

# Martin Way Methodist Church

Newsletter – July/August 2003

Minister – Rev Anne Rusbridge

## Minister's Letter

Dear friends,

As a small child one of my favourite places to visit were the stepping-stones at Boxhill. It had seemed very exciting, quite an adventure, jumping over the stones. As we get older walking over stepping-stones seems quite tame. The stones are the same; it is us who have grown. Ministry is rather like creating stepping-stones to help people on their Christian journey, and perhaps the ease with which we cross these stones has to do with our growth in faith. One small step can seem like a giant leap when we are beginning our journey, but as we draw closer to God we are able to step out with greater confidence. My ministry with you has been short, but I do believe it has been a clear stepping-stone further along the journey.

A small but totally committed group of people meet every Tuesday evening for prayer. Tim and Caroline's house-group has been regenerated with the LIFE Bible Course, and the SEEKERS Group has been formed. The SEEKERS began as a LIFE Bible Course and then undertook a very creative meditative Lent Course. The SEEKERS have now reverted to twice-monthly meetings and are participating in the Essence course. The group looks forward to working with John in the autumn.

Some of us took a brief side-step going out on mission in Morden with 'On the Move'. It was one of the highlights of my time with you, but perhaps was one of those bigger stepping-stones that require a little more confidence for some people. Other highlights have been working on banners, singing with the Frogs Club once a month, my work as chaplain to Arthritis Care and experimenting with the new technology in worship.

Martin Way is like a church waiting to give birth. The infrastructure is all in place with superb premises and property maintenance, financial stability, and a whole range of groups set up offering activities for all ages. You also have members of the local community meeting on the

premises every day providing exciting mission opportunities on your own doorstep. Wait expectantly with anticipation for all the Lord will do with you. I pray from the depth of my heart that you will be richly blessed by John's ministry amongst you, and that in the power of the Holy Spirit you will be skipping across those stones as you grow in faith and confidence. May God bless you in all you do. Thank you for sharing this part of your journey with me, for it has changed the course of my journey.

Mike sends greetings and thanks you for your support over the last three years. He may even meet up with some of you at next year's Christian Aid walk. We will hold you all in prayer as we move on to Upper Norwood and a new stage in ministry.

Every blessing, Anne

### **Christian Aid 2003**

Christian Aid 2003 started with the mini flower display and Sweet and Low concert that raised £586.44. On the Sunday we were privileged to have Peter West as our preacher. This set the tone for an exciting week that incorporated the door-to-door collection in the roads for which Martin Way is responsible. The weather was mixed this year, but all roads were covered and we managed to raise £1,046.66 that was about £100 more than last year.

The week ended with the Christian Aid Walk called 'Circle the City' which started at Wesley's Chapel. Lesley and Mike Mortley, Maralyn and Tony Loft, Gwen Wildman, Bob Hamblin, Derek Heaton and Mike Rusbridge took part and under a cloudy sky left Wesley's Chapel at 2 pm. The first part of the walk took us through the City on to All Hallows-by-the-Tower where we stopped for refreshment. Down Tower Hill, along the Thames which we crossed at London Bridge to Southwark Cathedral, Bankside and back over the Thames by Southwark Bridge. Back into the City with a further refreshment stop at St. Botolph-without-Aldersgate and then the home run to Wesley's Chapel. It took just under three hours and the rain held off.

It was a very pleasant walk. The sponsorship from the walk raised £641 that makes the total raised £2,274.10.

My thanks to everyone involved in Christian Aid this year. It was a very enjoyable time.

*Mike Rusbridge*

## **Church Council And AGM**

At our AGM in June we wove a large piece of fabric to demonstrate the importance of everyone being involved in the life of the church. Every person who is a part of our church in any way adds his or her own unique contribution to the corporate life of this church. Remove one thread and the pattern changes - add new threads and the design is enriched every time. Each minister also adds his or her own unique contribution to the pattern and design of this church.

The business side of our AGM was rather disappointing. There were no nominations for either the leadership team or representatives to Church Council. This leaves both groups very short, which not only places a lot of work on a few people, but one resignation and we will not be constitutionally correct for a Church Council. It is vitally important that all activities and all ages are represented in the leadership and management of the church so that we can cater for everyone's needs. The Church Council is also the main communication network of the church, feeding in the needs and concerns of the people and then reporting back the discussion and decisions taken. Please give serious and prayerful consideration to this matter.

At the Church Council we speedily cleared a number of small matters either dealing with them or passing them on to other committees! Derek Heaton informed us of helpful changes in Churches Together committee meetings and Mike Mortley was given authority to proceed further with the improvements to the sound system. Mike Rusbridge was thanked for his work. A new church directory is on the way, and Brenda is collating dates of meetings for next year so that a new Church Diary can be produced. The main item on the agenda was Safeguarding. Letters have been sent out to everyone working with children and young people and also to all office holders in order that we can get up to date with the signing of declarations and training. All key holders have now signed declarations and outside lettings do this automatically, so we are well on the way to getting this matter in order. We also received offers of help for a number of tasks:

Tony Loft        - Christian Aid Co-ordinator  
Ted Ashwood    - Envelope scheme

Anne-Marie Pallister - Flower Group Co-ordinator  
Rosemary Keen - offered to keep outside notice board up to date  
Gwen Wildman and Abby Loft offered to assist with Child Protection issues

Thank you to everyone for being so willing to take on extra tasks

*Anne Rusbridge*

## **The Church In Kenya**

Kenya was a centre of African-Arab culture from the 10th century. At the end of the 19th century, along with Zanzibar and Uganda, it was assigned to the English sphere of influence and in 1920 was annexed to the crown and declared a British Crown Colony..

Kenya's first contact with Christianity was in AD 1498 when Vasco de Gama, the Portuguese explorer, landed at Malindi Bay. But although the Portuguese remained in the area for over two centuries nothing is known of Christian work then and when the first Catholic missionaries of the modern era began work in Mombasa in 1890 the only Christians they found were about fifty Goans in Mombasa itself. Protestant mission work began with a chain of mission centres founded in 1844 by a Church Missionary Society missionary, the Rev Ludwig Krapf, a German Lutheran, and his colleague the Rev John Rebmann.

Back in Europe in 1860 publication of a book written by Krapf about his travels and work led to the British United Methodists commissioning him to pioneer a new mission, whose object would be to reach the Galla empire that was believed to stretch from Kenya to Ethiopia. This Methodist mission, launched in 1862, suffered a series of disasters over a period of fifty years. Frustrated in the attempt to move inland, the mission settled at Ribe, barely eight miles from the CMS post at Rabai. At the end of the first year only one missionary, Wakefield, had survived. Sir Bartle Frere, governor of Bombay in India and a convinced evangelical Christian, brought soon after a new vision of missionary work. While in East Africa to sign a treaty ending the slave trade he examined the state of the missions and recommended that CMS and the Methodists should take an active part in opposing slavery and the slave trade. CMS founded Freretown in 1875 to house the freed slaves from Mombasa Island. Out

of Freretown and other communities of ex-slaves came Kenya's first schools, the first African teachers and evangelists, and in 1885 the first ordained ministers. By 1890, there were about 2000 baptised Anglicans and a few Methodists, Kenya's first form of organised and enduring Christianity.

The Christian community is 38 per cent Protestant and 28 per cent Catholic, and the Anglican Church is the largest Protestant denomination, followed by the increasingly significant Pentecostal Church. The Methodist Church in Kenya became autonomous in 1967.

Current challenges for the Church include the theological training of leaders, outreach to pastoralist and unreached Islamic people groups; ministry to young people (60 percent of the population is under 20 years old); urban ministry, especially among poor people living in informal settlements; issues of justice and peace, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic which is believed to affect up to 20 per cent of the population in many areas.

### **Facts and figures**

Population: 29,549,000 (1999)

Ethnic groups: Kikuyu, Luyia, Luo, Masai, Kalenjin, Kamba, Meru, Gusii, Embu and Indian and Arab minorities

Capital: Nairobi

Languages: English, Swahili, numerous indigenous languages

Religions: 73% Christian, 6% Muslim, 1% traditional religions

Infant mortality rate: 75 per 1000

Life expectancy at birth: 52 years (1998)

Literacy: 77% can read and write age 15 and over

Although the official language of Kenya is English, Swahili is the national language. It is based on African Bantu languages with a smattering of Arabic, Portuguese and English words thrown in and Angelina (from Ruxley church) recently provided the Ruxley magazine editor with the following:

## **Sala Ya Bwana: The Lord's Prayer In Swahili**

Baba yetu ulie mbinguni	Our Father in Heaven
Jina lako litukuzwe	Hallowed be your name
Ufalme wako ufike	Your Kingdom come
Utakalo lifanyike	Your will be done
Duniani kama mbinguni	On Earth as in Heaven
Utupe leo mkate wetu wa kila siku	Give us today our daily bread
Utusamehe makosa yetu	Forgive us our sins
Kama tunavyo wasamea waliotukose	As we forgive those who err against us
Usitutie katika kisa wasi	Take us not into temptation
Lakini utuoke maovuni	But deliver us from evil
Milele na milele	Forever and ever
Amina	Amen

### **He who forgives ends the quarrel**

*African proverb*

## **Lending Time**

### **New Volunteer Opportunities With Merton Libraries**

New volunteer opportunities have recently been launched in Merton Libraries. The options are varied. In Raynes Park, for instance, we need volunteers to help run computer and Internet sessions for absolute beginners, and in Morden we also need people to help with children's reading activities and family activity mornings.

Volunteers can be all ages and for most jobs you don't need any particular skills. We endeavour to find volunteer jobs for everyone who applies.

There are opportunities in all seven Merton libraries and the Heritage Centre, with the double aim of providing rewarding volunteering and adding value to the service the library offers to its local community.

The project, part of a nationwide pilot, is run by CSV (Community Service Volunteers), the UK's leading volunteer agency, under the name of 'Lending Time'. If you might consider volunteering or if you'd like to know more

about the project, I'd love to hear from you. You can contact me, Andrew Chadwick at Mitcham Library, London Rd, Mitcham, CR4 2YR or email [achadwick@csv.org.uk](mailto:achadwick@csv.org.uk).

### **Anyone for football?**

Raynes Park Methodist Church Football Club plays in the SACFL League. At the end of this year's season, their first, they finished mid-table and are hoping to fight for promotion next year. The team has been a great way for Christians to share their faith with guys from the local community and many good friendships have been made. They are always looking for new players. Anyone keen to join them should contact Andy Frost on 07958 607797.

### **Update On Basketball & Multisports Court Project**

A recent update on the progress of this project [at the back of Poplar Primary School] reveals that about £46,000 has been raised so far. The main promise has been £20,000 from the London Marathon Charitable Trust. A further £2,000 has been promised by another Trust. In addition, Poplar School have raised about £6,000 and the Church some £8,000. Peter Leech, the Project Co-ordinator writes that "the total required is in the region of £75,000 so we are not yet near enough to initiate construction and we are still actively fund-raising". In April they had a basketball shoot in Morden Centre and since then a Gift Day. Peter has promised to keep me in touch with future fund-raising events [I guess a lot of us pass the Baptist Church on our shopping expeditions] so watch this space!

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Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a motor mechanic

Realise that red traffic lights can sometimes help us to become more real, spiritual people and that we may in the end achieve more by going deeper than always being tireless activists

*Ted Lankester of Mildmay Mission Hospital in a 1995 Newsletter*

## **Circuit Celebration Of John Wesley's Birth**

Are you coming on Sunday 6 July? Ruxley Church in Ruxley Lane, Ewell have been chosen as the hosts for this Circuit event and will hold an open air service in their grounds and car park. (Inside if wet). The Reverend Dr Rob Frost will speak on 'Wesley and his relevance today'.

The afternoon starts at 12.30 with a picnic (bring your own) followed by the service at 2pm. As well as Circuit Members, other churches in the area are also being invited as well as some representatives from the local community.

## **The Church Band And Its Music**

During our time of worship we find different ways to talk to God and to listen to him. Music helps us to celebrate God's glory in a spiritually uplifting way, adding strength to the words that are being sung. For many of us music is one of the best ways in which to worship God. Music has many moods from joyful dance to reflective prayer and can move us in a way that words alone cannot. For some of us words actually mean more when put to music.

We are very fortunate at Martin Way to have some talented musicians, and they can usually be seen playing in the church band at Family Services and some other services. The music is mostly taken from Mission Praise, which contains many of the best-known worship songs. These worship songs have a modern style and contemporary lyrics that just call out for different instruments such as guitar, drums, flutes, clarinets, piano, violins and more. Of course hymns are still important but many are very old now and were originally written to be modern and contemporary too. So it is nice to see new music still coming into worship. Different music appeals to different people, and there are many different people in church. The band normally gathers a little earlier on a Sunday morning for a quick run through. Then it's straight into the service. People might think that there is much rehearsing - there is not, they are just good! Anyone who is musical can join in so if we are not aware of your talent and you would like to play in church please let Janet Hamblin know.

*Colin Smith*

## CHURCH DIARY FOR JULY

Tue	1	10-12 am 8.00 pm	Coffee and Chat Time for Prayer
Wed	2	11.15 am	Toddler Time in Church
Fri	4	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	6	10.30 am 12.30 pm	Morning Service Circuit Wesley Celebration at Ruxley
Mon	7	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Rev Keith Mitchell)
Tue	8	10-12 am 8.00 pm	Coffee and Chat Time for Prayer
Wed	9	11.15 am	Communion Service
Sun	13	10.30 am 6.30 pm	Morning Service Communion Service
Mon	14	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Miss Audrey Butler)
Tue	15	10-12 am 7.30 pm  8.00 pm	Coffee and Chat Men's Supper Club (Russell Humphreys - Creating a Garden) [Next meeting 16 September] Time for Prayer
Fri	18	12.30 pm	Lunch Club [starts again 5 September]
Sun	20	10.30 am 6.30 pm	Morning Service Anne's Farewell Service [at Raynes Park]
Mon	21	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Miss Brenda Brisden)
Tue	22	10-12 am 8.00 pm	Coffee and Chat Time for Prayer
Wed	23	10.30 am	Bible Study
Sun	27	10.30 am	Morning Service
Mon	28	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Miss Priscilla Vivian) [Next meeting 1 September]

## CHURCH DIARY FOR AUGUST

Sun	3	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sun	10	10.30 am 6.30 pm	Morning Service Communion Service
Sun	17	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sun	24	10.30 am	Morning Service with Holy Communion
Sun	31	10.30 am	Morning Service
Tuesdays		10-12 am 8.00 pm	Coffee and Chat Time for Prayer