

Martin Way Methodist Church

Newsletter – September 2003

Minister – Rev John Nyota

Dear friends,

I know this is most unusual but as we say farewell to Anne and await the arrival of John it has fallen upon me to write a few words for this month's newsletter.

It has been a busy summer period with farewells and welcomes within the Wimbledon Circuit and although there is always sadness in saying goodbye, it is always a joy to embrace something new and exciting. Life is about growth, development and moving on which of course inevitably involves or brings about change. This, I know can sometimes be difficult, challenging and somewhat unnerving at times but I truly believe the Lord calls us to move forward in His name and if we respond He will guide and lead us in the direction He wishes us to go.

We are blessed in our Church, as are the other Churches in our Circuit with many gifts, skills and talents. It is down to each one of us to recognise them within others and ourselves and be brave enough to use them and encourage others to do the same. Let's step aside, open doors and allow space for the new to grow and enable the Holy Spirit to feed and nurture God's chosen seedlings.

The Lord is calling each one of us to serve Him in vast and various ways and waiting patiently for our response. Let's begin this new Methodist year with open hearts ready to receive His Love and Will for us in our lives.

As we welcome John and Faith let us be open and ready to receive God's ministry for them within our Church and the Circuit. As we say farewell to Anne and Mike let's ask God's blessing upon them both and Anne's ministry in her new Church in the Croydon Circuit.

Part of Anne's ministry at Martin Way was to empower and enable others to recognise within themselves the potential that God has been waiting to use. By recognising this and by working and sharing together in the life of

the Church and by meeting and joining together in prayer, the Lord will work through us. His purpose for His church and His people will grow and come to fruition and others will come to know and love Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. Alleluia!

May God's blessings be with us today and forever.

*Brenda Cannon
(Leadership Team)*

Thank You from Anne

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the farewell gift I was given. If you were unable to be at the service, I was given a CD player, a beautiful hydrangea bush for our new garden and a very generous cheque. Thank you so much. Thank you also for all the individual letters, cards and gifts to remind me of my time in the Wimbledon Circuit.

A very special thank you also for the farewell celebration. I was so touched by the care and thoughtfulness that went into the whole event - the food and the cake - the flowers and balloons and candle all in my favourite 'holy spirit' colours - the worship and the tributes. It was a truly wonderful occasion. And thank you also to everyone who came. It was tremendous to see the church so full. My only sadness is that there were so many people there, that I was unable to speak to everyone and say goodbye. Thank you for all that you have given to me during my time in the circuit and I wish you every blessing in your next stage of ministry. With love, Anne

Message from Stan Brown

Dear Brenda and Tony

Thank you to you and all the team for last night's service and event. It was good and it was appreciated. Many thanks too to our cake maker for the beautiful cake with its iced picture of the vine hung with bunches of grapes. [The last time Stan preached at Martin Way he spoke on Jesus the Vine]. You will remember that I had mentioned the vine was almost dead and had suggested that this was because it was trying to keep the old leaves alive instead of growing new ones. The junior Church pruned the vine, cutting off all the dying bits and leaving only a bare stick. Now the vine is a sturdy little plant with a dozen or so new leaves and it looks very

healthy. [May it be a parable of our future as we all, with Stan and Anne look to new beginnings].

"Whatever God calls us to be he will fit us for" John Wesley

Circuit News - Report from John Vanek, Lay Worker

At the Circuit meeting earlier this year I had the great honour of the Lay Worker contract being ratified for another year, passed by an unanimous vote. I shall endeavour to do all I can for the Circuit and am very pleased to continue in post.

Circuit members may well wish to know just what their Lay Worker has been up to since I was first appointed in April 2002. There have been two main areas that I have approached to address, along with a cluster of initiatives that are arising almost by the minute. Firstly, I was asked to help structure some pastoral training, initially helping out with Anne Rusbridge's workshops. Anne has since handed this over to me and I have co-hosted two sessions and been responsible for two more, the last being at Stoneleigh and attended by twenty people from all round the Circuit. The theme for that session was 'Pastoral Visiting, Care and Prayer'. The themes are generated by pastoral attendees, as it is they who have the 'hands-on' experience of pastoral visiting. The workshops are designed to provide a forum for support and sharing, an advantage that is maximised by the involvement of pastoral visitors from all round the Circuit. A further workshop is scheduled for October 11th at Martin Way Church. It is open to all who wish to learn more about pastoral visiting and there are more details in this newsletter.

Alongside the pastoral training sessions, I was also invited at an early stage of the Lay Workership, to help with the new mission at Wimbledon church, centred on the Beacon Project. The Beacon Project had been up and running and well advanced for some time before I joined the Circuit. The Wimbledon members had worked long, hard and prayerfully, finally choosing a 'God-wards, us-wards and outwards' theme. The 'us-wards' part concerns the church itself, its growth and development. The 'God-wards' part is perhaps self-explanatory, involved with a re-dedication of faith and spirituality. The 'outwards' part of the project is where church members have chosen to reach out to the community and in particular, to families and young people. At the 'Workers Group' meetings we struggled

to put in place strategies for the best way of achieving this initiative and making it happen. There was already an established bedrock of support from various local groups, including the Civic Forum, Christian Care, the Ethnic Minority Centre and funding bodies. I felt strongly that other relevant groups should be invited on board to look at the Beacon Project and see what Wimbledon church is trying to do in the area. To this end, the church held an open day or 'Community Expo' on 5 April 2003. We invited the groups who were already on board, including the in-house church groups. We also approached organisations involved with families and young people in the area, such as the Shaftesbury Society, the 'New Creations' team (based in Raynes Park church) and the regional branches of the charities CAFOD and Christian Aid. Other organisations such as the youth employment and advice service 'Connexions' were also invited. The local police were asked but didn't get back to me. The day went well but perhaps highlighted how much more needs to be done.

Initiatives such as the Beacon Project are not exclusive to Wimbledon. New building is planned at Worcester Park and Ruxley has just distributed the report it commissioned from John Truscott, looking into all aspects of mission, spirituality and pastoral work. Martin Way and Raynes Park continue to explore new ways of reaching out pastorally. New mission is alive and very well throughout the Circuit, with much activity and prayer involved in different ways through individual church programmes. In many ways, new buildings are red herrings. A mission needs to be rooted in faith, love, intention and action. The building plans that are designed to invite and welcome the wider community can only achieve this through heartfelt active mission.

While in post as Lay Worker, I have had the chance of visiting all the churches in the Circuit and attending church committees, guilds and meetings. I have the advantage of a Management Committee made up of people from all over the Circuit. The Management Committee is a highly effective channel for guiding and supporting the direction of the Lay Worker. I have had the opportunity of addressing several church and Circuit groups and letting them know what the Lay Worker post involves, as well as trying to see what it is that individual churches want and need from the Lay Worker.

I have also had the advantage of access to wider expertise. A recent training organised by the London Committee took place at Methodist Central Hall. It covered areas such as how to involve the local population in church mission and how to structure a fund-raising programme. The training verified for me that inviting the community into the church is essential. In fact, churches must go one further. They need to go out to the community and find out what its needs are. There are various well-tested methods of doing this that the professionals can advise on. The key lesson seems to be that we cannot generate a witness on our own. It may even be the case that we are empty-handed and don't yet have a witness outside our church. But when we go out and meet the community halfway by going to the places where it assembles, then we may well see a flame coming to life - this time from others who might not necessarily be church-goers.

I don't have the space in this article to go on about the things that have happened in the Circuit since I have been in post. There have been ministerial welcomes and ministerial partings. Some occasions have been celebratory ones tinged with sadness when much-loved ministers have made their farewell. New challenges and welcomes are arising as I write, with the installation of no less than three new ministers in the Circuit. Other events have helped me to gain an insight and see a real cross-section of individual churches' activities and membership. Some events have been purely joyful, in particular, my wedding last 31 May to Margaret at Sacred Heart church in Wimbledon. Anne Rusbridge participated by providing the wedding tribute and I can't begin to express how much it still means to Margaret and me to have had Anne's presence at our wedding service. It was a wonderful day and our thanks go to everyone who sent cards, blessings and prayers.

The Lay Worker is a servant of the Circuit and I invite you, the church members, to channel through to me any concerns where you may feel I can be of use. I shall endeavour to do all I can to keep up-to-date with all the varied and dynamic initiatives that are going on within the Circuit churches.

John is based at Raynes Park Methodist church

John Vanek, Lay Worker

Pastoral Training Workshop

Saturday 11 October at Martin Way

The next pastoral training workshop is on the theme 'Confidentiality, Trust and our Healing Ministry'. It will take place in the Coffee Lounge at Martin Way. John Vanek, Circuit Lay Worker, will host the workshop and will run from 10am to 1pm. Refreshments will be provided. The course is open to everyone in the Circuit who is a pastoral visitor, or who wishes to find out more about pastoral visiting. All are welcome.

Please Help!

On Saturday 27 September the Men's Supper Club is organising a Lunch-time Market from 11am until 2 pm in aid of Wheels for the World. We shall be grateful to anyone offering to help in any way. We hope to have the following stalls - a 50p stall; bric-a-brac; a homemade stall (marmalade, jam, chutney, pies etc.), a cake stall (the ladies of Midways are helping us with this) and my bookstall. Richard Polley will have some of his (and my) paintings to sell and his daughter is selling her lovely cards. There will also be a raffle. Donations of raffle prizes or items for any stall will be very welcome. Anyone willing to help on the stalls will become an honorary member of the Supper Club for the day. Suki, our expert cook, will be providing light lunches. Please make the event known, come along and bring someone with you. We have raised £1,200 towards our target of £1,500 for 'Wheels' so hopefully we will make up the deficit on 27th! We shall carry on our fund-raising until the end of the year, so any donations will be gratefully received.

Bill Cox

Wesley Tercentenary

The Rev. Dr. Leslie Griffiths writes:

Declining membership; Strategies for coping; New initiatives; Our Calling. Our missionary task; Fewer ministries; Changing social patterns; An increasingly secular culture; Survival; Post-modernism.

Any picture we make of the age in which we're living would need to work all those oddly shaped pieces of the jigsaw mentioned above into their proper configuration before order emerged out of chaos.

The pressure of living in these complicated times, demands that can easily persuade us that we have energy only for the present moment; there simply isn't enough energy to spare on what's already disappeared into the murky regions of yesteryear.

This impatience with history might be understandable, but, in my view, it would be profoundly wrong. One of the most frequently debated questions of our day is that related to 'identity'. In all the fragmentation and dislocation of the times, we have to know who we are and where we stand. As Christians, of course, the person of Christ shapes and defines us. For us Methodists, the work and witness of John and Charles Wesley is fundamental to the question of who we are and how we face up to the present age. We relegate our history to the margins at our own peril.

The combination of personal piety and social action, the fusion of Wesley's doctrine of grace and his understanding of the Kingdom of God, are not only as vital as they ever were but even more necessary now than ever before. What God did through the Wesleys was simply stupendous. The three hundredth anniversary of the birth of John Wesley gives us another opportunity to connect with the essence of the eighteenth century evangelical revival, which, once we rediscover it, can still energise us for the mission, and outreach of the Church today.

Two Silver Spoons

An extract from the Rev. Herbert McGonigle's account of the life of John Wesley

Probably the most misquoted text in the whole Bible is 1 Timothy 6:10 which is repeated as "Money is the root of all evil". The full text is "The love of money is the root of all [i.e. all kinds] evil". In that respect John Wesley was clearly saved by grace from any love of money.

In the half-century of his evangelistic ministry, he earned thousands of pounds from his publishing enterprises. With his brother Charles, he published no fewer than four hundred titles, including letters, journals, sermons, theological treatises, Christian

apologetics, biblical commentaries, and much, much else. And he quite literally gave all the money away to poor people and good causes!

Early in the revival he wrote "If I leave behind me ten pounds, above my debts and my books, you and all mankind bear witness against me that I lived and died a thief and a robber". At his death in 1791, his executors found that his total treasury amounted to ten guineas (£10.05 pounds)! And his will directed that four of these guineas should pay four unemployed men to carry his coffin and the remainder to be distributed among his poorest preachers.

In one of his sermons he outlined the stewardship of money that he practised all his life. At Oxford he received thirty pounds a year, lived on twenty-eight pounds and gave away two pounds. The next year he received sixty pounds, still lived on twenty-eight and had thirty-two to give away. Years later when he received one hundred and twenty pounds, he continued to live on twenty-eight pounds and was able to give ninety-two pounds to the poor!

He once confided to his sister Martha "Money never stays with me. It would burn me if it did. I throw it out of my hands as soon as possible, lest it should find a way into my heart". He gave generously to the poor wherever he met them and was so kind to beggars that his brother Charles once remarked, "My brother was born for the benefit of knaves."

In 1776 the Commissioners for Excise were doing an inventory of all the silver plate held privately in England. They were sure that John Wesley, who had thousands of converts all over the country, must have become rich through all these supporters. They wrote and asked him to declare what quantity of silver plate he owned. His reply was as succinct as it was simple. "I have two silver spoons at London and two at Bristol, this is all the plate which I have at present and I shall not buy any more while so many around me want bread".

John Wesley really believed and practised the counsel of Jesus, "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions". [Luke 12.15] At the end of his long and devoted life, John Wesley

left behind him just ten guineas - and one hundred thousand converts!

From St. Cuthbert Wells Parish Magazine May 2003

What is a Methodist?

If anyone would know the answer to that question it should surely be John Wesley. This is his.

Portrait of a Methodist

A Methodist is one who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit given unto him, one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart and soul and mind and strength. He rejoices evermore, prays without ceasing, and in everything gives thanks. His heart is full of love to all mankind and is purified from envy, wrath, malice and every unkind affection. His one desire and the one design of his life is not to do his own will but the will of him who sent him. He keeps all God's commandments from the least to the greatest. He follows not the customs of the world, for vice does not lose its nature through becoming fashionable. He fares not sumptuously every day. He cannot lay up treasures upon earth, nor can he adorn himself with gold and costly apparel. He cannot join in any diversion that has the least tendency to vice. He cannot speak evil of his neighbour any more than he can lie. He cannot utter unkind or evil words. He does good unto all men, unto neighbours, strangers, friends and enemies. These are the marks of a true Methodist. By these alone do Methodists desire to be distinguished from all other men.

When I first came across that I thought, "I give up!" but then I realised that Wesley's portrait was that of an ideal, giving us standards to aim at - the perfect Methodist. And I don't think that there are too many of them about! Neither are there too many perfect Christians about either. We don't come to church because we're perfect; we come because we hope that in God's good time we are being led towards perfection.

Bill Cox

Appreciative Poem

If with pleasure you are viewing, any work someone is doing,
If you like them or you love them, tell them now;
Don't withhold your approbation till the parson makes oration
And they lie with snowy lilies o'er their brow.
For no matter how you shout it they won't really care about it,
They won't know how many teardrops you have shed.
If you think some praise is due them now's the time to slip it to them
For they cannot read their tombstone when they're dead!

More than fame and more than money, is the comment kind and sunny
And the hearty warm approval of a friend,
For it gives to life a savour, and it makes you stronger, braver,
And it gives you heart and spirit to the end.
If they earn your praise, bestow it, if you like them, let them know it,
Let the words of true encouragement be said.
Do not wait till life is over, and they're underneath the clover,
For they cannot read their tombstone when they're dead.

Author unknown

(From High Mountains, Deep Valleys, ed. Rowland Croucher and Grace Tomlinson)

The watch is over!

On Friday 25 July the five remaining Big Brother housemates could breathe freely again as the cameras were put away for another year. For nine weeks their every move, word and even sleepwalk have been shown for all to see.

The psalmist David knows how they felt:

“Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?
Wherever I go you are there.”

For David this was no negative thing. God didn't want to evict him, but rather cared for his every move.

At the moment some 30,000 children are spending every night gathered together on the streets of two towns in Northern Uganda because it is too dangerous for them to stay at home in the villages with their families.

For the last 17 years a war has been raging between the Ugandan government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Over 20,000 children have been abducted and forced to become child soldiers. One boy was forced to kill his little brother for trying to escape. His story is not unusual.. Local Church leaders started sleeping out on the streets with the children to show their solidarity. "I am the shepherd of my people, how can I leave?" says Rt. Rev Benjamin Ojwang Anglican Bishop of Kitgum

Now more than 800,000 people have been herded into so-called 'protected camps'. Here they are supposed to be safe, except that food supplies going into the camps are regularly ambushed, leaving the people inside starving,

The people of the region are mainly Christians and want to know that they have not been forgotten by their brothers and sisters here. They value our prayers above all, and believe that prayer can help to change this situation where military solutions and peace talks have both so far failed.. Please pray that in the midst of this horror they would know that the ever present God is with them as he is with us in our daily lives.

Pray for the children of Kitgum and for peace in Northern Uganda.

[© CMS e-short]

Quote - Unquote

"True godliness don't turn men out of the world, but enables them to live better in it, and excites their endeavours to mend it"

William Penn

Celebrating Age - Merton Older Persons' Festival

A group of organisations in the borough has joined forces to arrange a bumper bundle of activities and events for people over 55. The Festival will also offer plenty of ideas and information for those who care for an older person. From Saturday 6th September until Sunday 21 September, there's an action-packed agenda with something for everyone to enjoy

The aims of the festival are:

- to raise the profile of older people in the community;

- to celebrate older people's contribution to their neighbourhoods and their value to the borough as a whole;
- to highlight the myriad opportunities available to older people in the borough to:-
 - Meet new people
 - Have fun
 - Try something new
 - Discover more about your borough
- to provide more information about support and facilities available to older people, from safety in the home, to complementary health therapy, to library resources

And why not come along to the Merton on Show Day being held at Wimbledon Guild (30 Worple Road) on Monday 8 September from 10.00 to 4.00pm? A whole host of organisations, from the Fire Brigade to the University of the Third Age, will be there to tell you what they do, and let you ask any questions you may have.

Pick up a brochure from the Civic Centre

Help Urgently Needed For Mon/Thurs Brownie Packs

Due to family and work commitments, both our Brownie Packs are in urgent need of Helpers. We are looking for anyone who is interested in working with the 7-10 years old age group. We need Leaders (prepared to go into uniform and do training) and Helpers. If we do not have a response to our appeals, we may have to consider closing one pack.

If you are interested please contact Sally Holmes on 020 8715 5397

Book the Date Now

Thursday 27 November: there will be a Network District Day at Martin Way: the subject is Racial Justice and the day will be led by Margaret Sawyer, Connexional Network Secretary

Congratulations and Thanks!

It's very easy to say thanks and congratulations when passing or speaking to the person, but this is the time to put pen to paper so that all may

share and pat this guy on the back. I'm speaking of a person who as a very young boy sat on the wall refusing to go to Sunday School, and the person who is now our Worship Leader at Martin Way, none other than Tony Loft.

Over the years he's been a back up boy with others for church entertainment I think he's been on all the committees. He's been in most church related offices. He's faced challenges in his private life, in his fire-fighting days with strikes and disputes that put him to the test causing illness and worry.

Now over the last years we've seen big changes especially in church. His growing faith has led him to overcome his lack of confidence. He's been on courses to better his knowledge and understanding, and is now very happy leading worship.

He then took on the job of making the Raynes Park manse ready - redecoration, furniture removal, new floors - and so it goes on. He's seen the job well done, at a time when he had the worry of his mum seriously ill in hospital,

Yes, he's had the love and support of Maralyn and family, and the church family, but it takes more than just that. He's been given strength, patience and health and he knows where that comes from, his ever deepening faith.

When you see him, pat him on the back. He deserves it. Well done Tony!

Derek and Mary Heaton

Thank You

Many thanks to all who supported the Barbeque and Car Wash on 19 July. It was a great success and £85 was raised for the local Community Youth Project

Lunch Club - are you missing out?

Lunch Club starts again this month and hopes to see some new faces to join the happy group that meets on fortnightly Fridays to enjoy an excellent and most reasonably priced meal, plus the chance of meeting friends, making new friends and keeping abreast of what's going on in our local area.

Dates for your Diary

7 September 6.30pm: St. Mary Merton Patronal Festival: coffee, cake and biscuits after the service: come and meet friends from our ecumenical groups of churches.

Church Diary for September

Mon	1	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Mr P Hopkins - History of Merton)
Tue	2	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Thu	4	2.30-4pm	Seekers Group
Fri	5	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	7	10.30 am	Family Service led by Janet and Bob Hamblin
Mon	8	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	9	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	10	7.45 pm	Midways (Bring and Buy)
Sun	14	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	15	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Rev Colin Wood (St. Martin's))
Tue	16	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club (Michael Allen - Friends of Wimbledon Theatre)
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Thu	18	2.30-4pm	Seekers Group
Fri	19	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	21	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Barrie Tabraham
Mon	22	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Mrs Christine Perry - Girls Brigade)
Tue	23	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	24	10.30 am	Bible Study
		7.45 pm	Midways (Geraldine Ellis - the Three Fs)
Sun	28	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev John Nyota
		8.00 pm	Service led by Janet and Bob Hamblin
Mon	29	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Annual General Meeting)
Tue	30	10-12 am	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer

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