers in the parcel. I'm always amazed how so many people who knit for your group can knit the same size squares. Well done ladies!"



We so hope this encourages you to know how much you are valued and what a difference you are making!!  
Do you recognise your squares and handwarmers?

## NEWS OF DISTRIBUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

It has been a tough time for the team and volunteers with tight restrictions due to the South African Covid Variant which they have had to contend with but they are at last able to open up more with more volunteers returning. Winter is now well on the way there so they are eager to get the distributions underway. Here are a few glimpses of a couple of them taking place very recently:

### ❖ May 5th 2021

“Bongi was able to make a small distribution of blankets, hand-warmers, beanies and a small soft cuddly toy’ at a Christian Pre-school in Saxonwold.”

*(Spot the twins in the picture below comparing blankets!)*



It's so good to see that even in these challenging times, KAS is still able to reach some children. Thank you to all who crochet and knit so these precious little ones can receive a gift of love, warmth and hope.



### ❖ May 7th 2021

“Ten care bundles from ‘Knit-a-square’ for the ten new orphans of Kambazuma. Their kind courier came and collected them from me and will get them to Harare in Zimbabwe, at no charge 🙏😊 So, so kind of him, since space in their vehicle means money. On their way to you Tanja Komen! Thank you SO MUCH for handling it from here. Looking forward to seeing the pics, when you’ve been able to get out to the Centre and give them to the children, with our love.”



## FINALLY, FROM TRISH AND SUE

It's been fantastic to have some really positive news to bring you this time and great to see distributions taking place in South Africa again, especially as winter is rapidly approaching. We so look forward to seeing as many of you as possible face to face soon. In the meantime...

### A prayer:

#### *Lord Jesus*

We thank you for helping us through these difficult times and, as we now look forward to hopefully better times, we pray for all those around the world who are not in such a position, those who are suffering for whatever reason. We lift them all to you and pray your mercy and grace over them. We pray for the team and volunteers at KAS that you will sustain them and keep them safe as they continue to strive to help and support these little ones you love so much,

In Jesus name, Amen

