

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear friends,

Happy new Year!



Not again John. You must be under the influence of something more than excess Ribena. Mhh! Let me have a think. When is the best time to use this greeting? The Ethiopians have their date, Orthodox's a different one, Chinese, etc. But seriously, when actually does the New Year begin? This is an important question because the beginning of a new year is the beginning of new things to many people. In Kenya January seems to have this magical feel. Children moving to new schools or another class is the most significant item then. Not so over here. September is the thing. Time to say bye bye to summer holidays and a time when all things are moving on not least children changing classes, schools etc. Time to rebuild the deflated bank accounts.

In the Methodist churches September seems to be the appropriate time to say happy New Year. The year closes somewhere around June/July with the major conference then there is the break in August and behold all things new in September. And for me who has just brought a group who were holidaying and working hard in Kenya, sure September is the time to say, 'Happy New Year!' No church knows that better than Martin Way. September is usually the time we hold our church anniversary and gift day service. We have just had one already. It got me thinking about anniversaries.

Anniversaries are often very poignant occasions in our lives especially when we have lost a loved one during the past year or things that have meant so much to us are no longer there. Anniversaries highlight the fact that life consists of change and nothing stands still whether we like it or not. Indeed, whenever Faith and I look at our wedding photo album, we are made aware of changes that have happened or are in the

process of happening. For example, there are people who appear in the photographs who are no longer physically present with us now; there are physical changes in the town and the Church where we got married; and last, but by no means least, there are changes which have taken place within ourselves over the past ten years (and I'm not just talking about the few extra grey hairs on my beard!!).

Church Anniversaries are no less poignant than our own personal anniversaries. This year in particular we thought about the foundation stone and discussed the new foundations that we lay in life. As we celebrated our Church Anniversary this year, I was aware of changes that have happened in our Church. We cannot deny the fact that in the life of Martin Way there are people who are no longer physically present with us but whose witness and faith have paved the way for new members to join our Church family. We cannot deny the fact that physical changes have taken place in our area and at Martin Way where we worship Sunday by Sunday. Whenever I visit with Fred and Doreen they remind me of how congested Martin Way is compared to when they settled not so few years ago. Lastly, but by no means least, there are changes which have taken place within ourselves and, pray God, will continue to take place as we allow God to have His way in our lives and in our Church communities.

The Christian gospel is essentially a 'gospel of change' for it speaks of a God who changes and transforms the lives of people. In the Gospels we read of those who rejected the 'good news' of Jesus simply because embracing it meant they had to change their thinking and their lifestyle. They weren't prepared to do that so they died spiritually.

However, those who embraced the change which God's Holy Spirit brought in their lives found it to be a liberating moment for they were enabled to see things through the eyes of faith and that made a big difference.

It puzzles me why the Church, which proclaims a 'gospel of change',

often seems so reluctant to embrace change of any kind at all. Surely, if we truly believe that God makes a difference to people's lives then we have a Christian responsibility to use the resources we have, whether it's people, money or property and to do all we can to ensure people know about the good news of Jesus before it's too late. If we don't believe that God can change the lives of people or that the Church has an important part to play in bringing about that change, then we have lost our sense of mission and the Church just becomes a glorified social club.

A ministerial colleague of mine shared with me recently how he had been called to the bedside of a man who was dying. This man had lived a wayward kind of life and he wanted to make his peace with God and with his family before it was too late. It was a huge privilege for my colleague to lead that man to Christ and to witness the 'change' which God brought about before the man died.

The best form of change is the kind that we can prepare for and plan for so we can make the transition from one state to another gradually, before circumstances overtake us and we're forced into change. For example, most firms these days lay on pre-retirement courses for those who are making the transition from full-time paid employment to retirement and this can help people to adapt to that particular change in their lives.

No one pretends that change of any kind is easy. We are all creatures of habit – we do certain things at a certain time and in a certain way and when those 'familiar' ways are changed, we feel extremely vulnerable. However, change is often not as bad as we make it out to be. In fact, it can actually lead us into new ways of living and working which bring their own rewards.

One minister told a story of how she remembers visiting a lady who always used to do her washing using a twintub. It seemed like hard work to her but she was used to it so she carried on as she had always

done. Then one day, the machine broke down and could not be repaired because the model was obsolete. Consequently, her daughter persuaded her to buy a ‘new fangled’ washing machine. The lady was anxious about how to work this new machine but now she wouldn’t be without it. ‘Why did I leave it so long to make the change?’ she told me.

Anniversaries are times of reflection and thanksgiving for what has been but they must also be occasions when we take time to consider our present situation honestly and plan for the future. And what’s true of personal anniversaries is also reflected in our celebration of a Church Anniversary. So on our Church Anniversary & Gift Day, we gave thanks for those who laid the foundations, built our Church and established a community of faith here at Martin Way. We owe it to those people to have the vision and the courage to embrace change just as they did. We also owe it to future generations of Martin Way to experience the life-changing love of God. The words of the hymnwriter echo loud and clear:

‘The Church of Christ, in every age
Beset by change, but Spirit-led,
Must claim and test its heritage
And keep on rising from the dead.

We have no mission but to serve
In full obedience to our Lord:
To care for all, without reserve,
And spread his liberating word.’

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John' or similar, with a large, sweeping initial stroke.



Burning Questions

with Rob Frost and Guests

An audience-led panel discussion event hosted by Rob Frost

A panel of significant Christian leaders from politics, the arts and the church will be looking at today's current affairs from a biblical perspective. You will have the opportunity to help set the agenda and engage in the discussion if you wish to do so. This will be an informative and fast-moving event looking at local or national issues. The evening will be recorded live and broadcast in a prime time slot on Premier Christian Radio.

What's your burning question?

What should be the Christian response to climate change?
Is the church doing enough to prevent the slide into gang culture in our inner cities?
Should Christian values shape Government legislation?

On 23rd October, at Holy Trinity Church Wimbledon, 234 The Broadway, I'll be hosting a panel of distinguished church leaders; we'll answer questions put by you, the audience.

There are so many issues for Christians in today's society - moral, theological, legal and more - so come along and join the debate!

Rob Frost

*For more information go to the Premier Christian Website
www.premier.org.uk*

News from Synod

September 2007



Dear friends

The young worship leaders from Leytonstone ably led our morning worship as we gathered in Synod at Methodist Central Hall Westminster on the 8th September to *take a good look*.

We **looked backwards** at the Methodist Conference, through the eyes of 3 of our representatives. Apart from a debate on climate change much of the Conference was focussed on proposed changes to the Connexional Team. This debate was the culmination of several years of hard work. Conference's broad acceptance of the proposals mean that many processes will be simplified and more flexible, allowing the Team to adapt without major upheaval; making it more fit for purpose in the 21st century and more able to play its part in developing the priorities of the Methodist Church.

We **looked within** through the perspectives of young people - with Lindsey MacFarlane, the Croydon Circuit youth worker; Peter Baffoe, a member of the Association of Black Methodist Youth Clubs Exec; and Chidi Onyeforo, Chair of the Methodist Youth Exec. They challenged us to offer appropriate pastoral care and nurture to the young people in our churches, to receive the gifts they offer, make sure they know what's happening and - literally - put youth concerns higher up the Church agenda.

We **looked forward** to a number of vision and training days that are happening in the District and heard news of new opportunities, as well as a significant challenge to recruit and train new young Local Preachers. For further details see the centre pages.

We **looked around** us at the impact of climate change and the damage being done to the environment by our excessive consumption of the world's resources. We heard of the impact climate change on our

brothers and sisters in the Pacific, including the islands of Tuvalu where 20% of the population have had to leave due to the rising sea level – the first official climate change refugees. Jennifer Potter reflected theologically on why we should be concerned and David Craine, a local preacher in Harlesden and Mayor’s Advisor, gave a London perspective, highlighting the urgent need for us all to start making small changes in the way we use resources **now**, and indicating there is only a 10 year window in which to make significant change.

The themes of the synod were offered up in worship at the end of our day, including testimonies from Parchmore (solar panels on the roof), the Forest Hill junior stewards (a 12 and 13 year-old who are part of the leadership team) and Patrick Kandeh (who candidated for ministry from Walworth and has recently arrived as a probationer minister in the Bromley Circuit). As a new Methodist year begins everyone was challenged to identify one new thing we will do or to which we will (re)commit ourselves personally and one new thing we should be taking back to our churches and circuits. What page will we contribute to the ongoing story of Methodism in London?

It turned out to be a long day, with Synod overrunning - and we have been properly challenged to manage the time better in future. Part of the dilemma is that there is so much bubbling up in the District – and that’s something we want to celebrate!

At the start of this new year you too are challenged to **take a good look**: at your lifestyle and vocation; with others at the pattern of life in the Circuit churches and their local communities. **Take a good look** and reflect on what you see. Where is God at work? Where is good news needed? What should come to an end? What needs to be done in fresh ways? What needs to be started? Who might we be working with? Like the connexional team we need to develop more flexible structures that are fit for purpose, discerning where God is already at work and joining in.

Ermal Kirby

Stuart Jordan

Jenny Impey

23rd Psalm

(Modern version)

The Lord is my pace setter, I shall not rush.

He makes me stop for quiet intervals.

He provides me with images of stillness which restore my serenity.

He leads me in ways of efficiency through calmness of mind.

And His guidance is peace.

Even though I have a great many things to accomplish each day, I will not fret,

For His presence is here.

His timelessness, His all-importance will keep me in balance.

He prepares refreshment and renewal in the midst of my activity.

By anointing my mind with oils of tranquillity,

My cup of joyous energy overflows.

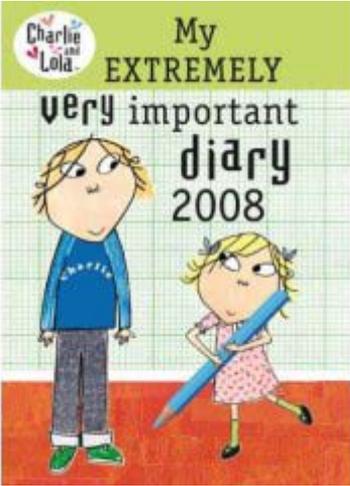
Truly harmony and effectiveness shall be the fruits of my hours,

For I shall walk in the pace of my Lord

And dwell in His house for ever.

Tokyo Megashie

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH - OCTOBER 2007



Have you got a diary for 2008 yet? I have - and I've also got my first booking for a talk in January. Come to think of it we spend much of our time looking ahead. Holiday dates have to be booked months in advance. Those of us who take services have to submit dates for the next quarter soon after the present one begins. All sorts of preparations have to be made in advance.

But also we wish our lives away sometimes. If we are working we find ourselves longing for the next week-end on Monday morning. We start as children, looking forward to birthday parties, outings and special treats, and we carry on from there. Looking forward becomes part of our way of life and there is the inner feeling that somehow the best is yet to be.

We show optimism when we plan ahead. Years ago when the preachers for next Sunday were announced, the proviso "D.V." was added - "God Willing". I may give an undertaking to talk to a group next January, but I can never be absolutely certain that I shall be able to fulfill that undertaking. All of us are in God's hands and he has plans for each one of us which may or may not coincide with the plans we make for ourselves.

We should also think twice about wishing our time away. Time is one of God's most precious gifts to us but none of us, young or old, knows exactly how much time we have at our disposal. That is just as well when we come to think of it. The fact that we can never be sure what lies ahead makes life all the more valuable, mysterious and intriguing. As we grow older we begin to realize the wisdom of just taking one day at a time and for being thankful for each day we are given.

Bill Cox

OUR SOGGY SWANAGE TRIP



Despite severe flooding in many parts of England, a group of merry campers from Martin Way descended onto Tom's Field in Swanage for a week of fellowship, fun and sun.

No one (not even Janet and Bob, who bought us all cream teas) had ever experienced the sight that greeted us all. The field had more or less turned to sludge and welly boots had become the height of fashion.

With the inclement weather restricting our outdoor activities we all rallied through and amused ourselves with coffee and chat under the cover of canvas. Through the week we did manage to catch some sun and took advantage by heading for the beach or visiting local attractions.

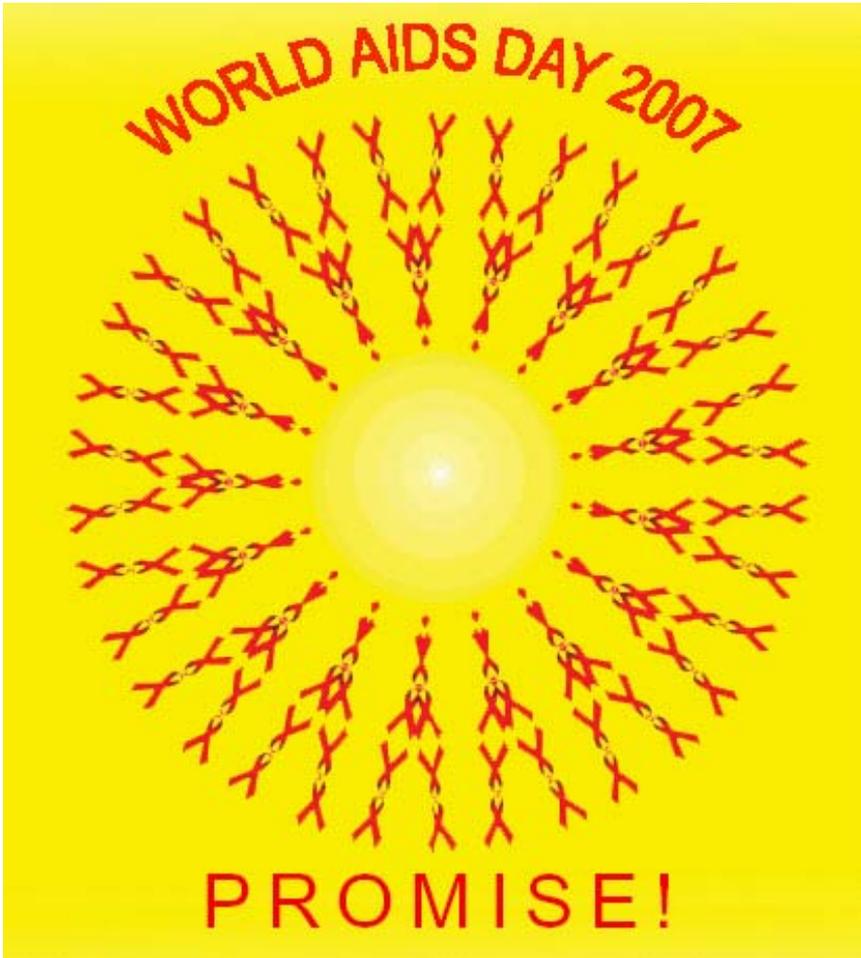
I think that most of us hardened campers would agree that it was definitely the wettest Swanage ever!



*Jane and Colin
Smith*

A MULTI FAITH SERVICE

6.30 pm, Sunday 25th November,
Southwark Cathedral, London Bridge



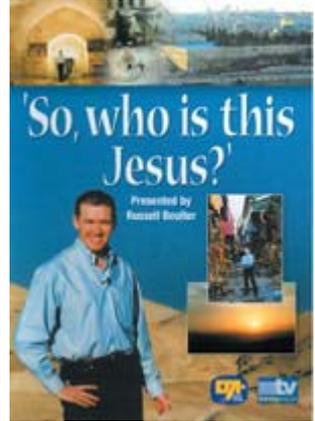
Further details available from Steve Penrose,
LEAT, St Paul's Church,
Lorimore Square, London SE17 2QU
steve@leat.org.uk 020 7793 0338

DVD REVIEWS from RE:FRESH BOOKS

So, who is this Jesus?

Presented by Russell Boulter - £8.99

This is an excellent DVD for use with teenagers or seeker groups. It comprises three 17 minute sessions which run consecutively but can be played individually. Set in Israel, it begins with an Old Testament background, from Abraham to the baptism of Jesus; the second episode looks at the birth of Jesus and key elements in his life leading up to the claim "I am the way, the truth and the life" while the third episode looks especially at the Garden of Gethsemane, the trial of Jesus, his death and resurrection.



There are also additional features including a 19-minute testimony by Brian Russ, jailed for attempted murder, 21 questions about the Christian faith, and historical information on Christian Social reformers.

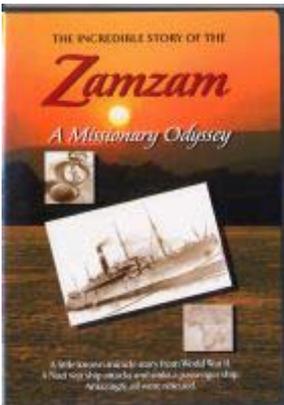
The language, format and choice of Russell Boulter as the Narrator make this an easy DVD to watch. It moves quickly and yet provides a solid foundation for the message, including the significance of animal sacrifices, the meaning of new birth and the importance of the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is filmed against appropriate backgrounds including a Nazareth carpenter's shop, a marketplace, the shores of the Sea of Galilee etc. with short vignettes to add interest.

Zamzam

A Missionary Odyssey

A remarkable, true World War II story about a passenger liner carrying 144 missionaries that was sunk by a Nazi warship off the coast of South Africa. Miraculously all the missionaries survived.

The 30-minute documentary, in colour and black & white, includes pictures by a *Life* Magazine photographer, who happened to be on the ship, and interviews with some of the survivors.



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

NEWS FROM KENYA

10th September 2007

Habari, Jambo, Cyfarchion,
Greetings to everyone,

Belated greetings from Kenya. Have been back for 5 weeks already and this is the first opportunity to write. The first 2 weeks was a bit chaotic- visiting up to 30 different projects with proposals for hospitals, clinics, tree plantations, beehives, goat herding, women's cooperative groups etc etc. It is obvious that Rafiki trust will not be able to support all of these. As a group and individually, we can only relate to what we have seen and heard, present the people's stories and hope that there will be individuals who will feel it in their hearts to help, be it financially or through prayer support.



Moira and Joyce stayed with me in Magina for an extended 2 weeks and, being loyal nurses that they are, were able to share their expertise and give valuable advice with regard to setting up a Health promotion facility. Jambo Sana as it is called, is now under way and the new building near completion. The latest plans are for it to incorporate a Feeding program for the orphans of the area and provide health and hygiene advice with regard to food handling, clean water and sanitation. Since there already exists a Pharmacy in Magina that supplies medication at subsidised costs and the nearest hospital in Kijabe quite accessible (though too expensive for many of the locals) a Health facility is not a priority in Magina at present. It is hoped instead that many of the children who will visit the Centre will be helped in some ways through teaching nutrition and provide us with some insight into some of the causes of why the children are hungry or malnourished.

Last week I visited Kenyatta National Hospital and came away armed with colourful posters on nutrition, breastfeeding and also health promotion leaflets. UNICEF 's booklet 'Facts for Life' is one that is recommended and which I hope to get from K.I.C.C. (no, not Kensington) but Kenya International Conference Centre next week. Since the school term has started I have been distributing the First-Aid

kits that was donated to us and the staff were delighted with them. In fact, just explaining the contents of the pack to the teachers, turned out to be a teaching session in itself. I have been invited back this week to speak to the children on various health topics as well as hand out some games for the Kindergarten class.

There is still no water supply in this part of Magina, despite being assured that 'they are working on it' a common theme here. Meantime some of our kind neighbours have been going to the Dam to collect as much as a donkey load can carry. The V.I.C.Church next door have said that we can use their well which I am told is 100ft deep. I managed to carry x 3 bottles (10 litres) in a wheelbarrow and found it sufficient exercise for one day! As for the handwashing - forget it! I've been taking my laundry to Kijabe and spending most weekends there. I am obviously not an African woman, yet!

All for now.

Gwen Wildman

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WHAT'S IN A WORD

Translators of the Bible often have difficulty in finding the right word.

When Dr Harold Moulton was translating the Bible for a group of Eskimos he was having a problem finding a word for 'Joy', so that he could interpret the meaning of '*There will be much joy over one sinner that repents*' .



As he went for a walk to ponder the problem he came across a dog enjoying a bone and wagging his tail. 'There was the solution', he thought.

He rushed home where he wrote, "*There will be much 'tail wagging' in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repents*"



FAIRTRADE RECIPES

Banana Choc Chip Muffins

Makes 7-8 large muffins



100g plain flour
40g melted butter

40g cornmeal

1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

90g unrefined (golden) Fairtrade sugar

2 ripe Fairtrade bananas, well mashed

50g Fairtrade milk chocolate, chopped into small chunks

1 egg, beaten

1 teaspoon baking powder

80ml buttermilk

Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6. Sieve flour, cornmeal, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda together into a large bowl. Stir in sugar. In a separate bowl, mix together the butter, egg, bananas and buttermilk. Add wet ingredients to dry and mix gently (do not over-mix). Fold in the chocolate chips. Fill a muffin tin (ideally lined with muffin cases) to just under the rim. Bake for about 30 minutes until golden-brown and firm to the touch. Allow to cool in the tin.

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SIGMA CHRISTMAS PRODUCTION

Sigma – (which used to be run by Janet & Bob Hamblin) are now meeting every Sunday at 4pm at Martin Way Methodist Church for a Christmas Production called ‘Topsy Turvy Christmas’, to be performed there on Sunday 16th December about 8pm.

(Time still to be confirmed.) If you enjoy singing/acting/dancing, please come and join us.



If you require more information please contact Anne Conquest.

Tel no: (020) 8942 7147.

Faiths in Community: Working Together

A meeting for parishes, groups and individuals

...interested in building relationships with different faith communities

... so that we can work together in our local communities and wider society

With Rev Richard Cook, Bishop's Adviser for Inter-Faith Relations, and staff from the Social Responsibility Department.

Wednesday 10th October

7.30pm-9.30pm

St Paul's Church, Oriental Road, Woking GU22 7BD

Please tell us if you are coming: email pat_jones@cofeguildford.org.uk
or telephone 01483 237866



Two opportunities for anyone interested or involved in inter-faith activities

Christians and Muslims: Working Together

A seminar for those engaged or interested in inter-faith work at local level.

Speakers

Rev Canon Guy Wilkinson, Archbishop's Adviser on Inter-Faith Relations
Dilwar Hussain, Research Fellow, Islamic Foundation, Leicester.

Thursday 8th November

6pm-8.30pm

The Oak Suite, University of Surrey

For more information or to reserve places, please email Pat Jones on pat_jones@cofeguildford.org.uk or telephone 01483 237866

PUZZLE CORNER

22 Books of the Bible have had their letters jumbled up, can you work out which books they are?

s e e s i g n

h e m w a t t

u s e d o x

v i s i t c l u e

n a i l e d

n o m i n a l t a s t e

v i o l e n t e r a

l a s t a g a i n

h a z e p h i n a

a s h e e p s i n

o n m a r s

m o o d y t e n u r e

h o b a i d a

i j e e r h a m

h e m p l i o n

a s h o e

t i l e a c c e s s e s

b e s h r e w

s o c i a l s o n s

s h i p i n p i p a l

h u m a n

c h a i r h a z e

CHURCH DIARY



Tue	2	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	7	10.30 am	Harvest Festival led by Mr David Eagle <i>followed by a Ploughman's Lunch at 12.30pm</i>
Tue	9	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	10	7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>More tales from behind bars</i> - Jo Allan
Fri	12	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sat	13	10-12noon	Midways Coffee Morning - proceeds to Church Funds
Sun	14	10.30 am	Holy Communion Service led by Rev Barrie Tabraham
Tue	16	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Galapagos</i> - Pauline Riley
Sun	21	10.30 am	Praise Service led by Brenda Cannon & Tony Loft
Tue	23	10-12 noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	24	10.30 am	Morning Communion led by Rev John Nyota
		7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>Quiz</i> - Janet Laker
Fri	26	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	28	10.30am	Morning Service led by Rev Andrew Jacobson
		6.30 pm	Bible Study led by Valerie Ashcroft
Tue	30	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer

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

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



Happy Birthday

and especially to:

Jennifer Smith on 13th October

Tyler Butland-Brooks on 26th October

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OUR COMMITMENT TO GOD

- Continue to meet with other Christians to worship and praise God (no matter who the preacher is or what our likes and dislikes are - it's part of our commitment)
- Join a house group and or a bible study group.
- Continue to meet with other Christians in fellowship / friendship.
- Continue to pray unceasingly on your own but what about joining a prayer group - remember Jesus' words - where 2 or more are gathered in My name then God is also there.
- Live our lives as Jesus taught us. Step out in faith and talk with your neighbour/s about what it is you see in and feel about church and why you come.

Tony Loft



The Christmas Tree Festival is to be held on Sunday 2 December between 2-6 pm.

We would also like to ask if anyone wants to sponsor and decorate a tree as an individual or family group and if so to contact either myself, Abby, or Jo by the end of October. Or Email me at jane.bryan@colony101uk.com

Jane Bryan

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**PUZZLE
CORNER
ANSWERS**

Solution to the Bible
themed Crossword
from last month's
Newsletter

D	E	S	P	A	I	R		R	E	S	T	I	N	G		
E		T		G		I		U		A		M		O		
P	U	R	E	R		G	A	L	A	T	I	A	N	S		
E		A		E		H		E		I		G		P		
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A	M	B	E	R				P	R	O	T	E	C	T	O	R
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L		E		A		C				S		L		N		A
S	T	R	A	N	G	E				T	R	E	A	S	O	N

Items for the **November Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox,
(email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 22nd October** at the latest