

MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear friends,

The days after the first Easter must have been extremely difficult for Jesus' followers and friends. The person whom they had loved had been cruelly and unjustly snatched away from them; the person whom they had followed and who had given their lives a sense of purpose and meaning and direction was no longer with them. Any certainties that they had ever known were surely torn from them when Jesus was nailed to a tree.

It is no wonder then that the Gospels paint a picture of the disciples grappling in the dark in confusion, bewilderment and fear. They did not understand what was happening to them. As they tried to make sense of the events that they had either witnessed or hidden from, they began searching for answers to questions like, 'Why has this happened?' and 'What does this mean?' In time, the resurrection appearances would help them to make some sense of these events – but not straight away and even then different friends and followers would respond to the risen Christ in different ways.

In our church services in the days and weeks after Easter, we focus on the resurrection appearances of Jesus. As we do so, we too try to make sense of the events of that first Easter; we look back over the death and resurrection of Jesus and ask the 'Why did this happen?' and 'What does it mean?' questions.

Of course, as we wrestle with these questions it is important that we look to see how others have answered them. It would be foolish to ignore the wisdom of previous generations. It would be arrogant not to listen to the voices of others – past or present. Having said that, in the end, we have to be able to own the answers we come up with and hold them with integrity. Our beliefs have to amount to more than what we have been told we *have* to believe or *need* to believe. It is essential then that the Church provide a place for honest and genuine searching. It is vital that we do not close down conversations with pat answers.

In what follows I will offer you a few of my reflections on the events of that first Easter. I do so hoping that this will help you and not hinder you. Please remember as you read on that I am not telling you what I think you ought to believe, rather I am being honest about what I believe and consequently cannot believe. I hope that me being honest will in some way give you permission to be honest too.

I believe in, and seek to follow, a profoundly human Jesus, a fully human Jesus. By that I do not mean that, whilst on this earth, he was a human being “warts and all” like us. Rather, I believe that Jesus shows those of us who have not yet got there – and that is all of us – what it means to be fully human. Jesus shows us what a life that is fully human looks like when it is fleshed out.

So, I believe that, first and foremost, Jesus lived for us. As a result, I cannot and do not believe that Jesus “came to die for us” – for me the claim that he did is a denial of his life and ministry – and I cannot make sense of Jesus’ death on the cross in terms of him being a sacrificial offering demanded by God, for whatever reason. Quite simply, such a god would, in my view, be a monster and less than, rather than more than, human. I could never believe in or worship such a god.

That said; I do believe both that we can speak of Jesus conquering evil on the cross and I do believe that we can proclaim that a great victory was won there.

Throughout his ministry Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God. This was a revolutionary message for it spoke of a time when the powerful would be brought down from their thrones and the lowly lifted up, it spoke of a time when the hungry would be filled with good things but the rich sent away empty.

Jesus knew that if he continued on the path that he was on – proclaiming this Kingdom – he would meet strong opposition and probably death. Since crucifixion was a standard form of death for failed revolutionaries, Jesus could have reasonably have expected such an end. This is the knowledge that Jesus is struggling with in the Garden of Gethsemane and this is what happens to him.

With all this in mind, I understand the message of the cross to be this: Jesus showed us how to live but people generally – and especially those

in power who had the most to lose – could not cope with him, with his love or with his message (and these are all inextricably linked). Finding Jesus and his message threatening, they do whatever it takes to shut him up and shut him out. They nail him to a tree.

The message of the resurrection, for me, becomes Jesus (and therefore God) saying, ‘You can try and push me away, shut me out and even kill me. But you will not win and I will continue to love you no matter what.’

In this way, I believe, evil was defeated – but not in a way that it would not exist again. Instead, here is a sign from God that says, ‘I’ve overcome evil once. I can and will do so again. Though evil persists, my resurrection life will ensure that love will ultimately triumph.’

As I said, I hope that me sharing my attempts to make sense of the events of that first Easter helps rather than hinders you in your searching. I repeat that I am not expecting you to believe the same things as me, rather I am encouraging you 1) to continue to think and talk about what it is that you believe and 2) to help to make the Church a place where others feel comfortable enough to do the same.

With every blessing

Paul

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WEDDING ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

March was a time of special celebration at Martin Way for Derek and Mary Heaton.

On Sunday 29th they celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary and invited friends and family to join with them as they renewed their Wedding Vows at the church.

We wish them many more years of happiness together.



EASTER OFFERING 2009

“The WAY”

What is the ‘Easter Offering’?
The envelope will be handed to

you or put on your chair/pew on Easter Sunday, but you may not look at the envelope very closely, even if you decide to put some money in it. It is not for, or instead of your usual giving to the church at Easter, but a special offering at his time. This information may help you to decide what should be put in (and maybe written on) the envelope



The **EASTER** OFFERING 2009
Way

Every year ‘Easter Offering’ envelopes are distributed in most Methodist churches, in Britain and Ireland, including all the churches in the Wimbledon circuit. Your giving, via these envelopes will support Mission Partners working in 61 countries overseas; the Mission in Britain Programme; Nationals in Mission Appointments and overseas students in ministry training. It also allows the Church to make grants to partner churches, Methodist women and to special projects. The collection is organised by Women’s Network and the Connexional Communications Team. Together they prepare a different service annually, to accompany the Easter Offering, if desired. The title of the service is printed on the envelopes and posters. In return Women’s Network receives 1% of the collection for training Methodist women.

Last, but not least, as usual if you contribute and pay Income/Capital Gains tax and would like the church to be able to reclaim tax from the Inland Revenue at no cost and no comeback to you whatsoever, there is a declaration to complete on the envelope, so that the church can receive 28 pence for every pound you give.

Valerie Smith

(District Network Rep.)

DAFFODIL DAY 2009

On Monday 2nd March Joyce Plant and Doreen Warren attended the annual Daffodil Day event at Methodist Central Hall Westminster. Both have written of their experiences of the day.

The next Daffodil Day is on March 1st 2010, book it in your diary now!



Doreen and I met at 10.30.am at Morden Tube and at Clapham Common we met my friend and Doreen's daughter met us outside the hall. We all purchased a daffodil emblem from one of the many sellers. We had a pleasant lunch in the cafeteria and then joined the assembled crowd already seated in the gallery. Community hymn singing, introduced by Rev Tony Miles, began at 1.30pm until 2.00pm.

Rev Martin Turner welcomed everyone and had a roll call of areas of attendance. On the platform were all the Central Hall staff and the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Cllr Louise Hyams who also gave a welcome.

The theme of the afternoon was “The Earth is the Lord's”, and there were various contributors, including;

- Polly Deal, who enacted two sketches written by her husband Steve.
- Revd David Bookless gave a reflection on A Rocha an environmental charity and how he became involved.
- A powerful tenor, Anando Mukerjee sang “Serenade” from the Student Prince and 'The Holy City'.
- Rev Steven Wild's talk introduced a frog puppet, Adam and Eve dolls and a cross at which we should stand at the foot.
- The Daffodil Day Ladies choir, who had been practising since noon sang 'O taste and See' by Vaughan Williams and Rutter's arrangement of 'All Things Bright and Beautiful'

The last address was entitled “And You are the Lord's” featured a mirror and was given by Rev Martin Turner. And finally the singing of

'Great is thy faithfulness', 'All creatures of our God and King', 'For the beauty of the earth' and 'O, Lord my God, When I in awesome wonder' by a packed Central Hall was the gloss on a very splendid afternoon.

Joyce Plant

Joyce Plant and I attended the annual Daffodil Day event at Methodist Central Hall Westminster. We travelled by tube train from Morden and met Joyce's friend Phil outside Clapham Common Station. We then proceeded by bus straight to Westminster. It was a beautiful, sunny day and arriving just before mid-day coaches were off-loading their passengers from many parts of southern England. It was a hive of activity. Then my daughter arrived from a nearby office to join us for lunch in the basement restaurant of the Central Hall. We had to queue for a short time as there were so many people. We found a table for four in a pleasant bright room and had a relaxing break before joining the throng beginning to gather in the Great Hall.

We took our seats in the gallery where we had a good view of the wonderful displays of fresh daffodils. (After the Service everyone was invited to take a few daffodils home if they wished). Also everyone was carrying "Marie Curie" daffodils which were on sale at the entrance to support a very worthy cause and added to the blaze of colour.

Following community hymn singing the main programme began at 2pm. when Methodist, civic and community guests, arrived to enjoy a lively service based around an environmental theme "The Earth is the Lord's". The Lord Mayor of Westminster brought her greetings – she was Cllr. Louse Hyams – and looked very young to be a "Lord Mayor". There were also powerful messages from various ministers including Rev. Steve Wild, who featured in "An Island Parish" on BBC television, and, of course, the Superintendent Minister of Central Hall Rev. Martin H. Turner. The Connexional President of Women's Network, Judith Simms also spoke.

There were prayers, poems, interviews and a professional tenor soloist sang "Serenade" from the Student Prince and "The Holy City".

The Choir sang Rutter’s version of “All things bright and beautiful” and the hymns all echoed the environmental theme and included “Great is Thy Faithfulness” and “For the Beauty of the Earth”.

Singing with a congregation of almost two thousand accompanied by a magnificent organ was an uplifting experience. I think all who were there will remember it for a long time.

The Rev. Martin Turner summed up the event with the words: “Wonderful singing, great fellowship, a tremendous day”.

Doreen Warren

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Times are Changing for Coffee and Chat

For some years people have met on Tuesdays for Coffee and Chat between 10 am and noon. Many popped in for a coffee before shopping.

Over the last couple of years this custom has changed and folk come for a refreshing cuppa after they have shopped.

We have therefore decided to change our opening hours a little and from after Easter (14 April) we will open at 10:30am, but will still run until 12 noon.



We hope this will bring in more customers. (Just don’t ask what John and I are going to do with the freedom of that extra half hour!)

Rosemary Keen

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COMIC RELIEF

At the last BIG BRUNCH there was a cake stall in aid of Comic Relief, which raised £71.40. Many thanks to those who made and/or bought the cakes.

Abby Herring



STOP THE TRAFFIK
PEOPLE SHOULDN'T BE BOUGHT & SOLD



Cadbury goes Traffik Free

STOP THE TRAFFIK campaigners around the world are waking up to the amazing news that by the end of summer 2009, Cadbury's Dairy Milk bars can be part of their diet again!

Cadbury announced today that Cadbury's Dairy Milk - their best known product, is to become Fairtrade by the end of summer 2009.

STOP THE TRAFFIK's founder Steve Chalke said, 'this is a very significant step in our campaign. We congratulate Cadbury on their commitment to justice and now look to their policy being adopted across their entire product range. Despite this huge success, STOP THE TRAFFIK's Chocolate Campaign marches on. We now call on Mars and other manufacturers to follow Cadbury and stop using cocoa produced by trafficking and exploitive forms of child labour.'

STOP THE TRAFFIK CEO, Ruth Dearnley added, 'Cadbury's decision demonstrates the power of ordinary consumers in bringing change and freedom. Two years ago, STOP THE TRAFFIK met with Cadbury and were told that a fairtrade Cadbury's bar was impossible and impractical. This is a victory for every person who has complained, campaigned and spread the message. But most of all, it is a victory for every child held in exploitative labour on West African cocoa farms. It is important to remember though that all exploited children will not be free until Mars, Nestle, Lindt, Hershey and all the others have put human rights before profit and make similar announcements.'

It has been known for a long time that thousands of children are being

trafficked onto cocoa plantations in the Ivory Coast and across West Africa to harvest cocoa we then eat as a tasty treat.

Even though the chocolate industry promised to remove all forms of exploitative child labour in 2001, little progress has been made. STOP THE TRAFFIK, a global movement against people trafficking, has been calling for individual companies to take responsibility for the chocolate they sell and asking for it to be traffik free.

Today STOP THE TRAFFIK campaigners around the world celebrate that in the summer 2009 there will be another traffik free chocolate bar.

Victoria Kuhr

STOP THE TRAFFIK Community Action and Resources Officer

STOP THE TRAFFIK.

75 Westminster Bridge Road

London SE1 7HS

phone: 020 7921 4252 fax: 020 7921 4201.

www.stophetraffik.org

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SPONSORED WALK



Now in its fourth year, the Walk for Skin 2009, is a series of eleven sponsored walks taking place throughout the country, chosen for their scenic appeal and accessibility to all, to help raise vital funds for



research into skin disease.

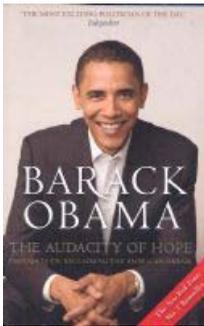
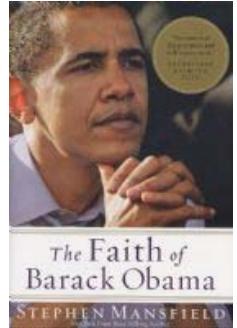
On Sunday 10th May, Karen, Jenny and Rebecca Smith will be doing the sponsored Walk For Skin (about 3 miles) in Kensington Gardens. This walk raises money for the British Skin Foundation and the Childhood Eczema Fund. Anybody who would like to sponsor them, please see Karen or Jenny or ring them on (020) 8542 0176.

BOOK REVIEWS from RE:FRESH BOOKS

The Faith of Barack Obama by Stephen Mansfield
164 pages, hardback, £13.99

Barack Obama, like his predecessor in the White House, professes a Christian faith resulting from a real conversion experience but his brand of faith-based politics is radically different from that of Bush.

Stephen Mansfield takes a balanced look at Obama. Written during the run-up to the Presidential election, *The Faith of Barack Obama*, explores the influences on Obama, including his atheistic mother, his Muslim stepfather (his black father and white mother divorced when he was two) and the controversial preacher Jeremiah Wright through whom he came to faith. It discusses Obama's pathway to the Presidential nomination against the background of his faith and his multi-racial parentage, and it contrasts his Christianity with that of George W Bush, John McCain and Hillary Clinton.



The Audacity of Hope by Barack Obama
375 pages paperback, £8.99

If you want it in Barack Obama's own words, his bestselling book *The Audacity of Hope* includes a chapter on faith. The title is borrowed from a sermon by Obama's friend and pastor Jeremiah Wright.

First published in the United States in 2006, *The Audacity of Hope* spells out Obama's vision for a new, less partisan, face to political and civic life in America.

The political and religious scene in America is different from our own and yet what happens there has a powerful impact on what happens worldwide. Barack Obama seems destined to be a major influence on both sides of the Atlantic for years to come.

Christians are called to pray for those in authority. These books can help us understand the new world order and so pray more intelligently for World Leaders.

Both of these books are available from re:fresh books & christian resources, 23 The Broadway, Tolworth, Surbiton KT6 7DJ

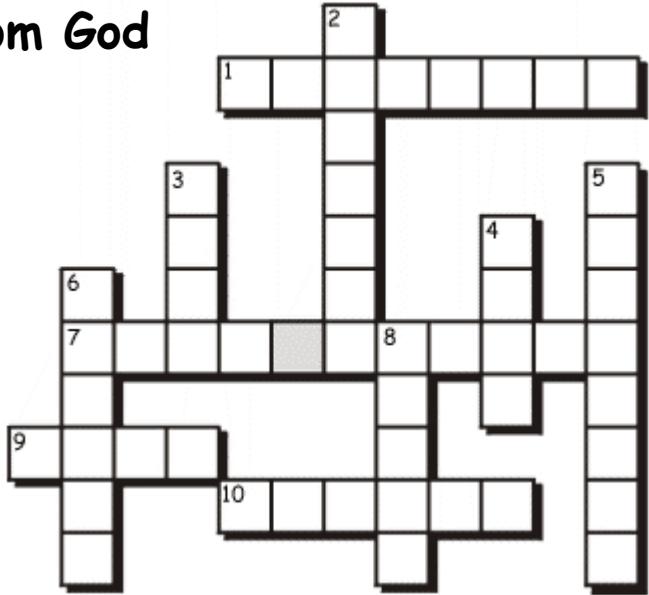
PUZZLE CORNER

The Gift from God

Acts 2:1- 47 (NIV)

The last time Jesus appeared to the disciples he told them to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the gift that God promised them.

That gift came on the day of Pentecost. Read about it in Acts 2:1-43 (NIV) and then complete the crossword puzzle.



Across:

1. Many miraculous signs and wonders were done by the _____. vs.43
7. All of they were filled with the _____ vs.4
9. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent _____ came from heaven. vs.2
10. Peter said that the people should _____ and be baptized. vs.38

Down:

2. They began to speak in other _____. vs.4
3. Peter said that the gift of the Holy Spirit was prophesied by the prophet _____. vs.16
4. They saw tongues of _____ come to rest on each apostle. vs.3
5. In response to Peter's words 3000 people accepted Jesus as their saviour and were _____. vs.41
6. Peter told the people that God had made Jesus both Lord and _____. vs.36
8. _____ got up and addressed the crowd. vs.14

EGG-STRA ORDINARY FACTS ABOUT EASTER

Apart from the cross, the humble egg is the most recognizable symbol of Easter.



Eggs have been associated with Easter for centuries, symbolizing fertility and new life. Hard-boiled and then dyed or decorated before being given as a gift is the traditional Easter egg, though chocolate eggs are now more common.

Here are 10 facts about Easter eggs which you might not have known:

1. Egyptians and Persians used to dye eggs in spring colours and give them to friends as a symbol of renewed life.
2. After being coloured and etched with various designs, eggs have also been exchanged by lovers and romantic admirers, much the same as Valentine's Day.
3. In Germany, eggs are dyed green on Maundy Thursday, while in Greece the traditional colour is red to represent the blood of Christ.
4. In Mexico children actually smash eggs over each other's heads! Fortunately, these eggs are filled with small pieces of paper rather than raw egg.
5. Egg rolling is supposed to symbolise the stone being rolled away from the tomb where Jesus was laid.
6. In medieval times eggs were traditionally given at Easter to the servants.
7. The tallest Easter egg was recorded in South Africa in 1996. It was 7.65 metres (25ft) tall and weighed 4,068 kilos. The marshmallow and chocolate egg was supported by an internal steel frame.
8. The largest Easter egg hunt took place in Australia in 1999 when 150,000 chocolate eggs were hidden by troops and found by 3,000 children.
9. The first chocolate Easter eggs were made in Europe in the early 19th century, with France and Germany leading the way.
10. About 80 million Easter eggs were eaten in the UK last year, as well as almost 500 million cream eggs.

**A LETTER FROM
MARGARET ADAMS**



WIMBLEDON CIRCUIT SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Friends,

As I write this there is still a great white blanket of snow covering my garden. Underneath this I noticed last week that there are lots of little shoots coming through the earth, hope of what's to come when the beauty of the flower will be revealed.

As Christians we are reminded of the hope that we have in Jesus. We particularly remember this at Easter as we celebrate the resurrection and the hope that offers us. May we share that love and hope we have with all those with whom we come into contact so that they too may have the joy of knowing God.

Circuit Stewards

Each year the Circuit Meeting is required to appoint Circuit Stewards. As you are aware David Mortimer, Tony Leech and Pat Rock are our current Stewards. At the Circuit meeting held on Tuesday Tony Leech and Pat Rock were re-elected.

David, our Senior Circuit Steward, having been a Circuit Steward for the past four years, will stand down on the 31st August – we thank him for all his hard work over the years. However, this means we have a vacancy for a Circuit Steward. A number of people have been asked to consider this position but all have declined.

Please prayerfully consider whether this is a role that you or someone within your church could take on. David would be pleased to talk to any one who would like to know more about the role of a Circuit Steward.

If you are interested or have a name to put forward, please contact me.

With my love and prayers

Margaret
Tel – 020 8393 2322

CHURCH DIARY



Weds 1	7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>South Africa</i> - Pauline Riley
Fri 3	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun 5	10.30 am	Palm Sunday Service led by David Somers
	6.30pm	Holy Communion led by Rev Paul Timmis
Mon 6	8.00 pm	Evening Meditation for Easter
Tue 7	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
	8.00 pm	Evening Meditation for Easter
Weds 8	8.00 pm	Evening Meditation for Easter
Thurs 9	8.00 pm	Maundy Thursday Joint Service
Fri 10	10.00 am	Good Friday United Service at
		Morden Baptist Church
	2.00 pm (approx)	Ramble - <i>full details will be in the Notices</i>
Sun 12	6.00 am	Sunrise Communion on Cannon Hill Common followed by Breakfast at Martin Way at 7.15am
	10.30 am	Easter Day and Holy Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue 14		Spring Harvest (to 19th April)
	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat (<i>Please note the new time!</i>)
	8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds 15	7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>Speaker to be arranged</i>
Fri 17	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun 19	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Valerie Ashcroft
Tue 21	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat (<i>Please note the new time!</i>)
	7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Gwen Edwards</i> - St John's Ambulance Brigade

	8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun 26	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by David Eagle
	6.30 pm	Bible study led by Rev Faith Nyota
Tue 28	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat (<i>Please note the new time!</i>)
	8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds 29	7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>Speaker to be arranged</i>
		<i>Please refer to the Website (www.martinway.org.uk)</i> <i>or Weekly Notice Sheet for any additional information</i>

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We wish all of those who celebrate a birthday
in April a very

Happy Birthday
and especially to:

Celia Johnson on 4th April

Rosie Randall on 10th April

Kim Nyota on 16th April

Phoebe Pallister on 29th April

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**PUZZLE
CORNER
ANSWERS**

Solution to the
Puzzle from last
month's Newsletter

A short distance away - YONDER,
The distance anything extends - LENGTH,
Speak loudly - ALOUD,
Damascus, capital of - SYRIA,
.... Of iniquity - MYSTERY,
into Abraham's - BOSOM,
...., fork and spoon - KNIFE

The bible Verse

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light
(Matt.11:30)



Can YOU help?

**The Christian CARE Association
is looking for volunteers.**

1. BEFRIENDERS' COORDINATOR

- to recruit befrienders and match them with families
- to support them and organise training

2. LEADER[S] FOR TEENAGE WORK

- to organise 4 Saturday outings a year
- to run the Wednesday Club once a month

3. CAMPS ORGANISER

- to make the arrangements for the 12 young people going to Falcon Camps at Sevenoaks each summer

For further information contact:

Bert Hyde, Chairman, Christian Care Association

St Barnabas Community Centre, Thirsk Road

Mitcham, Surrey. CR4 2BD

Phone: 0203 044 0093 Email: christiancaremerton@gmail.com

Items for the **May Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox,
(email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 19th April** at the latest