

MINISTER'S LETTER



On my return from holiday and Greenbelt, not only was there a pile of post waiting for me, there was also an e-mail inbox full to bursting. I don't know about you but, when faced with such mountains of post and e-mails, I tend to skim through looking for attractive or appealing items first, putting off the others for a little while longer. So it was that one of the first e-mails that I opened this week was one from Mike Mortley, headed as it was "Inclusiveness". Believing passionately that the church should be a place where all are welcomed, this was an e-mail that was always going to grab my attention.

The e-mail itself was brief - an invitation to click on a link to a 'Stuff Christians Like' blog entry entitled 'How to welcome people to your church' and the suggestion that we should discuss it. On following the link I too found the content to be worth sharing. The writer, Jon Acuff posed the question as to what a great welcome message on a church noticeboard or weekly notice sheet might look like, and then answered the question by sharing the welcome notice that the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Community, Daytona Beach, Florida, uses.

Here's what it says:

We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, gay, filthy rich, dirt poor, yo no habla Ingles. We extend a special welcome to those who are crying new-borns, skinny as a rail or could afford to lose a few pounds.*

We welcome you if you can sing like Andrea Bocelli or like our pastor who can't carry a note in a bucket. You're welcome here if you're "just browsing," just woke up or just got out of jail. We don't care if you're more Catholic than the Pope, or haven't been in church since little Joey's Baptism.

*We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet, and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome soccer moms, NASCAR** dads, starving*

artists, tree-huggers, latte-sippers, vegetarians, junk-food eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems or you're down in the dumps or if you don't like "organized religion," we've been there too.

If you blew all your offering money at the dog track, you're welcome here. We offer a special welcome to those who think the earth is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or because grandma is in town and wanted to go to church.

We welcome those who are inked, pierced or both. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down your throat as a kid or got lost in traffic and wound up here by mistake. We welcome tourists, seekers and doubters, bleeding hearts ... and you!

Given that what we say on a noticeboard has to be backed up in practice, I'd be interested to hear what people think about this. What is there here that you'd embrace and want to say, 'Yes' to? What makes you feel uncomfortable or uneasy?

I'd also like to set you a challenge - to have a go at writing a similar welcome notice for our context. Not only might such an exercise help us to shape something of our own to use and live by, it might also challenge each and every one of us to think more deeply about the nature of the hospitality that God-in-Jesus calls us to offer and the limitations that we sometimes place upon it because of our own beliefs and prejudices.

With every blessing,

Paul

* I don't speak English (Spanish)

***National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing*

The full blog entry can be found here:

<http://www.jonacuff.com/stuffchristianslike/2012/07/how-to-welcome-people-to-your-church/>

Thank You Joyce...

For the past 6 years Joyce Plant has been tireless in her capacity as a Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) Representative for Martin Way. Although many of us had occasionally heard that there were people imprisoned for their faith, we had not always taken these stories seriously or maybe we denied that our fellow brothers and sisters in other parts of the world were suffering, being tortured and even killed for their faith. Joyce did indeed mobilise us and the church to live out the scriptural mandate to “continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering” (Hebrews 13:3).



Unfortunately Joyce has decided to step down from this role and pass on the baton to me and of course it is a privilege. But what a hard act to follow! I take this opportunity to thank Joyce for her dedication and passion to this cause, keeping us updated with regular prayer requests and making us more aware of the issues. Until recently she has been giving of her time and her technical skills as a volunteer in the CSW office and I know that, as a novice volunteer there myself; the staff still hold her in the highest regard and are appreciative of her commitment and dedication. Imprinted on my memory is the day I first went into the office to find Joyce in her little office confidently sitting at the computer and being part of this huge worldwide network which is CSW. It is obvious that I have a long way to go but I thank Joyce for her example and the way that she has inspired me to believe that, as Christians, we never retire nor are we ever redundant in the work which God has called us to.

Being a CSW Rep is about helping others to be a voice for the voiceless, stir others into prayer and action for persecuted believers and others who face injustices because of their faith. Reps keep the church informed about the issues and help get people involved via regular updates, prayer requests and practical action including writing to persecuted believers. Reps help by:

Showing solidarity – encouraging small groups to use Connect and

Encourage address book to write cards of encouragement.
Mobilising activists – collecting signatures for campaign petitions to MPs/MEPs.

Raising prayer – bringing prayer needs to the church.

Spreading the word – getting a CSW speaker along to a church meeting/small group.

Being an ambassador for CSW – publicising CSW to church members and wider networks.

Providing for CSW's work – organising small events to raise funds.

Joyce has been doing all of this and more - admirably. Whilst I will be distributing the Connect and Encourage address book and the bi-monthly Response newsletters from now on, I know that in her heart Joyce will pray fully continue to be very much a part of CSW.

Gwen Wildman

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An Art Exhibition for local artists to exhibit (and sell) their work to the public is being held at Raynes Park Methodist Church. An annual event open for one week from 15th - 22nd September (excluding Sunday 16th) from 10.30am until 4.30 pm each day, with two late nights on Tuesday and Thursday until 7.30pm.

This year we have the comedian, Tim Vine, officially opening the Exhibition on Saturday 15th at 11.00 am.

The event is FREE to the public and items exhibited are usually of a mixed/high standard with some items of exceptional quality.

MEDAL 2012

Wimbledon Methodist Church



M – METHODISTS
E – ENABLING
D – DISCIPLES
A – AS
L – LEADERS

For Further Information

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Wimbledon Methodist Church,
Griffiths Road,
Wimbledon,
SW19 1SP

Day Conference: 27th October 2012, 10am-4pm

The leadership provided by lay people is a vital part of the Methodist story from its very beginnings. Our discipleship has been, and in some places still is, sustained and inspired by the Methodist class – the small groups with lay people as leaders nurturing others.

MEDAL 2012 is inspired by the vision of the church in *Ephesians 4:12* *The gifts God gave ... are to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.*

This one day conference provides an opportunity to experience and challenge ideas for lay leadership. It acts as a follow-up to the district wide weekend in February 2012 on encouraging new leadership from within the church.

Keep this date free as an opportunity to be part of the lay leadership experience.

The Afternoon House group

Recently the house group have been discussing 'Still waters' and exploring the amazing statements about the love and care of our Shepherd made by David in his 23rd Psalm. At our last meeting we looked at the psalm from different translations of the Bible ranging from the sailor's, the astronauts, the scouse's and the pacemakers' versions. Here are two of them:

Sailor's paraphrase of the 23rd Psalm

The Lord is my pilot, I shall not drift.
He guides me across the dark waters.
He steers me through deep channels.
He keeps my log.
Yea, though I sail 'mid the thunders
and tempest of life,
I shall dread no anger, for He is with me;
His love and His care, shelter me.
He prepares a quiet harbour before me.
He anoints the waves with oil
My ship rides calmly.
Surely sunlight and starlight
shall guide me on the voyage I take,
And I will rest in the heaven's port forever.

Psalm 23 for computer people

The Lord is my Programmer, I shall not crash.
He installed His software on the hard disk of my heart.
All of His commands are user friendly.
His Directory guides me to the right choices for His name's sake.
Even though I scroll through the problems of life, I will fear no bugs, for
He is my backup.
His password protects me.
He prepares a menu before me in the presence of my enemies.
His help is only a keystroke away.
Surely goodness and mercy will follow me, all the days of my life.
And my file will be merged with His and SAVED FOREVER!
Author Unknown.

Moira Bailey

A Wedding in Warsaw

Thursday, 2nd August this year found Derek and I up at 3am, ready to fly to Warsaw, in Poland for the wedding of Adriana and Andrew (our Newsletter editor) the next day. We had been invited, not only as friends, but also to represent Andrew's deceased parents as well as representing our Church Family at Martin Way, so we felt very honoured to have been asked to attend in this capacity.

Andrew had kindly made all the flight arrangements for us including disabled assistance at both Heathrow and Warsaw airports for the journeys which helped immensely. We were lucky on the approach as we were able to look out of the window as we flew over the big river and massive forest areas. As our wheelchairs were pushed through the Warsaw immigration area, we saw Adriana's and Andrew's smiling faces welcoming us to Poland. It was then a short bus ride to the Boutique Bed & Breakfast, where we and the other nine guests were staying for the 4 day duration of celebrations. This turned out to be a very modern small hotel with historic furniture in most of the rooms including a Grand Piano where concerts of Chopin's music are regularly held.

We just about had time to unpack before walking to a little Polish café with Adriana and her Mother where we sampled delicious crisp potato pancakes covered in a creamy mushroom sauce. By this time Andrew had been back to the airport to collect his German Best Men, Oliver and his partner Insa. As we returned back to the Boutique we decided to have a rest in the airy Courtyard where we found ourselves in the delightful company of this charming couple. Straight away we struck up a friendship and when Andrew appeared on the scene to escort us all to the evening's meal, he found there was no need to introduce the four of us to each other! By now the rest of the guests were all assembled in Adriana and Andrew's suite for the pre-meal cool drinks – it was 90° (32° C) plus with very high humidity and stayed that way for our whole visit!



Having already met Adriana's Mother earlier, we were now introduced to Andrew's cousin, Fran and her Scottish husband, Andy. We were then surprised to learn that the Polish Bridesmaid, Arleta, came from Mitcham and worked in Morden library, and her boyfriend, Francisco was from Madrid in Spain.

We then moved on to have a fantastic meal in an Egyptian decorated Restaurant called The Sphinx, where we were able to get to know



everyone and had lots of photos taken. We all walked back to the Boutique very slowly, still in the excessive heat and as the younger ones in the group chatted on into the early hours, we bade our farewells and headed for bed around 11pm. Sadly Adriana's Aunt Maryla and her son Tomasz only arrived very late from

Gdansk and consequently missed our meal together.

The next morning, Friday, the Wedding Day, found the group completed sitting by 9am along the huge breakfast table seating over twenty folk of

all nationalities. This small friendly B&B believed in ecological values, serving organic breakfasts with no MSG, segregating waste, conserving the environment and saving energy. The comprehensive breakfast consisted of freshly cooked compote (a Polish fruit juice obtained by cooking fruit), juices, coffee, fruit and herbal teas, together with boiled eggs, platters of cheeses, hams, a whole cauliflower, dishes of salad in mayonnaise, cereals, fresh bread and rolls, etc.



The Wedding Day had dawned bright, sunny and hot and we all met at



1pm to be whisked off to the venue at the Pałac Ślubów (the Palace of Weddings) in a luxury mini coach. On arrival, the official photographer started snapping away informally at every opportunity. There was just enough time for us to stroll across the cobbled street for some refreshing

cold drinks before the Bride and Groom arrived in a black, shiny Mercedes car. On arriving, Adriana caught sight of Andrew's cousins husband Andy in full Highland Regalia, which had been kept a closely guarded secret, which resulted in tears of happiness. He was nearly passing out in the excessive heat with his long woollen socks, waistcoat, long sleeved shirt, sporran, kilt etc.



We all entered the Pałac Ślubów going upstairs to a palatial pre-ceremony room overlooking the Vistula

River. In due course, after many more photos we were ushered into the main room where the violin was being played alongside the keyboard. The officiator looked very distinguished and smart wearing golden chains of office. Our couple looked absolutely splendid and more than a few tears of happiness were shed by folk at this time. As we sat in rows of scarlet chairs, an interpreter deciphered everything that was being said and promised which made the ceremony more meaningful for everyone present.

After the ceremony and more official photos we all walked across the plac Zamkowy (the Castle Square) passing many horse drawn carriages and posed for group photos at the base of the column of King Zygmunt III



Waza before arriving at the Delicja Polska restaurant. We went downstairs to a beautifully decorated room with many mirrors and flowers everywhere. There was a delicious and varied menu in both English and Polish and we were fortunate to have half hourly intervals between many courses. This gave us time to stretch our legs, chat to the folk

and enjoy the room which was used during the WWII by the family who owned the building. During the speeches Arleta translated for the Polish folk and then it was Derek's turn to say a few sincere words of thanks, first in Welsh (thanks to Gwen Wildman's help) and



then in Polish (courtesy of a Polish waitress in our Morden restaurant). After the speeches amidst all the confetti throwing the wedding cake was wheeled in complete with a shooting firework to top it! A fleet of taxis then took all the guests back to the Boutique B&B, all tired but very contented after seeing our couple so happy. The young ones, after changing, then went back to the Old Town to continue celebrating.

Saturday morning we were up at 7am

for another substantial breakfast where the owner of the Boutique surprised everyone with bottles of champagne to toast the newly married couple. Seven of us were then ready to be picked up at 10am by a mini tour bus as arranged by Andrew and Adriana to see the sights of Warsaw. At least at this hour had not yet built up to the high temperatures of the proceeding days. The tour started with a visit to the Belweder - the Home of the President complete with a soldier guarding the front entrance. This building then led on to a statue of Marshal Józef Klemens Piłsudski - the



leader of Poland between the wars. We then strolled through the Park Łazienkowski - first of all seeing a very unusual statue for Chopin in an area of formal gardens where they hold weekend concerts in the open air. It was there we got our first view, and try, of one of the musical benches that had been set up around the city to commemorate Chopin. A chance to sit and listen to his music by

pressing a button built into the marble seat. We were then led through a cool wooded area teeming with red squirrels who allowed close-up photos to be taken as they came looking for nutty treats! We progressed to the Water Palace crossing a bridge with ducks swimming below us before arriving at a small Grecian amphitheatre with peacocks sunning themselves amidst the columns. Our group then walked alongside the lake where giant carp were breaking the surface before crossing another bridge where our tour bus was waiting to collect us after about 1½ hours from dropping us off. We were then driven past many churches and large buildings finishing up in a Jewish area. We walked past the one huge remaining ghetto building in very bad repair and by this time the sun was blazing down on us. We then continued to





the only remaining Jewish synagogue in the city whereas prior to the war there had been over 200. This one had survived the war but the Jewish Star of David and the Torah quotation had been removed at the time so it could be used as a warehouse. These have now been reinstated and the building is

now an active Synagogue for the remaining Jews in Warsaw. A short trip on the mini bus took us to the surviving part of the ghetto wall where we saw Jewish folk dressed as they would have been during the war period including a young girl dressed in a shawl telling her story of ghetto life and selling Jewish bread (some of which Insa bought for our group to try). Once again we boarded our transport to be taken to the Old Town and visited the church accommodating floor to ceiling listing of names of the Polish folk who died during the Katyn massacre (mass execution of Polish officers and intelligentsia by the Soviet secret police in 1940). We then crossed the road to see the massive figures

commemorating the Warsaw Uprising during WWII. Around 2pm we were dropped off by the mini bus ready for a final tour around the Old City walls which Derek and I realised it's going to be too much for us. So we found some seats where after a short while we were joined by Adriana and her Mother where



we learned that Tomasz and his Mother had already left for their drive home. After nearly an hour the remainder of the group joined us where we all said our “thank-yous and good byes” to our tour guide for such an interesting although extended tour of Warsaw.

All eleven of us then found a lovely pavement restaurant where we sat

in scorching sunshine under a massive umbrellaed area for cooling drinks and a bite to eat. After this we got a taxi back as Derek and I were shattered and we knew we had a final meal coming us with everyone in the evening. We really did appreciate another siesta before doing a bit of



packing. Later on that evening all our group were walking to the Old Town past all the paved cafés and restaurants serving food outside but, being Saturday night, we couldn't find one large enough to accommodate such a number as ours. Eventually Derek and I together with Andrew, Adriana and Arleta took a taxi to the

Old Town Square while the rest did the journey on foot. It was there Adriana and Arleta magically found a Polish restaurant with an inside table big enough for us all. We then enjoyed our last Polish meal before - yes you guessed it - we took a taxi back to the Boutique. The streets and Square atmosphere were wonderful with lots and lots of people enjoying themselves late into the night as did the remainder of our group after we left them.



Sunday morning found us yet again facing a vast breakfast. Shortly after we said goodbye to Arleta and Francisco as they were catching an early train to take them for a further week's holiday in the mountainous area of Poland.

We then sat for the last time (as we had done on the first day there) with Oliver and Insa in the courtyard before saying our thanks and farewells at around 1pm to Andrew, Adriana and her Mother who then embarked on a

3-hour train journey back to where she lived where they were staying on for another week. But before they left Adriana and Andrew presented everyone with a set of Warsaw Coasters as a memento of our wonderful time there.

As Fran and Andy from Scotland were staying on for a few extra days in Warsaw, they returned from a walk to say a final good bye to us and Oliver and Insa before we left for the airport. Insa promised to send us some snaps and true to her word 5 days after our return to England her lovely package arrived through our letter box - the rest is history as most of the Church family will have by now seen the lovely pictures it contained. At 2pm we then shared a taxi back to the airport with her and Oliver ready for our homeward flights. Once again they were so kind and attentive to us as they had been throughout the whole four days this time insisting on helping us with our luggage before our wheelchairs arrived and then staying with us until we were pushed through our boarding gate. They then took off for their flight back to Germany.

As we entered British airspace our pilot announced over Maidenhead that we would see first the dome then the Olympic Village and stadium all brightly lit up and finally over flying the Olympic rings cut in the grass of Richmond Park which made a fitting end to our journey.



Finally, to the new Mr and Mrs Fox we thank you both for a wonderful long weekend. As you know we felt honoured to be representing your dear Father and Mother, Andrew. We are sure they would be very proud of you and love Adriana as much as we do. You make a splendid couple and it only remains for us to wish you both health and happiness in your future life together.

God bless always.
Mary and Derek Heaton

And a Grateful Thanks

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to every one in the church for all the wishes passed on to us for our big day.

And a very special thank you to Mary and Derek for not only being there with us and representing the Church Family, but also for writing such a full account of their time in Warsaw, so allowing us to share our wonderful memories of that time in the Newsletter.

Adriana and Andrew Fox

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Operation Christmas Child

Knitted Purse

Pattern

You will need:

Oddments of double knitting wool
in 3 colours.

Needle size: 3.5 mm (UK 9)
and 6mm (UK 4)

Button



Using 3.5 mm needles and 1st colour, cast on 16 sts.

Knit 2 rows in garter stitch. (Every row knit)

Next row: (Make button hole) K7, cast off 2 sts, knit to end.

Next row: K7, cast on 2 sts, knit to end.

Work 6 more rows in garter st. Break off wool.

Change to 6 mm needles and join in other two colors together, knitting with double thickness.

Knit 28 rows in garter st. Break off wool.

Change back to 3.5 mm needles and join in 1st colour again. Knit 10 rows in garter stitch. Cast off.

Fold work in half and stitch up side seams. Sew on a button opposite button hole.



Richard Herring's random act of kindness

When comedian and writer Richard Herring came across a fundraising page from another Richard Herring, he decided to share the page with his 97,000 Twitter followers. He tweeted “This isn’t me, but wouldn’t it be cool if you pretended it was and all sponsored him anyway? Go on.”



Less than 24 hours later, over 370 kind strangers had taken Richard’s fundraising total to over £2,600. (It now stands at over £3,000!)

Richard, who is trekking to Machu Picchu to raise money for **Sense**, was greeted by hundreds of messages from tweeters, all wishing him luck. Here’s what Richard had to say about the sudden surge to his fundraising. “I’m absolutely overwhelmed by people’s generosity, a massive thank you to the other Richard Herring and his followers.”

Comedian Richard is no stranger to fundraising himself. Richard has raised over £160,000 for great causes in the last few years. Taking to his blog, Richard tells us how a joke on Twitter turned into thousands of pounds for charity.

It just goes to show that generosity is infectious – and by sharing someone’s page on Twitter or Facebook, you can really help them to raise even more for their cause.

Richard is trekking as part of a team. His team mates (Abby Herring, Anne Conquest and Rachael Conquest) have also seen a few donations from generous tweeters, despite not having a famous comedian as their namesake.



If you want to add your donation then please visit the teams’ page on the justgiving website at www.justgiving.com/teams/Machu-Picchu-Trek.

Sense is the UK's largest organisation offering support to deafblind people and their families. Established in 1955 as a parent's support group, Sense now offers a range of services - including, advice, housing, education and practical help to children and adults who are both deaf and blind.

Abby Herring

“Shoot them, and we will let you live!”

Taken from: Extreme devotion, the voice of the martyrs from the co-authors of Jesus freaks. Serious followers of Jesus pay a price, and extreme followers often pay the ultimate price. Each story is true.

The pastor had struck a deal with the Communists in the Chinese prison where they were being held. But the two Christian girls standing before him were resolved not to renounce their faith. A fellow prisoner who watched the terrible scene described their faces as pale but beautiful beyond belief—infinitely sad, but sweet. They were determined to face death rather than turn their backs on Christ.

The pastor reasoned, “Why should we all three die? If I kill you and they let me live, then I can continue to work among the churches.”

The girls spoke to him softly, “Before you shoot us, we want to thank you for all you have meant to us. You led us to Christ, baptised us, and gave us Holy Communion. May God reward you for all the good you have done. You also taught us that Christians are sometimes weak and commit terrible sins, but they can be forgiven again. When you regret what you are about to do to us, don’t despair like Judas but repent like Peter. And remember that our last thoughts of you are not of hatred and anger, but of love and forgiveness. We all pass through times of darkness. We die gladly.”

But the pastor’s heart was already hardened, and he shot them. Immediately afterward, the Communists shot him.

People who are faced with the prospect of a sudden death may find their thoughts turning to friends and family or to unfulfilled dreams. Some recall their lives “flash before their eyes.” This total recall, however, is likely interrupted for those who fall victim to the ultimate betrayal—being murdered by someone they considered a friend. Anger, bitterness, and hatred for the supposed would all seem justifiable. Would forgiveness factor in it at all? As Christians, we must choose to extend forgiveness in every circumstance, even those involving life and death. Like the girls in this story, your reaction to betrayal preaches an effective sermon. How might your choosing to forgive point the way to Jesus for someone you know?

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32

CHURCH DIARY



Sun	2	10.30am	All Age Worship led by Rev Paul Timmis
		12 noon-1pm	Church Council Meeting
Tue	4	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	7	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	9	10.30am	Morning Service led by Mark Williamson
		6.30pm	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	11	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	12	7.00pm	Circuit Meeting at Raynes Park Church
Thurs	13	8.00pm	Leadership Meeting
Sun	16	10.30am	Morning Service led by Valerie Ashcroft
Tue	18	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Rupert Cutler</i> - RNLi (including goods for sale)
		8.00pm	Time for Prayer
		8.00pm	F&P Committee Meeting
Fri	21	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	23	10.30am	Morning Service led by Rev Margaret Adams
Tue	25	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00pm	Church Council Meeting
Sun	30	10.30am	Harvest Festival and Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
		12.30pm	Harvest Lunch (for more details and tickets please speak to Lesley Mortley or Anne Conquest)

Please refer to the Website (www.martinway.org.uk) or Weekly Notice Sheet for any additional information



We wish all of those who celebrate a birthday this month a very

Happy Birthday

and especially to:

Abigail Fuwa on 15th September

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**Notice of Extraordinary Church Council Meeting
2nd September 2012**

To all members of the Church Council.

Please note that an extraordinary meeting of the Church Council has been called for Sunday, 2nd September 2012. The meeting will take place in the Parlour after the morning service.

The only item on the agenda is to discuss the proposal that we invite Christian Care to set up their office on our premises at Martin Way. The full proposal will be circulated to members prior to the meeting.

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RECYCLING

We are attempting to improve our “green” credentials and a box has been placed in the kitchen for the recycling of cardboard, paper and clean glass, cans and plastic. We have been recycling food waste for some time now via the brown containers.

Unfortunately Merton currently doesn't collect recycled food from us, so it has been down to individuals to take it home to add to their domestic recycling bins. Please remember that no-one will be offended if the urge falls upon you to do the same.



CHRISTIAN
SOLIDARITY
WORLDWIDE
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS



Burma: how can a country be free if its army is free to slaughter its civilians?

“About a month ago my mum was shot dead by the Burma Army troops. She was shot three times in the knee and the chest.”

A twelve-year-old boy, Harry (not his real name), lost his mum when the soldiers came to his village. Her only ‘crime’ was belonging to the Kachin ethnic group – most of whom are Christian.

In the past year, Burma has been taking its first steps towards freedom after decades of oppression. But government troops are still rampaging through parts of the country, torturing, raping and killing ethnic civilians. This is unacceptable. The army generals who dominate Burma’s government are trying to tell the world that they’re making the nation more open and progressive. But how can a country be free when its army keeps murdering civilians?

In order to help Harry and the thousands of others who have suffered like he has, we need people to write to Burma’s President. He needs to be told that although the reforms so far are a good first step, while the Burma Army continues to kill people from the ethnic groups, like Harry’s mother, there’s still a very long way to go.

Visit the CSW website and use their online petition to send your own message to Burma’s President, Thein Sein. Or write to your MP, asking them to urge the British Government to push the EU to impose important benchmarks for reform in Burma.

*To find out more about this story or CSW visit their website at
www.csw.org.uk/home*

Items for the **October Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox,
(email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 16th September** at the latest