

MARTIN WAY METHODIST CHURCH

Newsletter – July/August 2001

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Dear Friends,

This edition of the newsletter completes for me one year in ministry. A very busy year, a very challenging year, and a year full of surprises. As I reflect on all that has happened during this year I find myself asking the question 'What is a minister?'. The stewards and I are all reading a book called 'Jesus on Leadership' by C. Gene Wilkes. The chapter we are focussing on this month stresses the importance of remaining faithful to the mission God has given us. Without this we are unable to function properly as ministers. I see my mission as enabling people to become more aware of the presence of God in their lives and this determines the focus of my ministry.

I am a 'team player' in my style of ministry. I see ministry as the responsibility of the whole people of God, particularly in terms of pastoral care, and leadership within the church as the responsibility of the minister and church stewards together. This has meant quite a lot of changes for the church stewards and I want to thank them for being so willing to look at new ways of working. We meet together monthly as a team to worship together, to study together, and to discuss church life. At the beginning of June we had an 'away day' when one of the circuit stewards helped us to identify our own individual gifts as part of a process of enabling the different members of the leadership team to focus on areas of strength within their ministry.

One of the hardest parts of team ministry, both for the leadership team and for the whole church, is that in order to focus on the areas of work in which we are most gifted, we need to give up some of the other tasks we have enjoyed doing. But we are already beginning to reap rewards for tackling this difficult issue. One of the first changes we made was to ask for volunteers to help with the counting of money on Sunday morning. This has meant that the stewards have more time to focus on pastoral issues and hospitality. The increased presence of members of the leadership team, both before and after worship, has been commented on by many people, and appreciated. In order to facilitate this we have moved morning prayers in the vestry from 10.28! to 10.10am. If you are in church at that time of the morning, you are very welcome to come and join the leadership team in prayer. If that is too early! - come and join us in 'A Time for Prayer' on Tuesday evenings at 8pm, when we pray for the life of the church and the minister's tasks for the coming week.

Ministers don't all come out of the same mould, and no amount of training is going to make us all perform in the same way. One of the riches of our Methodist itinerant system is that we have great variety of styles and gifts in ministry and over a period of time the life of the church is enhanced by a wholeness that comes of the many different contributions in ministry. If we were able to look at our individual churches from God's perspective we would see the whole pattern and each ministerial appointment as one small part in the overall plan.

The autumn sees a new group for young families starting to meet, a circuit weekend with Ann Leck Vice-President of Conference, and an invitation to you all to come to tea at the manse on Saturday 1st September.

With love, Anne.

Circuit Service At Raynes Park 22 July At 6.30 Pm

Everyone will be welcome at this Service of Admission of Andy Walker as a Local Preacher.

Circuit Weekend 7-9 September 2001

Mrs Ann Leck Vice-President of Conference will be with us. There will be a Service of Celebration at Worcester Park at 6.30 pm on Sunday 9 September.

Christian Aid Walk From Westminster Central Hall 2001

Wendy and Barry Evans, Lesley and Mike Mortley and Mike Rusbridge joined several hundred people of all ages for this walk of about 8 miles which had 20 checkpoints at famous churches and took over three hours to complete.

Encouragement from Gloria Hunniford set us off for our first stop Westminster Cathedral, then on to the Abbey and down by the river to Lambeth Bridge and Palace. A pleasant walk by the Thames crossing Westminster Bridge led to St Paul's Cathedral and the return journey down Fleet Street and Whitehall. There are vivid memories, not least of climbing steps to the City churches, the famous landmarks passed, and the variety and beauty of the many churches, clouds of incense in one, the welcome cup of tea at St Martin's Ludgate Hill, the tiny interior of St Bride's, momentary setback of not being able to find the Temple church in the rabbit-warren of legal chambers. The walk took longer than we expected and the Thanksgiving Service had begun by the time we got back to Central Hall. But it was a very enjoyable afternoon and good weather.

Our sponsorship raised ,£565 and with the money raised from the house to house collection and the Benevolent Fund gift, the total raised was £1,487.75.

Finally, thank you for your support this year.

Mike Rusbridge

Dance In Worship

I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity at Martin Way to be part of a group that enjoys dance in worship. I think one of the first things I ever took part in was a dance in 'Daybreak' that the Wimbledon Circuit Youth Choir did in the mid 1980's, which we took to the Secombe Centre in Sutton. I'd had no formal teaching, but enjoyed expressing movement to music. In fact the YPF and the WCYC gave me many opportunities for dance in Youth Services and presentations.

I was encouraged to join in a dance workshop on one occasion at Spring Harvest which was most enlightening. Whereas we generally like to work out our dances in advance to help visualize the meaning of the songs, we were encouraged to freely move in an expression of our love for God, to adore and praise Him through dance. It was an experience and one which I found fairly difficult being quite self-conscious, but most enjoyable once I relaxed and concentrated on God and my feelings for Him.

I would hope that the dance we have at Martin Way shows our adoration and praise for God, as well as helping people to visualise their feelings for God through music. It is certainly a pleasure to be involved, and I hope that other people also find it to be a valuable part of their worship.

Karen Smith

London South-West District - Letter From The Chairman

Dear Friends,

The other day I received a letter wishing me a happy retirement! The writer had got the year wrong. I am conscious that in the next year and a half before I superannuate there is much to do. In this letter I want to share with you a brief reflection.

I have been a Methodist Minister for the whole of my working life apart from one year of teaching. It has been full of emotion and I have been privileged to share with people in moments of great joy and shattering sorrow. I have never understood those people who seem to think that Ministers do not live in the real world, the world of pain, anguish, brokenness and depression; all of that is a part of the human condition. The other side is quite different; it is one of love and joy and an overwhelming sense of the goodness of people and of God. I have been sustained in many ways and not least by fellow pilgrims who have helped and supported me on the journey. But I have also been sustained by a deepening sense of the love of God, as he never abandons us, and of his willingness to heal what is fractured.

Many people - or is it most people - have times in their lives when awful things happen to them. We are ever more aware of the tragic effects of abuse and the way it can dominate life. Do we believe that God can do anything about what has happened to us but is now in the past? At the heart of what I believe is the stunning insight that God cannot take away things that have happened which have caused us pain and may still

do so. But he can help us feel quite different about those rough places that can feel like internal wounds or the heaviness of lead. That is what a part of the Ministry of Healing is about. It is one of the gifts of the Gospel, and as we receive it we can be set free to be 'wholly present'. Life today should not be dominated by the bad things that have happened in the past. Christians are called to live in and for the present moment. At the point where we recognise that the pain of the past no longer dominates the present then we can truly thank God for helping us where we are unable to help ourselves.

I mention this because it puts into context such things as the debate about an increase in the Assessment, the increasingly urgent need for us to work at a policy of how we will cope with a shortage of Ministers, and the concern that some people have over whether or not the Circuit, as have known it for two centuries, is relevant for the new one.

May the truth of the Gospel be something that dominates our lives and keeps things in perspective.

With greetings and kindest good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

R. Martin Broadbent

Young Families Group

We are very grateful to all those who came to the meeting on 2 June, for their enthusiasm for the group and for all the delicious food provided. Overall there was support for the idea of a group for families and many ideas for future group activities were put forward. These were:

- social events for parents and children (picnics, barbecues, outings to parks or other local attractions, bowling, seaside trip, musical activity sessions)
- social events just for parents;
- meals together (takeaway, fish and chips, faith supper, progressive supper) - praying together;
- Bible studies;
- listening to speakers (eg a local preacher);
- discussion group;
- linking with the rest of the church (eg introductions to other church activities, outings to church events);
- raising children's profile in the church;
- providing structured activities (eg music, story time) in the crèche; and
- running a babysitting circle.

The general view was that one meeting per month would be about right. The next meeting would be a picnic lunch in Richmond Park on 19 August. As well as providing an opportunity to view holiday photos, this would be the time to devise a programme for the rest of the year. This would probably include an early evening family meeting in September and a fire-work related social event in early November.

Tim and Caroline Johnson
[tel: 8540 3755]

Tick Tock

"Tick Tock, Tick Tock, the clock goes Tick Tock". These words greet a group of pre-school children in the church hall on Tuesday mornings. The children enjoy a 50-minute session of songs and rhymes and are encouraged to join in with the singing and actions. It is led by Anne Conquest and Geraldine Ellis who make it a fun, learning environment for the children and parents!

William, George, Phoebe and Rosie are regular attendees along with their newfound friends from the local area. They have learnt many of the old favourite songs and are up to date with 'Bob the Builder'.

We are often greeted early in the morning by the sound of William singing in his bedroom and doing the warm up actions of 'Open and Shut'.

It is good to know that even the youngest members of our church enjoy a tune together where their friendship can develop.

Jane Smith

For further information about Tick Tock contact Anne Conquest (tel: 8942-7147)

We never close! Coffee and chat - Tuesdays 10-12 noon

Why do people come to Coffee and Chat? Certainly the coffee dispensed by Edie Winrow and Jean Butland is excellent and the accompanying biscuits are tempting. The coffee lounge is welcoming too, with its circle of chairs - sit where you like and move from group to person to group as you feel inclined.

But it's the company and the talk that draws those present. With a variety of people of all ages and from all backgrounds, like a market-place it's a centre for information of all kinds. And as a group of friends it can provide a listening ear and sympathetic support when needed.

Weekly numbers vary. The lucky retired people can come whenever they like, and they form a small group of regulars. Other people can only come during school holidays, or on the odd occasion when opportunity arises. Some bring friends, not only local, but visitors from more distant places. Every week may bring a surprise - perhaps that's part of its attraction for some. It may be very quiet at 10 o'clock but by 11 more

people have arrived and often at noon, though some have left, others linger catching up with news, as Edie and Jean close down and pack up for another week.

You don't have to qualify to come by attending Martin Way church. It's a meeting-place for everyone in the locality. So come and try it. Usually the babble of voices will lead you directly to the coffee lounge. And if you feel shy, come with a friend. You'll be most welcome.

Jean Butland

The Children's Trust

Despite the terrible weather for our Summer Fair on 16 June we still raised 700. Many thanks to all who contributed in any way. It was good to have such active support from our St. Martin's friends. With their help and with subsequent donations we raised £2,962.70. That was made up to £3,000 and the 'good as new', bric-a-brac and other things left after the fair were given to the children's Trust for sale in their charity shops. God has certainly blessed our efforts!

Bill Cox

Thanks From Edie

I would like to say a big thank-you to all my friends for their prayers, kindness and concern, during my recent stay in hospital, and for the many lovely cards I received. My stay in the geriatric ward was an experience I would not like to repeat. I hope to be back with you soon.

Edie Winrow

Centenary!

Congratulations to Valerie Rogers' mother who celebrated her 100th birthday on 11 June.

Gift Day

Gift Day donations totalled £1,979.50 but only 30 envelopes were returned!!

Thanks For Your Support

Following the two performances of 'Exodus' on 5th and 6th May we were able to send £420 to NCH Action for Children.

The 'Classics to Jazz' concert on 19th May raised £160 for our Church Funds

Midways

Midways are glad to report that the Coffee Morning on 12 May raised £169 which enabled their donation to church funds to be increased to £350 this year. Membership stands at 26 and new members are always welcome.

Dates For Your Diary

3 September - Fellowship: first meeting of the season

5 September - Midways: members' meeting (Bring and Buy)

20-22 October - Women's Anniversary Weekend

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CHURCH DIARY FOR JULY

Sun	1	10.30 am	Family Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
		7.30 pm	Prayer Series (5)
Mon	2	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Jean Butland plays)
Tue	3	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
Wed	4	10.30 am	Toddlers Service
Sun	8	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
		6.30 pm	Holy Communion led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
Mon	9	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Bill Cox)
Tue	10	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
Wed	11	10.30 am	Holy Communion
Fri	13	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	15	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr Martin Brown
		6.30 pm	Celebration Praise led by Janet Hamblin
Mon	16	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Cllr. Brian White)
Tue	17	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club (Rev. Geoffrey Owen from St. James' just along the road)
Sun	22	10.30 am	Holy Communion led by Rev Rodney Hill
		6.30 pm	Circuit Service at Raynes Park
Mon	23	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Pastor Keith Mitchell from Merton Park Baptist Church)
Tue	24	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
Sun	29	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr John Sephton
Mon	30	2.45 pm	Fellowship Lunch (Derek and Mary Heaton entertain)

CHURCH DIARY FOR AUGUST

Sun	5	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Miss Priscilla Vivian
Tue	7	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
Sun	12	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Charlotte Elvey
Tue	14	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
Sun	19	10.30 am	Holy Communion led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
Tue	21	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
Sun	26	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr Andy Walker
Tue	28	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat