

# MARTIN WAY METHODIST CHURCH

Newsletter – July / August 2002

Minister: The Revd Anne Rusbridge

Dear friends,

One of my favourite hymns is "I am a new creation, no more in condemnation, here in the grace of God I stand". On Thursday evenings a small group of us meet for the LIFE Bible Course. To come right back to basics and reflect on the meaning of being a Christian, to think afresh about what God has done for me through the life and death of Jesus is extremely uplifting. It is so easy to get caught up in all the practical busyness of our Christian lives that we don't always take enough time to praise God. To do a course like this is to re-focus, to get our priorities right, and to be overwhelmed again by the fact that when we go wrong, God doesn't just repair the damage, but re-creates us, so that we are completely new.

Recently Michael and I visited Furzey Gardens in the New Forest. It's a wonderful natural woodland garden, and as we were walking round we came across a wooden cross carved with the following words: "The cross is the Christian symbol of God's love for all mankind. The beauty of these gardens and the surrounding countryside is a reflection of God's love and mans creative co-operation with God. May God who created you and this place draw you to himself."

The summer is a good time to re-establish patterns of prayer and finding time to relax in the presence of God. There are fewer meetings to attend and for many people there is an opportunity for a holiday or a break from work. I pray that during these summer months you will have plenty of opportunities to relax, to reflect on God's love for you, and to praise God for the beauty of the world in which we live.

Don't forget that on Saturday 31st August you are invited to come to the manse for tea, an opportunity for us to relax together at the beginning of a new church year.

With every blessing,

Anne

## **CIRCUIT NEWS**

**Saturday 20 July 7pm** : Farewell Service for Rev Rodney Hill: at Raynes Park Methodist Church: Rodney leaves us this summer to take up an appointment as superintendent minister in Sheffield. The farewell service will be one of Holy Communion and there will be involvement from the New Creations project and Lantern Arts Centre - so it promises to be a colourful event. There will be time for refreshments and a social afterwards.

**Sunday 28 July 6.30pm** : "Farewell to Upper Tooting" and to Rev Jenny Impey. Upper Tooting has contributed enormously to the life of our circuit. We have rejoiced in the cultural variety of their church and celebrated with them that they have been a growing church in recent years. Jenny is moving to Hind Street Methodist Church in Maidenhead where she will be replacing Rev John Swarbrick who has been appointed our new Chairman of District. Upper Tooting's move means we also lose our Circuit Treasurer Kojo Amoah-Arko. The Circuit Meeting has appointed Pat Rock as Circuit Treasurer from September 2002. Please remember her in your prayers as she undertakes this important task.

## **DISTRICT NEWS**

Thursday 22 August: induction of new chairman, Rev John Swarbrick at Guildford Cathedral.

## **QUOTE - UNQUOTE 1**

According to Jesus, by far the most important thing about praying is to keep at it. Be importunate, Jesus says - not one assumes, because you have to beat a path to God's door before he'll open it, but because until you beat the path maybe there's no way of getting to your door.

Frederick Buechner

## **OVERSEAS MISSIONS WEEKEND**

We were very grateful to all of you, including many friends from neighbouring churches, who supported our Cream Tea event on Saturday 15 June. Our Sunday guest speaker, Alan Cramer, was there and brought wood carvings and photos illustrating some of his experiences whilst working in Southern India.

Joan Baker was in charge of the raffle and the yummy cake stall was looked after by Joan Harding. She had also made the lovely cake for "Guess the Weight" (in the charge of Jennifer Smith who also asked us to guess the number of sweets in the jar). Jennifer's brother James controlled the Roll-a-Ball, watched over by Karen. If you needed a more restful occupation Bill Cox had his books, or if you were feeling energetic Mary had many plants for sale. We were able to enjoy sitting on the patio

eating a delicious strawberry cream tea prepared by Sylvia Baxter and Pauline Riley. It was lovely sitting around chatting with one another.

Sunday saw our minister Anne leading our service with Alan Cramer as guest speaker. The three Bible readings all related to Alan's many years of mission work in Mysore.

Very many thanks to you all for the hard work and donations of cakes etc. on the Saturday and for the gifts of money etc. All together £181 was raised which will be sent to help patients at the Mysore hospital.

Derek Heaton - Overseas Missions Representative.

## **CHURCH COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS**

At the meeting of Church Council on 23 May Gwen Edwards and Dennis Clark were appointed and welcomed as Church Stewards. They join Brenda Cannon (Senior Steward), Gwen Wildman, Moira Bailey and Peter Randall.

Three new members of Church Council were elected:- Anne-Marie Pallister, Fred Handy and Tony Loft. They join Anne Conquest, Tim Johnson, Joyce Plant, Derek Heaton and Bob and Janet Hamblin.

## **EFFECTIVE PRAYER CONFERENCE**

This Conference was held at Central Hall Westminster on 11th May and I went with a group from Upper Tooting church and their minister, Jenny Impey. Tea and coffee and soft drinks were served in the library when we arrived.

A large audience of men and women of all ages assembled in the lecture hall at 10.30 for a lively worship session This was followed by Alan Poole on approaches to prayer, which was sometimes interspersed and sometimes accompanied by music played on various wind instruments by Simeon Wood - very thought provoking and inspiring. We then had ten minutes of movement before the next session.

This began at 11.50 with private prayers and prayers for healing by Dr. Malcolm White, who has discovered powers of healing after much prayer and following the illness of his son. We then broke off for a sandwich lunch and an opportunity for a short stroll around Westminster.

At 2pm we gathered together for two short sessions of further aspects of prayer led first by Alan Poole and then Malcolm White. We then divided into a series of workshops:- a) prayers for healing b) creative prayers in corporate worship, and praying with the Bible c) insights into journeys in prayer in contemplation and meditation.

At 4pm we all assembled in the new chapel which is under construction (and very dusty!), but a lovely bright room. Those of you who are familiar with Central Hall will know the section that used to be a bank. The Superintendent of Central Hall, Rev

Martin Turner, who had earlier welcomed us, led this session and told wonderfully inspiring stories of how God had wanted that part of the building back to become a worship centre. We all sang "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" and then had two minutes of vocal individual prayer after which Martin prayed a prayer of blessing.

The final session was worship in the lecture hall, and then, after more tea and coffee, we departed.

During the day our attention was drawn to Romans 8 vv26-27: "In the same way the Spirit also comes to help us, weak as we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray; the Spirit himself pleads with God for us in groans that words cannot express. And God who sees into our hearts, knows what the thought of the Spirit is; because the Spirit pleads with God on behalf of his people and in accordance with his will".

And in the Old Testament Jeremiah 33 v3 "He whose name is the Lord said "Call unto me, and I will answer you; I will tell you wonderful and marvellous things, that you know nothing about". Also Colossians 4 v2 "Be persistent in prayer and keep alert as you pray, giving thanks to God".

It was a lovely Hilltop experience and coming down is not easy. If you get the chance to go on such a day, take it.

Joyce Plant

## **METHODIST CONFERENCE 2002**

The Conference Handbook includes a message from President Designate Ian T White: extracts are given below.

- Conference is not just about working through an Agenda. It is about meeting together as an international Body reflecting the universal work of Christ. The importance of a people who recognise no barrier of country or race has significance at a time of global uncertainty and suspicion...
- I look for a balance in our conferring as we listen to one another - a weaving together of those who are present for the first time with those who have attended in previous years. Our being a Connexional Church is truly seen when we meet as the Conference, but not a Connexionalism that isolates itself from national or local issues. Our decision making must be earthed in both the Gospel we share and the context in which we live...
- May our time together enable the work of the Church to develop, our friendship with one another to deepen and our sharing together strengthen our being "The People of God".
- Let each of us enter into a covenant to pray for one another and for those affected by the decisions we will make.

## **LOCAL GARDENS OPEN TO PUBLIC** under National Gardens Scheme

Cranleigh Road Gardens 14 July 2-6: combined admission £3 children 50p

39 Cranleigh Road: This medium size garden includes a circular lawn with borders, Mediterranean area with water feature and secluded pond with raised beds. Designed as an all year round garden, it features a wide range of perennials and shrubs, including many varieties of clematis (proceeds shared with Wimbledon Guild of Social Welfare)

41 Cranleigh Road: paved terrace with pots of tender specimen plants; steps leading to Mediterranean garden with large pond and hard landscaping flanked by deep borders full of shrubs and perennials, leading to English garden with old roses and colour-coordinated beds around a circular lawn. Beyond is sheltered garden, with fruit, herbs, camelias, ferns, waterfall and wildlife pond

### **QUOTE - UNQUOTE 2**

The best argument for Christianity is Christians - their joy, their certainty, their completeness. But the best argument against Christianity is also Christians - when they are sombre and joyless, when they are self-righteous and smug, when they are narrow and repressive. Then Christianity dies a thousand deaths.

C.S.Lewis

## **SAFEGUARDING WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **Important new developments**

The Methodist Connexion has an enviable record of collaboration over the last eight years in working to ensure that our premises and our groups have been safe places for children and young people to meet.

The three Safeguarding publications produced over this period have been significant contributions in voluntary work and our Church has responded well in putting in place the varied good practices recommended.

Until this year the Churches and Voluntary Organisations have had to rely entirely upon their own resources and initiatives to check the backgrounds of those who may work with younger members in our Churches. While we are sure that the majority of those who work with us are entirely safe and appropriate people, without recourse to external help it has not been possible to be more certain that some people offering to work with us are equally safe and well motivated.

Now there is an important change.

The government has now established the Criminal Records Bureau to make checks, known as "Disclosures", on the backgrounds of all potential volunteers and employees who will work with children, young people, and in due course, vulnerable adults. The

services of the Bureau are now available to the Churches, Voluntary Organisations and others.

The records held by the Bureau encompass those of the Police National Computer, and the lists held by the Department of Health and the Department of Education and Skills list 99.

The Methodist Church will be making use of this new service and is working in close collaboration with other Churches and seven particular denominations in an agency known as "The Churches Agency for Safeguarding" (CAS) which will operate from Methodist Church House. In order to move smoothly into this new opportunity a gradual implementation will be taking place over the next few months.

How will this affect us at Martin Way? Those working with the Sunday Club, Sigma and the Youth Groups etc have already had training/instruction and have filled in form A. Now this will be extended to all key holders i.e. anyone who has authorised access to our premises when children may be present will be asked to sign Form B. If you want to know more, the people to ask are Graham Currie, who is our Safeguarding Co-ordinator, or any member of the Church Council.

## **POLAR BEAR ADVENTURE**

Last November Mary and Derek flew out of Gatwick to Toronto on the first leg of their journey to Churchill, Hudson Bay, to see the polar bears for which the town is famous.

Here are some extracts from their account of their adventures:-

Nov 8th saw Mary and I flying out of Gatwick to Toronto Canada and the following day we ate at the revolving restaurant in the CN Tower, the world's tallest freestanding building (over 1290 ft) where we watched small planes pass by at our level going into the airport!

On Saturday 10th at Grand Union Station it's all aboard the train to Vancouver. Once out of the suburbs it is pine and birch forests and lakes, everything covered in heavy white frost and the lakes and river frozen. The train ambles along a single track with passing places where the goods trains, more than a mile long, wait for our passing. Many of the stops have Indian names such as "Sioux Lookout". As the train travels on the next day, Remembrance Day, we all share in a two minute silence at 11am followed by the attendant reading the poem "Flanders Fields" - a moving moment. After a stopover at Winnipeg we board our train for Churchill two hundred miles north. Once again we stop at villages, cross roads, just openings in the forest, the weather much colder, snow and ice everywhere and heavy blizzards. Thursday morning we arrive dead on time and are met by our Minister's wife, Marion. We were to stay for five days at the manse, a lovely wooden two-storey well-insulated home - four other guests - all of us bed and breakfast (for church funds).

Churchill has one snow-covered main road with log-cabin type souvenir shops, mini-market and about ten side roads and small eateries. It was minus 17 degrees with a north wind and fine snow showers; one minute the snow was knee height from drifting, the next it was ice or snow to walk on. Just up the road Hudson Bay was a heaving mass of moving ice and there were signs up saying "Beware Bears in this Area". Yes, we'd been told what to do in this town of passing bears.

That night we saw the Aurora Borealis and we woke to a clear sky and even colder temperatures. We were out at 7.45 am into a coach taking us out to the Tundra Buggies for a full day's viewing of polar bears. We got excited when we saw Mum bear followed by two cubs about a quarter of a mile away. But once on the move on the giant buggies 8 foot wheels out on the ice, snow and tundra all of a sudden they were touchingly close. The whole day we're amongst bears and cubs. Many stand on their hind legs up the sides of the vehicle, below where we're standing. Their claws come through the grill, the breath from their noses steams up the lens of the camera. They look so cute but they are one animal that has no fear of anything and must be treated with the utmost respect.

The next day we went to a different area. There had been a wind off the land overnight and all the ice on Hudson Bay had been blown right out of sight - amazing! When the tide went out there was a beach. Again lots of bears to watch, also red and Arctic white foxes, ptarmigan in winter plumage, eider ducks on the water. Another great day - we saw nearly 100 bears in the two days.

On the Sunday it was bitterly cold and blowing a blizzard. David the Minister and wife Marion went off to church early to shovel the entrance clear of drifting snow. David is Minister of the Alliance Church working with local Cree and Denee Indians and the local Inuit. We went to the kids Sunday School which was followed by the adults Bible Study at 9.45 with the service at 10.30. The service starts in prayer, the choruses with guitar and electric organ, a children's address and then Pastor David gives the message or sermon. There were announcements and then - surprise - David welcomes Mary and me to Churchill and their church and I'm invited to say a lot of words about ourselves and what we've done in the Holy Land. I give our greetings from our family at Martin Way. In the evening we went to church for prayers and choruses led by Roy a resident Cree. He played the guitar and taught us a chorus in Cree; then we shared more stories before walking home. On the way we saw a white arctic hare in an alleyway, but even in that hundred yard walk we remembered to watch and listen for bears.

On Monday we wandered round the shops. We were the last tourists in town. The few hotels were all closing until Easter, but they were giving free meals to all over 60s as a thankyou for putting up with the six to eight weeks of disruption of thousands of three-day tourists. David assured us we qualified so we went with him and Marion and enjoyed the hospitality.

Tuesday was our last day and last treat - we went on a husky dog run. There were six lovely huskies for the single seater sledge, and we were sitting on Caribou skin with elk skin covering us. A great experience and whereas we thought these dogs would be aggressive we played with them in the snow. There were about 28 of them in all living chained to their box-like kennels. If they want water they eat snow just as the bears do.

That evening we gave our fond farewells. It's another blizzard, wind from the north, the ice back in bay and piling. If this freezes solid, away will go the bears to hunt. We leave for our return train trip of four and a half days. Winnipeg is expecting snow, while Toronto is still autumn.

What an experience! The bears stole the show!

Mary and Derek Heaton

### **QUOTE - UNQUOTE 3**

God has a soft spot for sinners. His standards are quite low.

Desmond Tutu

### **FIGHTING THE AIDS EPIDEMIC**

CMS mission partner Dr Peter Winfrey looks at how Kisiizi Hospital in Uganda is fighting the Aids epidemic

About every twelfth person you meet in urban Uganda has Aids. In rural areas the figure is probably nearer to one in six. That's a lot of people. Up to half our patients at Kisiizi Hospital are HIV positive.

A typical case is that of Augustine (not his real name), an ex-soldier with two wives. He came to us feeling weak and looking very thin, with a cough, a sore mouth and a skin rash. He used to be healthy and athletic, but now even the simplest job made him breathless. Further examination revealed Kaposi's sarcoma (a type of cancer) in his mouth, oral thrush and shingles. Augustine's wives would almost certainly have caught the virus and, in a few years' time, would also be wasting away as their immune systems failed, allowing mild infections to go unchecked.

Their children (and it wouldn't be unusual for each wife to have at least five) will most likely join the 13 million Aids orphans in sub-Saharan Africa. Life for them will be tough. With resources limited, adopted children often go without schooling and adequate nourishment as their guardians' natural children are given preferential treatment. As a result, boys often drift into crime, and girls into prostitution where they are likely to acquire the disease that killed their parents. Admittedly, this is the worst-case scenario - adopted children do not always get a raw deal. However, there is only so much that Africa's extended families can deal with - imagine trying to bring up 22 grandchildren on your own. Add to this the complications of living in a society that puts a stigma on people with Aids..

In the light of these needs, the most important thing we are doing at Kisiizi Hospital is reaching out to HIV patients. These “modern-day lepers’ need to be shown Christ’s love, not despised. There is a limit to what we can do medically, but we can tell them about Christ.

Playing an important role in this evangelistic work is the Hope Ministry team. It was set up by the hospital to provide counselling for those taking HIV tests and to educate the community about HIV. In addition, Kisiizi supports about 70 orphans with funds, donated by the Dutch charity Dorcas Aid, paying for school fees, mattresses and other essentials.

Uganda is often held up as an HIV success story, but we are still rejecting 25 per cent of donated blood because it is HIV positive, and we struggle on with what we have. Even if a vaccine against HIV is found, our greatest hope will remain in our creator and liberator - Jesus Christ

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## **A STORY**

An expert in time management was speaking to a group of business students and used an illustration those students will never forget.

As he stood in front of the group of high-powered overachievers he said, “Okay, time for a quiz”, and he pulled out a one-gallon jar and set it on the table in front of him. He also produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, in the jar.

When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, “Is this jar full?”. Everyone in the class yelled, “Yes”. The time management expert replied “Really?” He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. He dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks. He then asked the group once more, “Is the jar full?” By this time the class was on to him. “Probably not”, one of them answered. “Good!” he replied. He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in the jar and it went into all of the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, “Is this jar full?” “No!” the class shouted. Once again he said “Good.” Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim.

Then he looked at the class and asked, “What is the point of this illustration?” One eager beaver raised his hand and said, “The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things in it!” “No”, the speaker replied, “that’s not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is “If you don’t put the big rocks in first, you’ll never get them in at all’.”

What are the big rocks in your life - time with your loved ones, your faith, your education, your dreams, a worthy cause, your friends, teaching or mentoring others?

"Remember to put these big rocks in first or you'll never get them in at all". So, tonight, or in the morning, when you are reflecting on this short story, ask yourself this question: What are the big rocks in my life? Then put those in your jar first.

[by Gill Ross: from Buckland Parish Magazine May 2001]

### **MERTON PARK RAINBOWS CALLING YOU!**

The 1st Merton Park Rainbows (girls aged between 5 and 7) meet on the church premises on Wednesdays between 5.30 pm and 6.30 pm under the leadership of Geraldine Ellis. The pack's popularity is shown by its long and growing waiting list! Are you active, "child-friendly" and able to give one hour a week to help? Those who are patiently waiting would be so pleased. To find out more please contact Geraldine (8542-9241).

### **FAMILY NEWS**

We send our congratulations and love to Grace and Ted Ashwood who were married on 1 June. It was a joyful service with much music and singing and we wish them every blessing and happiness for the future.

Friends of Mildred Badgery send their sympathy and prayers to her and her family following the recent death of her mother Ethel Spence. We have happy memories of her visits to us.

### **LETTER FROM JOAN CRAIG**

Thank you for my birthday cards celebrating my 60th birthday. It seemed a milestone at the time. Whatever would we do without friends who are there for the good and the bad. I know how much this means.

Much love Joan Craig

### **CHRISTIAN AID SPONSORED WALK**

'Bridge the Gap' was the name of the Christian Aid Walk this year on 19th May. Lesley and Mike Mortley, Gwen Wildman, Bob Hamblin and Mike Rusbridge met for the 2.00pm start at Finsbury Circus (said to have been the only bowling green in the City!).

St. Margaret's Lothbury, St. Lawrence Jewry (with its gridiron weathervane), St. Anne and St. Agnes, and St. Vedast were our first four checkpoints leading to St. Paul's Cathedral. We continued along Cannon Street, with more checkpoints before reaching All Hallows-by-the Tower. Passing the Tower we crossed the hustle and bustle of Tower Bridge and then walked by the river to Southwark Bridge (peaceful and calm) where we crossed back to the city. The rest of the journey was identical to

the 'home run' of last year, Ludgate Hill, Fleet Street, calling in at St. Bride's and the Strand. We arrived at Westminster Central Hall about 5.20pm.

It was a very pleasant walk and the weather was just perfect..

Our total sponsorship was £524 which added to the door to door collections of £966.84 makes a total of £1,490-84 raised by Martin Way this year. Thank you to all who have either helped with the door to door collection or sponsorship for 2002.

Mike Rusbridge

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Saturday 20 July : Annesley House : 2 Princes Way, Wimbledon SW19: 30th Anniversary Garden Party: 2.30- 4.30pm: variety of fun stalls and activities for all the family; cream teas will be served (price £2.50): there will be tours of the building; see Doreen Warren for more details

## **CHURCH DIARY FOR JULY**

Mon	1	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Mr Hamish Duncan - The Guitar)
Wed	3	10.30 am	Toddler Time in Church
Sun	7	10.30 am	Family Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
		1-5 pm	Church Picnic at Hurst Park Molesey
Mon	8	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Rev Anne Rusbridge)
Tue	9	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	12	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	14	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr Andy Walker
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Barrie Tabraham
Mon	15	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Mr Bill Cox)
Tue	16	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club (Mary and Derek in Bear Country)
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sat	20	7.00 pm	Farewell Service for Rodney Hill at Raynes Park
Sun	21	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Stan Brown
Mon	22	2.45 pm	Fellowship ( Mr Bert Hyde)
Tue	23	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	24	10.30 am	Bible Study
Sun	28	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr Bill Cox
		6.30 pm	Farewell Service Jenny Impey and Upper Tooting Church
Mon	29	1.00 pm	Fellowship Lunch
Tue	30	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer

## CHURCH DIARY FOR AUGUST

Sun	4	10.30 am	Morning service led by Miss Priscilla Vivian
Tue	6	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	11	10.30 am	Morning service led by Ms Gill Hulme
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
Tue	13	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	18	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
Tue	20	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	25	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr Bill Cox
Tue	27	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sat	31	3.00 pm	Tea at the Manse for Martin Way and Raynes Park