

## MINISTER'S LETTER

On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, Irish rock band U2 release *No Line On The Horizon* – their twelfth studio album.



Undoubtedly many pages in the music press will be devoted to it since there at least the release of a new U2 album is always seen as a great and significant event. I have something of an interesting relationship with U2 – I am convinced that they have something important to say (and so continue to buy their albums) but often struggle to connect with the way in which they say it (and so consequently don't listen to them much).

There are odd tracks that really work for me though and they serve to keep me interested. I still haven't found what I'm looking for (*The Joshua Tree*, Island Records, 1987) is one such track, another is Walk On (*All That You Can't Leave Behind*, Island Records, 2000). The latter picks up the theme of the album's title and is a song about a journey. It speaks of packing a suitcase for a place none of us has been: a place that doesn't need to be 'seen to be believed' but rather 'believed to be seen'. It describes the journey as a 'journey home' and home, it says, is not where the heart is but, interestingly, where the hurt is – for this is a journey that will take us to those places where people are hurting most. The song turns upside down some of our lazier assumptions. It speaks of an upside down world that I think is identifiable with the Kingdom of God.

And on this journey the song says we have to decide what we take with us and what we leave behind. 'The only baggage you can bring' sings Bono, 'is all that you can't leave behind.'

Throughout the journey of our lives we gather things around us as we go along: a language, hopefully some knowledge and wisdom, but also people, practices, property and possessions. We surround ourselves with these things – some of them important and necessary for living – and they not only become part of who we are, sometimes they even define who we are. In part that's OK. But when what car we drive, or what clothes we wear becomes of utmost importance, clearly it's not

only nonsense – it’s damaging nonsense.

Well the church – being a community of individuals – is kind of the same and in time certain places and buildings, a particular language, and some incredibly rich traditions and practices have all arisen and become important. And it’s OK that these things become part of who we are – and some of them are very helpful indeed – but when they begin to *define* who we are, we do run the risk of letting these things become too important for they can in time obscure the message and hinder effective discipleship. When this happens it can all become damaging nonsense.

Jesus challenges us to follow *him*. Not a philosophy or a code of ethics but him: a person. And following speaks of movement, of journey. If what we’re actually saying to Jesus is “I will follow you as long as I can take all that I want with me” or “I will follow you as long as I don’t have to move out of my comfort zone” something has gone wrong.

For Jesus is clear, there’s no such security or comfort to be found on his journey and it’s *his* journey he calls us to follow: a journey of hardship; a journey through prejudice; a journey of suffering and persecution; but ultimately a journey of hope. And to those of us who say we’ll follow but who’re tied to things that prevent us from truly following on this journey, Jesus has some strong, uncompromising words.

When Jesus’ request to the man to follow was met with ‘Lord, first let me go and bury my father’ Jesus said, ‘Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.’ To the next person who said ‘I will follow you, but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family’ Jesus replied, ‘No-one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the Kingdom of God.’ (Luke 10: 59-62)

Jesus invites us to follow him. On this journey there is always an opportunity to be seized to do something new. We need to keep journeying on, following Christ, proclaiming the Kingdom of God, and leaving behind those things that perhaps we have been allowing to get in the way for a while. Leaving behind those things that have begun to define (incorrectly) who we are and what we’re about as church.

Leaving behind those things that – however important they might’ve become to us over the years – are ultimately peripheral.

Our task during Lent (as it always is) is in part to consider the journey ahead, to see where it might take us and what we’ll need to sustain us along the way. It’ll not be an easy journey but all we need to take with us are the essential things: all that we can’t leave behind.

The U2 song ends by suggesting that we can leave most things behind on our journey home. For those of us who want to hold on to too many things, Jesus says, stay behind – the dead will be left to bury their dead. For those of us who truly want to follow – let’s begin to decide, individually and together, what we’ll take with us on the journey and what we’ll leave behind.

Let us pray that God will help us each to choose wisely and courageously as we prepare for the journey ahead. And let us hope that (for those of us who buy it) there will be more food for the journey for us on U2’s new offering.

With every blessing

*Paul*

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### **REV JOHN DAKIN**

It is with regret that we have to announce the death of Rev John Dakin on Friday 13th February 2009. John's funeral was on Thursday, 26th February, at the NE Surrey Crematorium before which there was a thanksgiving service at Martin Way Methodist Church.



John was a good friend of both Bill Cox and Fred Warren, who we have already sadly said goodbye to in the last few months. But it is a happy thought that the three of them are now reunited with each other in the Lord’s presence.

*Andrew Fox (Editor)*



## Memories of Rev John Dakin

“Hello, good afternoon and welcome” that’s what John would have said if he were standing here. I will always remember him starting his services with those words. I first met John 40 years ago when I was a young man starting on my walk of faith, and he was the Superintendent Minister based at Tooting Church in the Tooting Mission Circuit, which I remember had lovely comfortable cinema style chairs not like the wooden ones at my church - Southfields Central Hall.

John always had time for everyone he met and would love to talk about football and or cricket especially if it involved Yorkshire and on more than one occasion he would use his love of cricket to illustrate his sermons/message.

John was a walking storybook with the many stories he had and would always have a story to fit the occasion.

I never got to hear John preach very often, mostly I heard him at my own church. The times I did hear him, I found his stories about almost anything wonderful examples that help tremendously with understanding the message he was delivering.

Also he would often say “as a matter of fact” when given his sermon at the point when it would be just that – it was fact, not fiction or made up, but fact.

I have a lot to thank John for; I was encouraged by him both through his preaching and his love of God, which came shining through whenever I spoke to him.

Maralyn and myself were involved in running the youth club at Southfields and the circuit also had a good number of young people in some of the other churches. When it was decided to take a group from the circuit away for a holiday in the West Country and for this we needed to hire three mini buses. One I was going to drive so on the day I had to collect the bus John drove Maralyn and myself to the hire company and

all I can say about the drive was that it was interesting, but we were very thankful to John for the lift.

Maralyn and I moved to Martin Way Church when our daughter was 21 months old and I'm not sure if we followed John or he followed us but we all ended up in this circuit. John once again my Superintendent Minister based at Raynes Park Church. John would always be ready to offer help in any way he could and right up to just before Christmas he was planning to come to Raynes Park church to hear me preach at my trial service [mid way through my studies of the Faith and Worship course.] (Yes I started late in life training to be a local preacher, but as John and many others kept telling me it's never too late to do what God is calling you to do.) When I spoke to Lily just a few weeks after my trial service, the first thing she said was that John wanted to know how I got on, did I pass muster, and yes I passed. So again; even towards the end he was still thinking about others.

I want to finish this small tribute to John by summing up what he was to me. John was a Great man of God who loved his Lord and always lived his faith openly. He was a man of stories and who loved his cricket and football. I just pray that I can be just a little like him and live my life for God in all I do and say.

*Tony Loft*

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## **THANK YOU**

I, together with my family, would like to thank so many friends at Martin Way fro their kindness, love, prayers and messages received after the passing of a beloved, husband, father and Grandpa. A special thank you to Derek and Graham for their valuable help with travelling.

John wasn't able to join in worship as often as he would have liked, but he was always so very pleased to receive such a warm welcome from so many friends. He valued their friendship over so many years, and enjoyed very much being the Superintendent of the Circuit for seven years. It was a very happy time for him.

*Lilly Dakin*

# PUZZLE CORNER

Write the answers to the clues in the boxes to the right of each clue  
Copy the letters in the numbered boxes to the other boxes  
 in the boxes below with the same number.

This will give you verse from the Bible.



**a short distance away**

5		26	18	25	23

**the distance anything extends**

29	9		30		31

**speak loudly**

16		2	22	24

**Damascus, capital of \_\_\_\_\_**

28	6	3	10	13	

**\_\_\_\_\_ of iniquity (2Th.2:7)**

4	20	11	32				15

**into Abraham's \_\_\_\_\_ (Lu.16:22)**

21		14	7	19

**\_\_\_\_\_, fork and spoon**

8	17	27	1	12

1	2	3

4	5

6	7	8	9	

10	11

12	13	14	15

16	17	18

19	20

21	22	23	24	25	26	

27	28

29	27	30	31	32	



**CHRISTIAN  
SOLIDARITY  
WORLDWIDE**  
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

## **CSW CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 2008**

Gwen, Moira and I attended the Christian Solidarity Conference (CSW) on Saturday 9th November.

Cindy Kent opened the proceedings and updated the assembled crowd on the latest news and events of CSW.

A speaker from the All India Christian Council spoke about antichristian violence which has taken place in Orissa state, India. The violence, which began in August 2008 continued for two months and resulted in the displacement of an estimated 50,000 people and the deaths of at least 60, many by burning or burying alive. His talk served as an inspiring guide on how to pray for our brothers and sisters in India.

We heard a moving testimony by Michael Oluwasesin of Nigeria, whose young wife was killed by a rioting mob. Christiana was a teacher and had that day been invigilating an examination with Muslim girls. She caught one of the girls cheating. The girl immediately, falsely accused Christiana of desecrating the Koran, and motivated a violent attack. Christiana tried to run away but was eventually caught and stabbed to death. Michael has been left with two young children and they are all deeply traumatised. Instinct initially left Michael with feelings of anger, revenge and confusion, Michael has since learnt to place his faith and future in God's hands. Now, he likens Christiana's death to that of Jesus'. And having walked through the garden of Gethsemane himself, Michael has learnt to embrace God's will and higher purposes. Michael is determined to honour his wife's memory in a way she would have wanted. A deeply compassionate and caring woman, Christiana had a special place in her heart for underprivileged people suffering from HIVAIDS. Michael has therefore launched the Christiana Oluwasesin AIDS Foundation, which will provide humanitarian assistance to those infected with HIVAIDS, and will also seek to assist victims of persecution.

We had a video link with Helen Berhane the gospel singer and former prisoner of conscience. She was put in prison after releasing an album of gospel singing, and was very badly treated. Part of the time she was kept in a shipping container which is very, very hot during the day and freezing cold at night. She was also beaten by a guard and when released from prison was unable to stand or walk. She was helped to escape to Sudan and eventually granted political asylum in Denmark, where she now lives with her daughter. When the link began and Helen appeared she was given a standing ovation. After answering questions she sang two of her songs.

I stayed in the main hall and listened to Bishop John Perry a CSW board member speaking on Christian teaching in the face of global opposition. Gwen and Moira went to another room and heard Assad's "An Apostate's Testimony"

We were also resourced with some excellent worship from singer/songwriter Ian White and an encouraging word from CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas.

This was an excellent event and we all left feeling inspired.

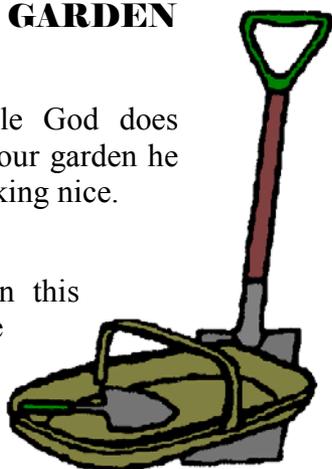
*Joyce Plant*

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## **SPRING CLEANING IN THE GARDEN**

Once again Spring has arrived and while God does marvellous work at making things grow in our garden he does need a hand at keeping the gardens looking nice.

We are holding our Garden Spring Clean this month on Saturday 28th March. Please come along if you have some spare time, as many hands make light work.



# WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



## In Christ There Are Many Members Yet One Body

A Service Prepared by Christian Women of Papua New Guinea

# Friday 6th March 2009

**10.30am**

**St. Mary's Merton**

**Church Path, Merton Park**

**Speaker Canon Hilary Johnson**

and

**8.00pm**

**All Saints' Church**

**All Saints' Road, Wimbledon**

**Speaker Mrs. Brenda Cannon**

*Coffee and Tea served after each service*



**ALL WELCOME  
MEN WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**



**CHURCH  
DIARY**



Sun	1	10.30 am	All Age Worship led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	3	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	4	7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>Brian &amp; Irene Goldsmith - Pre-Raphaelites</i>
Thurs	5	8.00 pm	Church Council
Fri	6	10.30 am	Women's World Day of Prayer at St Mary's
		12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
		8.00 pm	Women's World Day of Prayer at All Saint's Church
Sun	8	10.30am	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	10	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	15	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Brenda Cannon
Tue	17	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Gwen Edwards - St John's Ambulance Brigade</i>
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	18	7.45 pm	Midways Group - Cherkley Court Gardens
Fri	20	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	22	10.30 am	Mothering Sunday with Sunday Club
			Anniversary and Parade Service led by David Somers
		6.30 pm	Bible Study led by David Eagle
Tue	24	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sat	28	9.00 am	Church Gardening
Sun	29	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Paul Timmis

*Please refer to the Website ([www.martinway.org.uk](http://www.martinway.org.uk)) or Weekly Notice Sheet for any additional information*

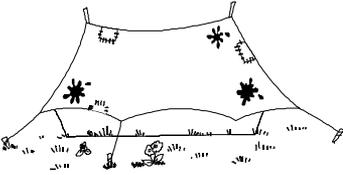
We wish all of those who celebrate a birthday  
in March a very

*Happy Birthday*



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## **CHURCH CAMP ?**



Would anyone like to go on a Church Camp this summer? I am hoping to plan a week away to Kingsbridge Devon (near to Janet & Bob Hamblin) from Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August.

We have a few options for camping round the area in Kingsbridge – one which is only licensed for 10 tents and 10 caravans, so, assuming there are already regular bookings in place, it may not work. There is a much bigger site but the owner is also away at present, but we will find out as soon as possible.

I am unsure whether we will find anywhere as flexible as Tom's Field in Swanage where we have had previous Church Camps, so it's pretty important that I find out numbers fairly soon. If I can book for the people who can say yes definitely now, we could always see if we can accommodate any who make their minds up later. That might mean we are split but would still be possible.

If you would like to come along please let me know by Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March.

My email is [abbyloft @googlemail.com](mailto:abbyloft@googlemail.com)  
Mobile number 07739185814  
Home number 02085439093

As I said before it is important that I get confirmed numbers ASAP and after that I'll arrange a meeting to discuss all details.

*Abby Herring*



## FAIRTRADE RECIPES

### Fairtrade Banana Bread

By television chef Michael Barry.  
Makes one loaf.

- 225 g (8 oz) self-raising flour
- 100 g (4 oz) butter
- 150 g (5 oz) caster sugar
- 450 g (1 lb) Fairtrade bananas (the  
gooier the better)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- 175 g (6 oz) mixed dried fruit



Pre-heat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas Mark 4. Peel and mash the bananas, and then mix all the ingredients except the dried fruit together. You can do this in a food processor, or by hand in a basin. When they're all thoroughly mixed, add the dried fruit.

Spoon the mixture into a 1 kg (2 lb) non-stick loaf tin, spread it out evenly and bake it for 1½ hours.

The loaf is done when a skewer pushed into its middle comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack before slicing.

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The question of bread for myself is a material question;  
but the question of bread for my neighbour, for everyone,  
is a spiritual and religious question.

**Nikolai Berdyaev**

*(Russian Religious Philosopher 1874-1948)*

Items for the **April Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox,  
(email: [roife@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:roife@hotmail.co.uk)) by **Sunday 22nd March** at the latest