

Martin Way Methodist Church

Newsletter - June 2005

Minister - Rev John Nyota

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear friend

In Jesus' time on earth, during the Roman occupation of Palestine, a soldier had the right to compel any civilian into service. In particular, a soldier could make someone carry their baggage for a maximum of one mile. A Jewish man may be sitting by the roadside or ploughing his field and a soldier calls over, "Carry this, mate!". Or he could be approaching the soldier on the road, travelling in the opposite direction. Then he is forced to retrace a mile of his journey!

How should he respond? Jesus makes a surprising statement in his sermon on the mount. Instead of slamming down the rucksack onto the ground after a mile, hoping something inside breaks, he should offer to carry it a further mile!

It's such a counter-intuitive thing to say that "going the second mile" has become a saying in our language. Jesus was, of course, serious! We don't have soldiers forcing us to carry their baggage but how can we apply what Jesus said?

We have been celebrating Pentecost - the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church, bringing to the disciples power to achieve the task that lay ahead of them. Today also the Spirit brings power to God's people, and we celebrate that at Pentecost!

Communicating the good news of Easter to the people of this world means going an extra mile. Only the Holy Spirit, as Peter was to learn, would enable us to burst our comfort zones and go for it. Yet unfortunately, most people are reluctant to allow this power to work in them. Some think that letting the Spirit into their life is letting go of yourself, somehow giving up on your free will. Not true - God's most precious gift to us is our free will; he would never take that away from us. The Holy Spirit is a helper not an occupying force.

Do you think that being Spirit filled is going to change you? Absolutely, but not in a negative way! God created us, and loved us from the beginning. He only wants the best for us, and if we are changed by the Spirit it is because we are made complete.

Do you think that we can manage without the Holy Spirit? No way, unless you consider yourself stronger than Peter, or Paul, or the other early apostles! They recognised time and time again that it was through God's Spirit that they achieved the things that they did.

God's church without the Holy Spirit is like a plumber without tools - able to talk endlessly about the problem, but not equipped to deal with it! God deserves better. He deserves a church which is both ready and equipped to do the job set before them. What situations are there in life when you end up doing jobs you'd much rather not be doing? Maybe for a family member or the boss at work or even a responsibility at church! It's not always easy to go the first mile, without offering to go a second mile!

But then, Jesus also said that we are to love one another with a love that will be such a powerful witness to the world that we are his disciples. Loving others means doing two miles even when we weren't intending to do one. But that kind of love makes even the most callous people start wondering! They can't work out why you do it! And they may well start to ask questions about your reasons for doing what you do. Questions which may even lead them to finding Jesus for themselves.

For us to achieve this kind of love we have to try to understand each other and the reasons and motives for what we do. It is not easy to get inside another person's mind but if we learn to listen and trust then it does become possible to reach a greater degree of togetherness and we can go forward agreeing to differ, but agreeing that in love we can work alongside each other for Christ.

And this is achievable through the higher power, the Holy Spirit. Catch the fire.

John

Those who have the gale of the Holy Spirit go forward even in sleep.

Brother Lawrence

MINI MARATHON DAY

On 17th April we ran in the Flora London Mini Marathon, It was a long day starting with a team coach journey to Central London. We then had around two hours to warm up and prepare ourselves for the race.

The race started at Southwark Bridge where there was a celebrity to cut the tape and start us on our way. We ran along Victoria Embankment and past Westminster, where the atmosphere was amazing. We finally ran along Birdcage Walk where we reached the finish line. We were then awarded our medals. We would like to say THANK YOU to all our sponsors who helped us raise £280 for the "Saving Toto Simba project".

After our race we stayed to watch Paula Radcliffe break her London Marathon Record. We stood at Birdcage Walk, near to the finish line to see Paula run her last 800m

Jennifer and Rosemary Fernando

THINGS WILL CHANGE

When you get to the end of your tether
And your energy seems to have gone;
When you're weary and wondering whether
It's worth while to keep struggling on;
When the fire has gone out of your spirit
And your armour has fallen apart
LET GO AND LET GOD DO THE FIGHTING.
BE STILL IN YOUR HEAD AND YOUR HEART.

When you get to the end of your courage
And there's nothing much more you can do,
Try folding your hands for a moment
And letting God's guidance get through...
Life cannot be altered by worry,
Stop trying to push it away.
JUST LET THE GOOD LORD TAKE OVER.
YOU'LL FIND THAT THINGS CHANGE WHEN YOU PRAY.

*He who kneels to the Lord can stand up to anything
Seven prayerless days make one weak*

MEMORIES OF GEORGE BAUGH

He was quite a little man ...always on the move ... a bundle of energy and enthusiasm ... a fund of funny stories - often repeated! ... a forthright person and a simple and direct preacher.

I was about twelve when George and Margaret Baugh came to Martin Way. They brought with them their daughters, Elizabeth and Katheryn aged eight and four and Margaret's mother. I clearly remember their welcome meeting in the church hall, where we shared tea and scones and were all introduced.

George served here for nine years and he left me with a wealth of memories, It was George who challenged me to become a church member, and led the classes to prepare me for that step. I have often remembered the things he said then and which I've understood since! He encouraged me to form the YPF and it was he who led us in the first of many "Youth Services".

It was during the ministry of George Baugh that I first felt that God was calling me to preach, and it was he who with George Collins and Dorothy Bulmer, was my mentor through my training. I can still hear his voice saying, " A good preacher should preach for twelve and a half minutes - no more and no less!". Needless to say many of us timed him after that, and he was seldom far from his target ... I try!!

George's sermons always had three points, and those points were clear and memorable. He was an excellent teacher! He told endless stories to illustrate his message - often at his own expense! How many other people can still remember the fisherman and the "What's your line?" story? His favourite hymn was "Jesus, the Name High Over All" and we sang it many times!

The Baughs went to America on an exchange visit - arranged after a long search for Methodist ministers bearing the same name. (How much easier that search would now be on the Internet!) For a whole summer we hosted Rev Odin Baugh and his family, and then a group of us all went to Heathrow with banners to welcome George and Margaret back.

All the ministers I remember at Martin Way have left legacies behind them - the benefits of the Methodist itinerant ministry! - and all their

legacies have enriched the church in different ways in turn. Probably because it was while George was here that my faith became a personal one, not just something I had been taught, I remember him with great affection. He left here for Hornchurch and on his visits back he never seemed to change. He was a little greyer, a little more bent, but had the same enthusiasm and clarity of message as ever. On the last visit, not that long ago, I felt I could close my eyes and instantly be transported back forty years!

George Baugh was one of 'God's Faithful Servants' and it's my guess that at this moment he's telling the "What' Your Line?" story to a host of angels!

Janet Hamblin

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH - JUNE

I'm writing this late at night because the editor has asked me for it by tomorrow morning. I had intended to start on it early this evening but it is 2nd May and I've been watching the final of the World Snooker Championship on television and I became "hooked". I've never played snooker in my life and my knowledge of the game is very basic, but this year's final has been an extremely close one. The eventual winner was twenty-two year old Shaun Murphy. At the beginning of the tournament the odds against him were 150 to 1, but he reached the final, beating several previous world champions on the way!

I may not be very knowledgeable about snooker, but it was easy to appreciate that young Shaun and his opponent, Matthew Stephens, are expert players. I have them to thank for giving me the Thought for the Month to share with you each and every one of us has something we can do well. It may not be spectacular but there is SOMETHING we can do well and, if we use it for the benefit or pleasure of others, it is enhanced. My wife June was a good knitter and she made literally hundreds of pairs of gloves which she sold for various church funds. She also excelled at making chocolate sponges. The only time she had a disaster was once when she dropped it getting it out of the oven. Even then it was appreciated by our dog, Tosh, who ever afterwards hoped that she would drop another one!

God has given all of us talents and He expects us to use and develop those talents. If all you can do well is to make a good cup of tea, then invite someone to join you for a cuppa. Find an outlet for the talent you have been given and use it to the full. I feel that when we move on from this life there will be greater opportunities for us to use the talents we have started to realise here. Thank God for the things that you are able to do well and show your thanks by learning to do them even better than you do now. In that way you will find enjoyment in helping others and at least at times you will feel that inner glow which God gives as a sign of something well done. But don't let it go to your head - it is only God working through you to show His love to others.

Bill Cox

PRAYER - 1

What's important is that God is so much part and parcel of life that spontaneous mental chat becomes second nature

Cliff Richard

QUOTES FROM OUR ARCHIVES - JUNE

8 June 1933: record of a meeting of local residents held in the Merton Park Golf Club House; The chair was taken by Rev Wilfred L Hannam; in addition to the Rev A Cecil Parker, Rev A N Rose, the Circuit Steward and 37 ladies and gentlemen.

The progress made to date in the purchase of land and the preparation of plans for building were explained ... and numerous questions were asked which showed keen interest on the part of friends present

29 June 1934: Lady Stamp has promised to open the church and Dr Donald Soper has consented to preach at 3.30 pm and to speak with Rev A Cecil Parker at 6 pm on the 15 September 1934

the following representatives of other churches are to be invited to the Dedication Service:-Canon Philip, the Vicar and Curate of St. Mary's, the Presbyterian and Baptist and Congregational Ministers

24 June 1935: church membership stands at 62

8 June 1936: Missionary committee to be formed: to consist of:- the Society Stewards, the various departmental Missionary Secretaries, the Collectors, the General Secretary, the Treasurer

15 June 1937: arrangements should be made whereby the delivery of coke to the church did not necessitate the drawing in of a cart over the church paths

2 June 1947: Mr Warren reported average attendance of 48 at the two morning services and 70 at the three evening services. After discussion it was agreed to adopt the practice of receiving communion at the Communion rail, [rather than in the body of the church]

It was agreed that the reading of the lesson by one of the young people should be a regular feature of parade services

19 June 1958: Mr Bass reported Sunday School had 142 scholars on the roll with an average attendance of 92

The Scout troop had assisted in the preparation for the opening of the new church building

22 June 1959: organ maintenance: there were to be three visits a year from Messrs Rest, Cartwright & Son Ltd for tuning

bronze handrails [at the church steps] had been donated by Mrs Watts

DID PRAYER SAVE NEPALI GIRL'S LIFE?

Tracy Day was sitting out with her neighbours in a village on the outskirts of Kathmandu when she caught sight of two young girls on the side of the road. One was washing the other's leg.

"I went over to see what the problem was and saw that the girl's leg was mushy with sores and smelt like it was rotting. From my nurse training, I knew it was osteomyelitis and that she needed an urgent operation".

Tracy and her husband Jason are working with the United Mission to Nepal. They went to help train nurses but were still on their intensive language study programme when they met the eight-year-old with the bad leg, called Pasang.

Jason and Tracy took Pasang and her mother straight to hospital. "The doctors said that if she had waited any longer, her whole leg would have shattered it was so rotten with disease." says Tracy.

After a successful operation, Pasang started losing weight and vomiting constantly. Tracy thought they were going to lose her. "Every day we saw her she became worse and wouldn't talk or look at anything; she just lay in bed staring at the ceiling," says Tracy.

"In desperation, we asked her mum if we could pray over Pasang and said we believed that God would heal her. Pasang's mum agreed; we also frantically e-mailed all our link churches asking them to pray for her."

So, do you believe in miracles?

"Two days later, we could not believe our eyes," Tracy continues. "Pasang was sat up, had been eating and was so loud and happy we couldn't shut her up. I checked her charts to see if she had been given any other medicine but she hadn't."

Jason and Tracy had had doubts about their prayer being answered but knew they had support from home. "It was brilliant to see the answer and also to see how all our link churches rallied together and stood with us in prayer," says Tracy. "For me that was one of the most touching things."

Pasang is now back home with her family.

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PRAYER - 2

Keep praying, but be thankful that God's answers are wiser than your prayers

CHURCH DIARY FOR JUNE

Wed	1	7.45 pm	Midways (Members Evening - My first day at work)
Thu	2	2-3.00 pm	Seekers Group
Sun	5	10.30 am	All Age Worship led by Janet and Bob Hamblin
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	6	2.45 pm	Fellowship (George and Annie - Musical Afternoon)
Tue	7	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	6	7.45 pm	Midways (Lynn Hazen - Flexibility is Fun)
Thu	7	2-3.00 pm	Seekers' Group
Fri	10	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	12	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	13	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	14	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	15	07.45 pm	Midways (Barbara Beven - Croydon Palace)
Thu	16	2-3.00 pm	Seekers Group
		8.00 pm	Pastoral Committee
Sat	18	9-12 noon	Big Brunch for Kenya
Sun	19	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	20	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Grace Ashwood - Life in the ATS)
Tue	21	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club - Lesley and Mike Mortley's visit to America
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Thu	23	2-3.00 pm	Seekers' Group
Fri	24	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	26	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Dr Arthur Miller
		8.00 pm	Service led by Janet and Bob Hamblin
Mon	27	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	28	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	29	7.45 pm	Fish and Chip Supper