

MARTIN WAY METHODIST CHURCH

Newsletter - October 2002

Minister: The Revd Anne Rusbridge

Dear friends,

*We plough the fields, and scatter the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand*

Many of you have said to me that harvest is your favourite time of the year and especially the Harvest Festival services with the displays of fruit, flowers and vegetables and the singing of the traditional harvest hymns. To some of our younger people, who are used to a ready supply of foods from around the world available in our local supermarkets, many of these hymns have much less relevance. Of course we are still dependent on a good harvest, there is just not the same awareness. We also see changes in our harvest giving with the need to support those whose harvest will be poor, and so our gifts this year will predominantly be in money. The Harvest Festival is also a time to think about the harvest of our lives and the harvest of our churches. We sometimes expect to see results where we have not sown any seed, and sometimes we resist change because we are unaware of the riches that are available to us.

I came across a delightful harvest story recently which is entitled "It's Harvest! So what?". (Roots Worship). It is a story about some mice who lived very happily in a beautiful field with lots of wild flowers and berries. One day the field was destroyed - or so they thought. Someone churned up the ground, scattered seed and went away and left it. Most of the mice left in disgust, but one stayed and patiently watched and waited. After a while, small shoots appeared which eventually turned into corn, which grew and ripened in the sun. Suddenly the field became a far better place than it had been before, with lots of food to eat and a wonderful place to play! The story ends, "It's Harvest" Sow what?"

If you would like to join a group to explore your faith in greater depth, please let me know. The LIFE Bible Course will be continuing in October with some of the group considering Church Membership. If you would like to become a member of the Methodist Church, or transfer your membership from another church, please let me know as there is still time to join this group.

With best wishes,

Anne

The Legend Of The Wounded Healer

A rabbi went to the cave of a great prophet and asked "When will the Messiah come?". The prophet said, "He is already here". "Then where can I find him?" the rabbi asked. "You will find him at the gate of the city sitting among the poor, the wounded and oppressed". "How shall I know him from all the other people there?" the rabbi asked. The prophet answered, "The others there unwrap all their wounds and sores at the same time to treat them and then put all the bandages back on at the same time. But this is not true with the Messiah. The Messiah will remove the bandages from one wound at a time, treat the wound and then wrap it up again. He does this saying "Perhaps someone will need me, and I could not go if all my wounds were unwrapped at one time, so I will treat them one at a time so I can go quickly to those who may need me".

[Rev D Ceri Lewis in 'Trinity News' January 2002]

Biblelands

Copies of the Autumn edition of "The Star in the East" are now available in both vestibules - please help yourselves. Having heard Bishop Munib's "Living Message from Jerusalem" for ourselves at Oxford, Derek and I commend to you the articles on pages 4-5. The Thanksgiving service and AGM (advertised on page 19) is a very worthwhile time of sharing for anyone interested.

Mary and Derek Heaton

Taize Prayer And Praise

These meetings are held monthly on Mondays at 8pm in the chapel of St. John Fisher Church, Cannon Hill Lane. The heart of the meetings is the longing for reconciliation - for barriers to come down between peoples, cultures and denominations and to discover oneness and unity in the presence of God. The next meeting is on 14 October. If you would like to know more please ask Gwen Wildman.

News From Burundi

This morning, as is customary, a member of the team opened in prayer with: "Lord Jesus, thank you that we woke up this morning, that you protected us through the night and have brought us to the beginning of a new day...". It could be ritualistic words, except that when shells are landing round the capital, you really do mean it. I have only been back a week, but on two nights there was massive shelling...when I arrived [returning from leave in England] my flatmate was upcountry assessing the damage of the latest rebel incursion...our main colleague was shot four times, and hit twice, but they were only minor injuries and he was back wanting to work the next day! Some people out here are simply amazing.

So there is the usual mixture of encouragements and discouragements. As I drove to preach at a new church on Sunday morning, having been at the lakeside at 7am to see several hundred people baptised, I was full of joy, because the Body of Christ is growing fast. But then this old lady hobbled across the road. Her sunken eyes were utterly lifeless. I tooted for her to get out of the way, and she stopped in her tracks, expressionless. I had to swerve as she wouldn't bother moving. I felt like crying - she was the living dead - a picture of complete despair...

As I listen to the shooting and shelling and see the desperate poverty I am gutted that [in the] fifteen months [I have been away] things haven't got any better...think of the family where they share one pair of shoes, so whoever goes into town wears them that day, whilst the others stay at home...

I came back in time for Scripture Union's Jubilee - 25 years in action in Burundi.. Pray for an ever-increasing impact on the nation through evangelistic outings, AIDS program, children's work, Bible-reading notes, and training of pastors. The opportunities are HUGE.

I asked a colleague the other day how he managed to smile so much, bearing in mind his personal circumstances. He replied: "How can I complain when I have my Jesus?" What do you answer to that?

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Holiday Snapshots - Evesham

When we moved from our suburban Surrey home to the Vale of Evesham in Worcestershire I thought that it would be an ideal place to spend a peaceful retirement. We had been active members of our Church - me a Local Preacher [in the Purley Circuit], representative on Churches Together, and member of the Church Council, my wife [who had been to school in Merton Park (the Chase Middle School)] a Sunday School teacher, and both of us sang in the Choir. Now we could relax and let others take the strain. It was not to be!

On our first Sunday in the Evesham church the minister welcomed us and asked me to help him preside at the Communion table. My wife was invited to join the choir (and I was soon to follow). Since then we have found ourselves holding a large number of posts including Secretary to the Superintendent minister and Chairman of the committee overseeing our rebuilding scheme.

Evesham Methodist Society has one of the longest and most interesting histories in Methodism, dating back to at least 1739 when both John and Charles Wesley paid visits to the town. That was the first of many visits by John in his travelling ministry. When Methodism was organised into Circuits, Evesham was one of the original seven - its area including what then was a little hamlet, Birmingham. The tradition of being among the first has continued right up to the present time. You may recall an item in

the Methodist Recorder about two months ago reporting the visit of the President, Christina le Moignan, together with a number of other dignitaries, for a service at which the Evesham church was formally presented with a plaque commemorating the first presentation to any British church of an Eco Award. As a church we are very aware of conservation issues, and have a strong tradition of energy efficiency and of material recycling,

Today [July], as I write this article, we have just started Phase 2 of our rebuilding Scheme, having completed Phase 1 in 1998 completely free of debt. The first part of the scheme was to build a completely new suite of rooms under the existing church, where (having established that the foundations went down very deep) we managed with voluntary labour to dig out tons of earth, which we used to form a riverside terrace - recycling again!) And then raised over ,280,000 to employ professionals to finish the job. Only 3 weeks after the opening we had an exceptional flood, the river next to the church having risen well over 17 feet and ruining the new premises. The builders returned (thanks to the insurance) and repeated their work.

We did not sit back and rest, but relaunched an appeal for the second phase - a ,360,000 rebuild of the worship area, hall, and other ground floor premises. Our building is almost 100 years old, and we felt it was time to make it fit for carrying out our vision of having a worthy centre for the worship we seek to offer, equipped for nurturing the growth of our fellowship, suitable for serving the needs of our local community, and a base from which to spread the faith to others. We still have some way to go in our fundraising efforts, but the builders are now starting their work and in 5 months time we expect to be realising the vision. In the meantime we are holding our morning services in a local school, our evening services in one of our downstairs rooms, our Wednesday service of healing and prayer and our Friday "Shoppers Service" in a chapel loaned by another denomination,

Our "retirement" to Evesham has turned out to be the most active and the most rewarding time of our life. We thank God, and we look forward to what the next phase might bring!

Don and Jackie Weddell

Garden Diary - Autumn 2002

The garden behind the church is past its peak now, although there are a few shrubs providing some colour. It has been very colourful during the summer and, on behalf of the gardening team, I would like to thank all of the individuals and clubs who provided plants and pots to add to the usual display. I hope that you all enjoyed seeing the results of their efforts as much as we did. I think that Midways needs a particular thank you as their large pots at the front of the church give a cheerful welcome to anyone entering. Some of the pots will remain little changed as they have roses or other shrubs in and will flower beautifully again next year. The pots containing

annuals or half hardy perennials will probably be dismantled and we would like to plant some bulbs. Spring flowers are always so welcome and give hope that winter is nearly over.

In order to plant bulbs for next year, we will again need the help of the clubs and congregation in the following ways:

1. Bulbs can be expensive but often, if you buy bulbs through mail order you get one or more free packs. If you don't know what to do with any free packs you may get, would you let the church have them.
2. If you are buying some bulbs from a shop, just buy one or two extra and give them to any member of the gardening team. As long as we know whether they are daffodils, crocus or whatever, we will be able to mix and match them to produce an interesting spring garden.
3. If any of the clubs would like to plant bulbs in their own pots it would be welcome (Midways will need an awful lot of bulbs to fill theirs!)
4. If you are not buying bulbs but would like to give a small donation towards purchasing some, it would be gladly received,

Thank you again for your help during the last year. We will look forward together to a brilliant spring.

Pauline Riley and the gardening team (Ted Ashwood, Jean Butland, Gwen Edwards, Derek and Mary Heaton, Joan Harding, Lesley Mortley, Mike Rusbridge)

PS If anyone has space in a greenhouse or cold frame which could be used to over-winter the geraniums, fuchsias and other tender plants which have given us so much pleasure during the summer, please let one of the gardening team know. These plants are expensive to buy and it would be a pity not to try to re-use them.

"People will say that you don't need friends on this journey, that God is enough. But I say to you that to be with God's friends is a good way to keep close to God in this life." St. Teresa of Avila

Martin Way Midway Group - Part 2

We had a good turn out to our opening meeting on the 10th September 1969, everyone was made welcome and we soon got to know each other.

Our second meeting was "Currency Decimalisation" with the speaker Mr Aslett from the Midland Bank at Morden. We had to do all we could to get our minds ready for the new money! We had a talk with slides by the late Margaret Bellars of the Merton and Morden News - she became a good friend of the Group, and enabled us to get a lot of good publicity in the local paper about Easter time. Barbara Meineck came and gave us

one of her many talks on flower arranging, and here 32 years on we had her latest one in 2001.

We had a Coffee Evening in aid of our own funds, Cake Decorating, a talk with music by Jane Austen the music teacher at Hillcross School, a Coffee Evening in aid of the National Children's Home, the work of a Police Woman, First Aid in the Home by Dr Tom Williamson, a visit from a Samaritan, a film of the work of the Royal National Mission for Deep Sea Fishermen, the Methodist Missionary Society and a visit to the Houses of Parliament.

So we completed our first year!.

During the following years we had visits to many other places of interest. We have been to the Homepride Bakery at Chessington. We went to the Dairy Council, the South Eastern Gas Board and the Thames Barrier. Various coach trips were organised (with husbands) around parts of the Surrey countryside and London sights - including the Globe Theatre.

We have had changes of Chairman over the years. The first was Anne Knighton, next Gladys Hall 1970-71, then Jean Butland followed by Doreen Warren in 1976, and during the time Jeannine Moore was with us she became our President. In 1997 Maralyn Loft became Chairman. She is still in office today and has done very well. She did, however, announce at May's AGM that this would be her last year but we shall see!!

Conclusion in the November Newsletter!

Jean Butland

Have you a surplus piano for an aspiring pianist?

Alan Morris (of St. Mary's Merton) would be very grateful to know of anyone who has a pianoforte for sale, as his grandson needs one. If you have, please telephone Alan on 8542-5086 or leave a message on 8540-9443. Thank you very much.

Financial News

Tax returned on Gift Aid donations is credited to our account in August and we have been very fortunate in the year to the 5th April 2002 in the amount received which totals ,6304.91 for the General Fund and ,943.99 for the Building Fund. This arises from forty-five Gift Aid donations to the General Fund and thirteen for the Building Fund. It has to be said that we have had some "special" donations during the course of the year in question, but I have to say again that if more people who pay tax made their donations Gift Aided we could repeat, or even improve upon, these figures in the current tax year. Does this apply to you? If so please speak with me.

John Butland - Church Treasurer

Family News

We send our congratulations to Alison Ellis and Darren Keyes who were married on 7 September and wish them every blessing and happiness in their life together.

Congratulations to Bob Hamblin whose achievement of 40 years as local preacher was celebrated at the Circuit Service at Wimbledon church last month.

Belated congratulations and birthday greetings to Veda Brown who celebrated her 90th birthday on 2 August.

Women's Anniversary Weekend 19-21 October

Calling all cooks! We are looking for kind people who would be willing to make cakes both for the Coffee Morning on Saturday and for the Rally on Monday afternoon. All contributions will be gratefully received.

Dates For Your Diary

12 October: Annual Book Sale at St. James' 10.30-12 noon

26 October: One World Week family festival 11am-4pm at Westminster Central Hall [details see September Newsletter]

Items for the next issue of the Newsletter (November) should be with the editor, Rosemary Keen, by Sunday 13 October at the latest.

"Pray as you can and do not try to pray as you can't"

John Chapman

Church Diary For October

Tue	1	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	2	10.30 am	Toddler Time in Church
Fri	4	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	6	10.30 am	Harvest Festival - Family and Parade Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
		12.30 pm	Harvest Lunch
Mon	7	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Rev Geoffrey Owen)
Tue	8	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	9	7.45 pm	Midways (Mary and Derek Heaton)
Thu	10	8.00 pm	Church Council
Sun	13	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mrs Valerie Ashcroft
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
Mon	14	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Mr Warwick - Bogus Callers)
Tue	15	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club (The Vet who climbs mountains)
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	18	12.30 pm	Lunch Club

Women's Anniversary Weekend

Sat	19	10-12 am	Midways Coffee Morning
Sun	20	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Ms Gill Hulme
		8.00 pm	"Worship at 8" - Healing Service
Mon	21	2.30 pm	Rally and Tea: speaker: Miss Pauline Riley
Tue	22	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	23	10.30 am	Bible Study
		7.45 pm	Midways (Mrs Margaret Sephton - My Work)
Thu	24	8.00 pm	Pastoral Committee
Sun	27	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev John Dakin
Mon	28	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Mr Nigel Sustens)
Tue	29	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer