

# Martin Way Methodist Church

Newsletter – May 2004

Minister – Rev John Nyota

Dear friends

There is something that excites my heart in this church. I feel that we are headed for some good things in the near future. The leadership team sat recently to consider one single agenda in the church, HOW WE CAN GROW SPIRITUALLY AND NUMERICALLY. Even before then some delightful things were happening. The growth in young people and their participation in the mission of the church is very positive indeed. The time they spend together and their willingness to take care of the little ones really excites my heart. This is what I meant when I recently mentioned that we are one flock under the good shepherd, Jesus Christ. He is the gate but we must let him in.

Then there are the 20 people who went to Spring Harvest. I am sure we must consider how some of the experience there can be passed on to others within the Martin Way flock. For indeed each of us did drink a cupful of exuberance and spiritual fervour from Skeggie. How about the Jerusalem Joy on the 24th of April? May the Lord help us to use all these moments in warming each other up and inviting them into the kingdom.

If we have all these things going on how come we are not attracting others to ourselves? There are a lot of seeds being sown and at an appointed time God will bring them. That is no reason to be complacent. So here are some of the things to consider, pray for and where necessary engage in as we endeavour to repackage ourselves.

1. There is an Alpha conference at Westminster Central Hall on 16/17 June from 8 to 8. The cost is about £30 per person, if we book before the 18th of May. It is for the leaders of new courses. The church will offer financial assistance to those wanting to go. Gwen Wildman has the details.

2. Welcome pack We need an attractive pack. Moira will give some thought to the contents and how to organise it so please give your thoughts to it.

3. Church magazine. A new editor is needed from August. A communications team with complementary skills has been picked to sort out a 'corporate image', a column for each organisation, a delivery schedule, connections with the web site; the distribution system for the magazine and how it could be augmented by a distribution of flyers of special events to the area around the church.

Again a group needs to decide ideas on editorial policy, distribution costs, when to include parents of children in groups in the church and collating a new data base of members, adherents and contacts. New communications group: Mike will be meeting with Andys (Smith, Smith, Fox), Colin and Jane Smith, Joyce Plant, Rosemary Keen and Maralyn Loft. We hope they will want to form an executive group.

4. Situations vacant. Roy has produced a Sit's Vacant board. An Overseas Mission Secretary and Property and Finance Secretary are needed immediately, and the Magazine Team needs to be in place before Rosemary retires in August.

5. SOFA. The items covered include:- how to integrate people including the shy and 'difficult'; sharing spiritual things at depth; the role of house groups; privacy policy; the implementation of a 'buddy' system

6. Photo board. We will be putting up a board with pictures of leaders, so that people will know who to approach for any particular need.

7. We need a cafe as a mission ground for those visiting the post office and other shops round here. As a jump with faith we need to put this issue in our prayers.

Quite a handful you would say! And I agree with you. But let us not fret for the good shepherd goes with us as we up the gear for his kingdom.

See you when I am back from Kenya.

John

## QUOTE - UNQUOTE

Mission will not happen unless the Church goes beyond its own life out into active care in the local neighbourhood

*David Sheppard*

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR LONDON SOUTH-WEST DISTRICT

Dear friends,

On Thursday 7 April I represented the District at a service of Vespers to mark the death of Pope John Paul II at St. George's Catholic Cathedral, Southwark. In addition to those from other Christian traditions, there were Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist representatives, as well as a fair sprinkling of mayors (to judge from the number of gold chains being worn) and MPs. The Cathedral was packed. From one perspective, it was a remarkable demonstration of how much the Roman Catholic Church has become integrated into what was once a fiercely - or do I mean bigotedly? - Protestant country. The ecumenical movement has done us a great service in that regard. Nowadays more people regard Brussels rather than Rome as the centre of a sinister, unaccountable, trans-national foreign power bent on undermining the sovereignty of the British state.

From another perspective, the huge turn-out was a tribute to the love and affection which Pope John Paul inspired in many people - whether religious or not. He was, in the best sense of the word, a charismatic figure, and his globe-trotting, media-savvy pontificate was unlike that of any of his predecessors. To adapt a phrase John Wesley used about himself, the world was Karol Wojtyla's parish. Those under the age of 35 have known no other world Christian leader of such calibre. Presidents of the Methodist Conference and even Archbishops of Canterbury come and go, but this Pope seemed to have been there for ever.

He was a man of many contradictions. He was conservative in matters of personal and sexual morality and all matters concerning human reproduction, yet official teaching on contraception is widely ignored. He reiterated the traditional line on priestly celibacy and opposition to women's ordination while scandals about clerical abuse of children engulfed parts of the Church. From communist-controlled Poland he had espoused freedom and democracy and played a major role in the collapse

of the Soviet empire (probably the best answer to Stalin's jibe 'How many divisions has the Pope?'). He made powerful speeches in Latin America in favour of the oppressed, but sought to suppress liberation theology from that continent as too political. He entrenched centralizing power at the Vatican at the expense of a more conciliar model of church governance. Yet he was surprisingly liberal in his views about human frailty, and trenchant in his preaching and teaching about the galloping materialism, increasing inequality, perpetual war, institutionalized corruption, pathological narcissism and paralysing obsession with celebrity of the past twenty-five years. He sought to atone for two thousand years of Christian anti-Semitism by reaching out to the Jewish people. At Jerusalem's Western Wall in 1996, he left a prayer asking for God's forgiveness for the sins of Christians against Jews. He strongly opposed both the first Gulf War in 1991 and the second in 2003.

I look back at the previous paragraph and feel confused. Some of Pope John Paul's stances and achievements want to make me cheer from the roof-tops, others leave me grinding my teeth in profound disagreement. I suppose it underlines the fact that Christian faith and Christian living are not monolithic. All of us seek to wrestle with the mystery of God in Christ who makes a claim on our lives. We seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in discerning to say and do what is right, so far as it lies within us. But the plain fact is that we differ. We differ in our reading and interpretation of Scripture; we differ in our theological convictions (and often pin unhelpful labels on them, in order to huddle together with the likeminded); we differ in our political convictions rooted in our understanding of the social teaching of the Church; we differ in our ethical convictions over a whole range of issues about what it means to be human. All of these will shape our attitude to the General Election on 5 May!

There is more in this than an appeal to conscience (and let no one say that conscience is a Protestant possession; it is at the heart of Catholic teaching even when it conflicts with the magisterium of the Church). Conscience is central to us as moral beings. I think what I am arguing for is something more than bland tolerance, but a positive attempt to live with our contradictions and differences, to seek to understand one another in affirmative ways, and wherever and whenever we can to celebrate our

differences. In the celebration we may learn something new about the nature and love of God and the meaning and purpose of human living.

*Best wishes,  
Yours ever,  
John*

## **QUOTE - UNQUOTE**

God has created us so we do small things with great love. I believe in that great love, that comes, or should come from our heart, should start at home: with my family, my neighbours across the street, those right next door. And this love should then reach everyone.

*Mother Teresa*

## **QUOTES FROM OUR ARCHIVES - MAY**

30 May 1934: proposed the purchase of hymn books 250 @ 1/6 (church books for visitors), 150 @ 1/6 for Sunday school, 20@ 8/6 Tune books for choir; and chairs:-55 primary @ 3/11 and 250 church @ 6/2 (Smith's white wood with birch seats)

gate in side road: as the side road will be completed before the opening of the church a double gate should be provided here in addition to the one in Martin Way

musical instruments:- three pianos, or one organ and two pianos

7 May 1944: Youth Charter to be hung on end wall of church in the middle of the arch

arranged for piano tuning (4 times a year) to be done by Maxwell & Sons, Wimbledon

21 May 1946: thanks to Youth Club for assistance in spring-cleaning the church

18 May 1955: Mr Evans was still living in the Worple Road manse, which was not at all satisfactory and it would be better for the manse to be near Martin Way

"That the manse be made over to Martin Way with permission to sell to enable Martin Way to buy another manse, also £2,700 to be paid to

Worple Road. Martin Way to take over the mortgage of £500 and to take out another mortgage for £750"

28 May 1958: [noted with thanks] the gift of a pipe organ for the church from Mr and Mrs E A Watson; also a cloth for communion table and pulpit fall worked and given by Mrs Wells-Brown

smoking: after discussion it was proposed and seconded "that smoking be permitted in the old premises on weekdays, but prohibited at concerts and in the new premises and not allowed in the building on Sundays"

15 May 1961: Youth Council

Mr Collins reported that Youth Club now had 12 boys and 5 girls who attended very regularly and three others who were a little less regular ... the average attendance was about 20. They were good youngsters. Efforts were being made to provide a varied programme ...The Road Safety Officer had visited the Club and the Club had been to the Fire Station. In two weeks time it was proposed to hold a Hamburger and Coca-Cola evening. The members were youngish and the money they had available was limited and this imposed restrictions on the scope of excursions ...Mr Collins paid tribute to the work of Mrs Gear

Mr Bass said that the Sunday School was holding its own with an average attendance of about 70

## **THE NEW LONDON DISTRICT**

Information Meeting held at Central Hall 14 March 2005: A summary of the Developments:

**The New London District - General Points:**

- \* The new District - of which the Wimbledon Circuit will be a part - will come into being in September 2006 and comprise 45 circuits
- \* The 'Lead' Chair will be Rev Dr Ermal Kirby (presently Chair of the London North-East District), whose main responsibility will be to develop a city-wide strategy and to be the representative person in civic and ecumenical matters.
- \* His co-Chairs will be Rev Dr Stuart Jordan (at the moment a member of the Connexional Team, London Mission) and Rev Jenny Impey (serving in

the Thames Valley Circuit), whose prime role will be in pastoral care (including stationing), north and south of the Thames respectively.

\* The London Committee will be replaced by a smaller group of trustees, and the London Mission Fund will shrink both in income and in grant-making by 2008.

### **An Emerging Vision for the New London District:**

\* It was felt that there is a need, because of the many changes, to stress the dual focus of

a) relating to the City of London and

b) supporting the mission of the local circuits.

NB: All three chairs will work across these two areas.

\* The new District's 'core values' will include the following areas: mission, justice, diversity and inclusion, ecumenical and other partnerships, work with young people, reflection and learning.

\* The District's work will be furthered by 5 'Commissions', i.e. Social Care, Congregational Development, Nurture and Discipleship, Vocational Development & an Urban Forum

\* It is possible that circuits may be encouraged to work in clusters at certain times, and when particular issues suggest that local groupings would be effective.

\* A District Council will be established as a source of accountability, and a District Resource Centre created at Westminster Central Hall to provide administrative support for the District and a resource facility for the circuits.

\* New District Officers will be appointed in due course, beginning with the Treasurer and the new Property Secretary in the summer of 2005, followed by the Synod Secretary et.al.

*Barrie Tabraham*

May they all be one should be a oneness that allows me to retain my uniqueness, my particularity, yet not render me incompatible with you

*Bishop Joe Aldred of the Pentecostal Church of God of Prophecy*

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH - MAY

We used to chant "March winds and April showers

Bring forth May flowers"

A home is incomplete without flowers. It is eight years this month since my dear wife June died. She loved flowers. We always tried to keep the part of the garden nearest the house full of colourful plants especially in the summer when there would be petunias, busy lizzies, french marigolds and so on. Perhaps I'm silly, but I still buy flowers for June and special ones on her birthday, at Christmas and so on.

We used to make a weekly visit to Tesco's. A ritual developed. Before starting the shopping we went into the cafe for a cup of coffee (plus a doughnut in my case!) Afterwards I would go in search of a trolley while June waited by the displays of flowers for sale. Invariably when I returned with the trolley June would give me a mini-sermon on how good God was to provide such colour and beauty and so many different varieties of flowers for us to enjoy.

I belong to a couple of art groups and more often than not I find myself painting watercolours of flowers. Like many other things, we take flowers for granted. A hymn begins "Think of a world without any flowers" and for us that is an impossibility. Flowers enrich our lives. Springtime blossom and flowers are there for our enjoyment. Thank God for them - and ask him to forgive you for taking so much that is beautiful in this world for granted.

*Bill Cox*

Sitting in silence for a long time my impress upon you that you are looking in the same direction and journeying the same way

*Archbishop Rowan Williams*

Our divisions prevent our neighbours from hearing the Gospel as they should

*Pope John Paul II*

Our first task in approaching another culture, another religion, another person, is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy, Else we may find ourselves treading on another's dream. More serious still, we may forget that God was there first.

*From the SPI DIR newsletter*

## WHAT YOU HAVE IN COMMON WITH A WOODCARVING

Woodcarving isn't as straightforward as it seems. You don't begin with a block of wood, you begin with a piece of paper. The first step is to draw a plan of what you want to carve, and only when you've got that right do you start to shape your piece of wood.

The carver then works his block with his plan alongside it. He cuts those bits of wood away that he doesn't want, and shapes what's left until it ever more closely resembles the original plan.

Only when the design on the wood and the paper plan are identical has the carver finished his job. He's then made exactly what he'd hoped for, while working all along from that original plan.

It's the same with our lives. God is the master carpenter. He has a unique plan for each one of us, which is a blueprint of what he hopes we will become.

As we go through life, God shapes us, cutting away those bits of us that He doesn't want and which would spoil what He hopes we'll come to look like. He then gradually moulds what's left until we look ever more like that original blueprint. Only when the two are identical will God's work be over.

But there's one big difference between a human being and a block of wood. A block of wood has to sit impassively on the carver's bench while he works at it. The wood cannot help the process along and has no idea what's happening to it.

God very much hopes that we'll help Him in the process of being moulded and shaped to His pattern. That's why we read the Bible and worship and pray: to find out just what his plan is for each one of us. Only when we have some idea of what He wants us to be can we help him in the process.

Yet however often we get it wrong and fail to live up to God's hopes, there's one promise we have.

God will never give up on us, until He's shaped us into exactly what He's planned for us to be all along.

*[Parish Magazine of St. Cuthbert Wells, February 2005]*

## **PRAYERS AND PRAYING**

Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tyre? - *Corrie Ten Boom*

Prayer is the victory of mind over mattress. - *John Perkins*

Prayer shows me what I need to do next in life, and gives me extra strength to do it. - *Rabbi Lionel Blue*

## **JUNIOR MISSION FOR ALL (JMA)**

Over the last 12 months JMA completed the long awaited cook book. A total of £166 was raised and the money was equally divided between the work of JMA and Methodist Homes for All (MHA). One of the aims of the cook book was to encourage all ages to work together. Thank you to all those who contributed with recipes and anecdotes. Thank you also to Derek Matthews who helped with the colour printing, to Marilyn Loft who photocopied countless pages, to Joyce Plant and Pauline Riley who helped with the editing, to Hannah Fernando for designing the front cover and to Jennifer and Rosemary for undertaking a lot of the typing and putting all the recipes into folders. A big thank you to everyone who bought the book.

People often ask what JMA is all about. Some assume it is about fundraising but this is only a small part of the work.

So what is JMA about? JMA was created so that children would not be excluded from supporting and learning about the mission of the Church. It is also about sharing the insights of God's people all over the world with children in our churches.

The JMA promise is to 'Learn, pray and serve with the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ.' It is important that all three actions are always taking place and that we know we are doing them with the whole Church. JMA has its part to play in all the church's activities where children are, or could be, present.

Currently I am JMA secretary for Martin Way Methodist Church but in May I shall be standing down although I will actively support the new secretary in my role as Sunday Club co-ordinator. Are you interested in taking on the role of JMA secretary? Please speak with me if you think you would be willing to take on the job or if you would like to know more

about what the job entails. You would not be working on your own but with the Sunday Club staff.

*Janet Fernando*

## **FASTING AND FEASTING**

Fast from discontent, feast on thankfulness. Fast from worry, feast on trust. Fast from anger; feast on patience. Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others. Fast from unrelenting pressures; feast on unceasing prayers. Fast from problems that overwhelm, feast on prayer that undergirds.

## **IMPORTANT FINANCIAL NEWS!**

Unfortunately the YMCA have ceased to meet on our premises, which has created a considerable loss of income. The budget considered by the Finance and Property Committee in February last anticipated an income of £5000 in the year from this source. Whilst we will not, of course, suffer the whole of this amount of loss for the current Methodist Year, i.e. to the 31st August 2005, as the YMCA only stopped meeting at the end of March, this income will need to be replaced to meet our commitments. We are in receipt of interest payments from money which we have on deposit with the Central Finance Board, but this will only continue for as long as we keep the capital sum intact, and in any event we should really endeavour to create sufficient weekly income to pay our way without having to rely on interest!

According to the February budget we needed an income of £355.88 per week, and the average collection plus payments by Banker's Orders so far this year equates to an amount of £359.30 - just about breaking even BUT with the loss of £5000 in a year from the YMCA we have virtually £100 per week to make up. Three things to consider - firstly if we could, for example, get 40 people to increase their giving by £2 per week, which would be £104 in a year, and have these amounts Gift Aided this would provide £4160 plus tax refund of £1164, giving a total of £5324 in the year. Perhaps even 40 new members?? Secondly, could I ask that the amount of the Banker's Order be reviewed periodically, as some have been static for a long time. I do appreciate that it may not be possible to give more but at least can it be considered? Lastly my attention has been drawn to the fact that some people who Gift Aid their contributions and

pay by Banker's Order continue to put donations in the collection bag on Sundays. Presumably because they feel embarrassed if they do not. On the other hand if the amount was added to the Banker's Order, for every £1 received the Church would gain an extra 28p from the Inland Revenue. Some of us already pass the collection bag by, so please do not feel embarrassed to do so, particularly if your Banker's Order is increased as a result!

*John Butland*  
*Church Treasurer*

### **QUOTE - UNQUOTE**

The optimist sees the blue sky from under his umbrella. The pessimist sees the cloud beyond the blue sky.

*V J Sayer*

### **THE SHOOTING STAR TRUST**

The work of the Shooting Star Trust is awesome. They are a children's hospice. There are only 8 in the country and none of these hospices receive any funding from the government. They raise their funds through local co-ordinators of which I am one. I cover the Merton area. So for some facts and figures. The Shooting Star Trust covers the Western half of London and the whole of North Surrey. This equates to 23 boroughs with a total population of 3 million plus. At any point in time the Trust estimates that 1500 children will need hospice care in the form of respite or palliative. Their intention is to be looking after 200 children and their families. To do this they estimate the cost will be 2.5 million pounds a year. The hospice has family units where the whole family can stay. They will also look after the children for a couple of hours so Mum or Dad can have a break to go to the hairdresser's etc.

If we all could look to donating £2 a month under the Gift Aid scheme that would mean the hospice would get £2.56 for every donation of £2.00

I am sure you will agree that their work is priceless. If anyone would like further information or would be interested in helping me at fund raising events please give me a call. If any groups in the church would like to have someone come along from the hospice to do a presentation to them, or would be interested in any of their events please let me know.

I shall be running a stall for them at the Wimbledon Village Fair on Saturday 18 June 2005.

*Sylvia Baxter.*

## **THANK YOU**

Many thanks to everyone who came to the Men's Supper Club annual service. The evening raised £140 which will be divided between the Adventure Scouts and the Baby Simba Project.

*Bill Cox*

## **REMEMBER!**

God doesn't call the qualified he qualifies the called

We don't change God's message - His message changes us

## CHURCH DIARY FOR MAY

Sun	1	10.30 am	All Age Worship led by Mr Paul Harvey
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Stuart Thomas
Mon	2	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	3	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	4	7.45 pm	Midways (Roy Ellis - Taxi!)
Thu	5	2-3 pm	Seekers' Group
		8.00 pm	Mission and Service Committee
Sat	7	10-12 pm	Midways Jumble Sale - for church funds
Sun	8	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	9	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	10	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	13	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sat	14	9-12 am	Big Brunch for Kenya
	15-22		Christian Aid Week
Sun	15	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	16	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	17	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club (Rev Bill Muncie of Croydon)
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	18	7.45 pm	Midways (Annual General Meeting)
Thu	19	2-3 pm	Seekers' Group
		8.00 pm	Church Council
Sat	21	7.30 pm	MPMC Concert for Church Funds
Sun	22	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Janet and Bob Hamblin
			Christian Aid Walk
Mon	23	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	24	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	27	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	29	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr David Eagle
Mon	30	2.45 pm	Fellowship