

MINISTER'S LETTER



As August and summer draw to a close, I find myself on the eve of travelling to the Greenbelt Festival once again. This is a journey that I have looked forward to each year since my first time in 1985. Even the rain that we've had this week - and the thought of spending a few nights under canvas - hasn't dampened my spirits though, of course, I am hoping for something of an improvement weather-wise.

At Greenbelt I find time and space to encounter new thoughts and ideas and discover fresh ways of looking at God, life and the world. Each year something inspires me in a particularly special way. One year it might be a piece of theatre, another it might be a musical performance. There again, it could be listening to an inspiring speaker or participating in an act of worship. So whilst I head off with thoughts as to what I will seek out this year, I have no way of knowing what is going to provide me with this year's "Greenbelt moment" until it happens. I call it a "Greenbelt moment" but I could just as easily label it a "God moment".

God moments aren't limited to Greenbelt, of course, or indeed any other church-related activity. God moments can be experienced at anytime, anywhere in any sphere of life. Perhaps one of the reasons that I experience them most August Bank Holiday weekends in a field at Greenbelt is because I'm expecting them then, I'm actively looking out for them. Perhaps when I'm at home I am less alert, less awake to the possibility of being so touched.

Many of you will know that I am a huge fan of Bruce Springsteen. I won't here eulogise over his lyrics, music or live performances. Instead, I simply wish to share with you something that he said in an interview a few years ago. Responding to a question about how he kept in touch with issues of social concern, he said,

'You have to remain interested and awake. You have to remain alert. You have to be constantly listening - and interested in listening - to what's going on every day. You have to remain interested in life and in

the way the world's moving. You have to be awake and listening...'

It would be easy enough to draw parallels between the task of socially engaged songwriters such as Springsteen and that of the church. For if the church fails to remain interested in, awake, alert and listening to issues of social concern, how can it truly continue to be the body of Christ? Ordinarily, that's how I would use this quote. Here though I simply wish to suggest that, if we wish to encounter God in the world, we would do well to take Springsteen's wise words and apply them to our daily lives. For if we cease to remain alert and awake to the possibility of being touched by God, if we cease to listen for the words of God in and through the discourse of others, if we cease to be interested in the world around us, how will God reach us? If, on the other hand, we approach life *expecting* to experience a God moment, well then my experiences of Greenbelt over the years would support the view that it becomes more than a distinct possibility. Seek and you shall find and all that.

With every blessing,

Paul

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Christmas Sigma

I have arranged with Paul that Sigma can lead the Carol Service again this year on Sunday 20th December.

I am really busy during September so am suggesting that we meet on Sunday 11th October at Martin Way 4pm. If anyone has any idea of carols or sketches/readings, bring along!



Hope you can make this day, please let anyone who maybe interested in joining us know.

Anne Conquest



Would you like to find out more about the work of St Raphael's? We are holding an open afternoon for faith group leaders and members involved in pastoral care from across Merton and Sutton. This will include displays about our work and tours of the hospice. Come at any time but there will be a short presentation at around 3.00 p.m.

OPEN AFTERNOON

Tuesday 6th October 2015 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm

St Bede's Conference Centre (behind the hospice)
London Road, North Cheam SM3 9DX
Please let us know if you are able to come
Kerry.thomas@straphaels Hospice.org.uk



St Raphael's Hospice offers palliative care to people facing life-limiting illnesses in the boroughs of Merton and Sutton

www.straphaels.org.uk | 020 8254 2450

Charity number 1068661

St Raphael's HOSPICE



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Bill Goodram

21st July 1921—20th June 2015

William Horace Goodrum was born at home in Hamilton Road, Wimbledon on 21st July 1921 - the only child born to May and Robert Goodrum. Robert, a printer by trade, had, like many young men of his generation, been called upon to serve his country in WW1. The man who subsequently returned from the battlefields some years before his son was born, did so deeply scarred by his experiences - something that undoubtedly impacted upon William during his formative years. Those years would largely be spent in Wimbledon - in Hamilton Road and then, later, Toynbee Road - although the family did move to Chingford when Bill, as he was more affectionately known, was in his early teens.

By now, his school years - which had begun in Raynes Park and had later continued at Pelham School - were largely behind him. Not that that concerned Bill unduly. Though he would later claim that he thought Pelham a good school, he'd still always maintain that he hated it!

Having left school, aged 14, Bill obtained a clerical position first in the offices of the London Fire Service and then, later, in the wages department of the grocery chain Home and Colonial Stores.

With Britain declaring war on Germany a little over a month after Bill had celebrated his eighteenth birthday, however, life would soon change beyond all recognition for him. Immediately called up to serve as ground crew in the RAF, Bill trained in Morecombe and was then posted to New Brunswick. Whilst the choppy Atlantic crossing was certainly more memorable than it was enjoyable, the time spent in Canada would prove to be a hugely positive experience - not least because of the welcome received from local people and the lifelong friendships that were duly forged as a result.

With Bill on the verge of pilot training, he received news from England that his father had died suddenly of Leukaemia. Granted compassionate leave, Bill returned home to be with his mother and saw out the rest of the war in Oxfordshire, helping to prepare gliders for the final invasion.

When the war was finally over and Bill had been de-mobbed, he returned to his position at Home and Colonial. Over the years the firm would acquire shares in some companies and merge with others. Whatever the incarnation - be it Maypole Dairies, Liptons, Presto or Safeway - Bill would serve the company faithfully, at various offices in the city and out at Hayes, Middlesex, until his retirement in 1986. We are though getting ahead of ourselves.

Shortly after the end of the war, Bill and his mother returned to Morden in order to be nearer to friends and relatives. To begin with they lived with May's brother Fred and his wife Winnie in Monkleigh Road. In 1949 they purchased 40 Westcroft Gardens, Morden. Whilst he could hardly have known it at the time, this would be home for Bill for the rest of his life.

After the move, Bill sought to immerse himself in community life by joining Martin Way Methodist Church. It was here that he met and fell in love with the organist's daughter, one Betty John. Bill and Betty married at Martin Way on 31st July 1954. Betty moved in to 40 Westcroft Gardens. A few years later, Bill's mother re-married and moved out.

John was born in 1958. Working long hours, Bill was always aware that holidays were hugely important. Occasionally these would see the family visit the Isle of Wight. More often than not, however, the destination of choice would be Southbourne, near Bournemouth. Having found somewhere that they liked, Bill and Betty were more than happy to return to it - and indeed to the same Guest House year after year. In fact, they'd even hire the same beach hut.

When not working or on holiday, Bill loved going to the theatre. Once he found a musical that he liked, *Oliver!* for example, he'd be more than happy to see it a number of times and indeed to listen to recordings of it at home. Bill's enthusiasm proved infectious and through it John's love of theatre was born.

As time passed, Bill and Betty, wanting a bigger family, decided to adopt. To everyone's delight, Nikki joined the family in 1968. Born prematurely, she required a lot of care. Beyond that, life continued in a very familiar pattern for Bill - with work, church (by now he had joined

the choir) and holidays in Southbourne providing something of a backdrop for family life. In time, a rather more adventurous journey was planned, and Bill was able to return to Canada, this time with his family by his side.

Following the return to these shores, the family received devastating news when Betty was diagnosed with breast cancer. A number of operations followed. These were difficult days for Bill who did his best to care for his family whilst still having to go off to work. With the help of others, not least Nikki's godparents, the dark days eventually passed and, as Betty's condition improved, life returned to something like normal.

When, in due course, Bill retired, he found more time to sing. In addition to the church choir, he joined the West Barnes Singers and, along with Betty, the Happy Wanderers group. These were good times. Happy holidays with close friends Graham and Valerie Currie were greatly enjoyed as were holidays to visit friends and relatives in Canada and times spent visiting and staying with John and Paula.

Following Betty's death in 1991, from a re-emergence of the cancer she'd recovered from 15 years earlier, life was understandably difficult for Bill. How could it not be? Their's had been a very happy marriage in which they remained very much in love and were deeply committed and fiercely loyal to one another. They worked well together. It was a huge loss. Understandably then it took a while for Bill to adjust to life without Betty by his side. But slowly, with the help of family and friends - and through his own determination - Bill began to live again.

There were monthly Scrabble evenings with friends. And there was always music. Bill continued his singing enthusiastically with both the Happy Wanderers and the West Barnes Singers. He put his accounting skills to good use with periods as treasurer for the West Barnes Singers and for Martin Way Methodist Church. More holidays with Valerie and Graham were enjoyed, as were visits to Canada with his cousin Peter, and holidays with sister-in-law Joan. There were caravan holidays with Nikki and Pete too - times spent in Sheringham when John was working the summer season there - and an inevitable return to Southbourne, to that Guest House and that beach hut.

In time there were grandchildren to delight in - and many, many happy times would be spent with David, born in 1988, Adam born in 1991 and Millie born in 1998. Grandad - or Grandad Bill - was a fine grandfather, and loved looking after and playing with all three of his grandchildren as much as they loved being with him. That's not to say that he'd let the children have their own way - particularly when they played the card game "Pairs" on the dining room table. That was a game that "Ruthless Bill" loved to win. And who knows, maybe that just taught the three of them to try harder. He was so proud of the two boys graduating from university, and of Millie's success at school and plans for university. There again, he never ceased to be proud of his own children, John and Nikki, for all that they achieved and for the people that they became.

As time passed, Bill became increasingly frail and dementia saw to it that he'd also become increasingly anxious. Even so, through a combination of his own strength of spirit and the help and support of family and friends, he remained in his own home and as independent as he could. He continued to enjoy visits from family and friends and his regular trips out to lunch-club at Martin Way Methodist Church - even if he'd happily nod off to sleep whilst there. On what would prove to be his final visit, he polished off a hearty beef casserole and a generous helping of treacle sponge. It had been a good time and it was a contented Bill who returned home that afternoon. The following morning, Saturday 20th June 2015, Bill fell unconscious at home and, never regaining consciousness, died a few hours later at St George's Hospital, Tooting, his family at his side.

The writer of the letter to the Colossians tells us what Christ-like qualities look like when they're fleshed out. Compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience and above all, love. Qualities that Bill increasingly possessed in abundance. He didn't talk about God all that much although he was insistent that "there's got to be something". He preferred to let his actions do the talking. He never ceased to be anything other than grateful for all the love that surrounded him or indeed to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. This was how he expressed his faith and his thanks. He was indeed a great disciple of Jesus Christ.

Paul Timmis

My Old Pal Bill

“Oh I AM pleased to see you....Oh I AM pleased to see you”.....was how Bill greeted me on my two or three visits to see him each week. The reality was that I had probably slipped in quietly and had been sitting near him for some time. He had been asleep of course, which was what he did very well. The huge smile and a brief comment on the weather would then be followed by....”What day is it? What time is it? And what do I do next? I get so muddled”. He was however, quite clear whether he had or had not done my gardening earlier on that morning. Did I not see him working away before breakfast? ...So we settled it all by having a cup of tea. Inevitably we differed on seriously key issues such as whether Merton Park was better than Morden and whether marmite was better than marmalade. After this we both had a snooze until it was time to have some pancakes or eccles cakes, blackberries or strawberries and cream. Bill loved ‘Eggheads”, football and car racing. My usual question concerned who was winning or what the score was. The answer was usually “nil – nil“ or he could not remember. However, his secret skill was winning at cards. I learned this to my cost. I have to admit that Bill was no pushover and knew exactly how to produce the right card at the right time.

My fondest long-term memories of Bill revolve around his sensitivity, generosity, a great sense of humour, and a willingness to go to any length to support Valerie and me. We shared a common love of music. On one occasion Betty had obtained three special value tickets for the ballet “Manon” at Covent Garden. Bill would have loved to go, but insisted that I should take Valerie and Betty . He would stay at home. Surely this was the sign of a real friendship and a generous spirit. ...Then there were those wonderful holidays and days out. Whatever I did, Bill was happy to join in. He also encouraged me to join the Men’s Supper Club

Bill and I have been good friends for 50 years. Our close friendship began in this Church in the choir in which we sang with Valerie and Betty, Brian, Freda, Moira, Jean, Gwen, and Anne amongst many, particularly after Bill retired. Under the leadership of Vida and Mrs John, and later with Douglas and Jean Butland, these close friendships led us both into hundreds of concerts with the Choir and Happy Wanderers with Jean Gear, Lesley Mortley and other dear friends. At the age of 80 years, Bill

was still entertaining the elderly! He never looked his age and always dressed smartly. He was a real stalwart and certainly supported me every step along the way in my singing. He loved singing duets with Betty and the rest of us, including humorous songs where he happily dressed up. One of our favourites was “South of the Border Down Mexico Way”. Bill loved classical and more modern repertoire. We sang together in many choral works and loved hanging on to our high tenor notes. On Wednesdays, Valerie and Betty would meet up, whilst Bill and I went to West Barnes Singers, where he became Treasurer. He had an unbelievable tenacity in selling tickets. Twenty for one concert was quite normal.

Once Bill and Betty had invited Valerie and me to their Southbourne beach hut in 1982, summers were never the same. Our first visit saw us treated to a picnic lunch with champagne on the prom. Somehow the crowds did not matter and problems and concerns seemed to drift away. The sun and sea air were a real antidote to work pressures. Bill and I went into the sea at every opportunity and quickly became expert at diving and crashing into waves, sunning ourselves and making tea on rainy days. Bill’s diving was unforgettable. On land, we were even on a par with great golfing pro’s, but kept this strictly to ourselves. We always popped in to Christchurch and Mudeford for shops and evening firework displays. Journeys home included picnics in the New Forest. One year, Bill ended up under several hungry ponies who fancied what we were eating. On one trip, Bill was so intent upon keeping up with our car that, to my horror, he ignored red traffic lights....but lived to tell the tale.

A further holiday followed to Austria, with Betty. Bill and I felt moved to climb down a mountain near Kitzbuhel, in the Alps, leaving Valerie and Betty to follow in the cable car. We must still hold the record for the fastest descent. It was great. After this, we even became gondoliers on a memorable day trip to Venice. A later visit to Pompei, Capri and Sorrento in Italy in 1999 marked a climax to Bill’s holidays further afield as he began to find walking more difficult. However, he still wanted to visit family war graves in France and Belgium, so day trips were arranged and enjoyed. In subsequent years, we joined him in Sheringham in Norfolk, several times, where he was supporting John, Karen and Millie. He was great and easy company on several trips to Cornwall. He was always cheery or asleep! Prone to laughing, he once blew mushroom soup all

over all the rest of us, seated opposite at a restaurant in Northampton, before one of John's shows.

Latterly, Bill was our great companion whenever we went out for the day. He had a great appetite. He came with Valerie and me for a meal every Sunday (after church) at St Anthonys, meeting up with Denis and Diane. Then we took a snooze in Nonsuch Park and on to see Freda in Wallington. He joined us for trips to Worthing or Epsom Downs, and numerous garden centres. He loved coming to our concerts. Apart from stubborn moments when he swore blind that he did not need a stick, or when his hearing was getting worse and conversation was becoming difficult (but he could not possibly be becoming deaf) , he had a great ability to go to sleep at the slightest opportunity and then recover , hoping he had not upset anyone.

Recently, the hardest part was not sitting with him at home, since we both fell asleep when conversation lapsed. Nor was it quite that he was inevitably lonely, because he was looked after so well by Nikki and her family in his home to the end. (supported by his carers). It was indeed, leaving him each time and wondering if I would ever see him again. He was muddled and had had enough.



He enjoyed his last Luncheon Club at Martin Way three weeks ago, asked me if I had enjoyed it and if he was boring. Then we had our last two hours together before Nikki eventually put him to bed later that day.

Old Bill - My BEST PAL... Thank you. You made such a difference to my life. We had great times. Rest in Peace... and "mind how you go" (his last words to me)

Graham Currie



Vietnam

CSW is concerned that a draft law on religion or belief, currently being reviewed by the legislature in Vietnam, will prevent rather than protect the enjoyment of full freedom of religion or belief.

Sudan

Four Christian women have been found innocent of indecent or immoral dress under Article 152 of the Sudanese Criminal Code, while three have been fined and one still awaits trial. One of them, Seema Ali Osman, has since been found innocent of indecent or immoral dress under Article 152 of the Sudanese Criminal Code on 16th August.

The women were part of a group of Christians from the Nuba Mountains who were arrested on 25 June after leaving a celebration service at the El Izba Baptist Church in Khartoum. Two were released without charge while the rest were charged with indecent or immoral dress under Article 152 of the Sudanese Criminal Code and released on bail while awaiting court hearings.

China

CSW joins over 45 other organisations from China, Hong Kong and around the world incalling on the Chinese authorities to stop the illegal detention of hundreds of lawyers and citizens and to release those who are still being held.

CSW previously reported the detention, interrogation and disappearance of over 100 human rights lawyers and activists beginning on 10th July. That number has now reached over 265. While many have been released, around 30 remain in some form of detention or have been forcibly disappeared. Those detained include human rights lawyers and activists but also relatives of lawyers and staff from the lawyers' firms.

**MARTIN WAY
HARVEST FESTIVAL
Sunday 27th September**



FAITH IN ACTION
helping with homelessness

This year our Harvest Festival donations will be passed to
Homeless Drop-in Centre.

The FiA Homeless Drop-in Centre is open every Wednesday and Friday from 10:00am to 3pm. The Drop-In is in the Salvation Army Hall, 109 Kingston Road, SW19 1LT.

They welcome all rough sleepers, street users and the precariously housed, as well as those who are socially excluded, vulnerable and isolated or who have mental health or addiction issues.

The Drop-In offers friendship and a warm welcome to all from the moment they come through our door.

In addition, service users can obtain:

- Breakfast, snacks and a home-cooked lunch
- Shower and laundry facilities
- Clothes and food parcels
- Supported internet access, giving assistance with online registration forms, job and housing applications, and benefit claims
- Help with access to local statutory and voluntary services such as the Community Drug and Alcohol Teams, Spear Housing, Street Rescue, and Merton Winter Night Shelters
- Help in the search for work: assistance with putting together CVs, looking for jobs, and making online applications. And we help service users get the best out of the Government's own jobs website Universal Jobmatch.

They particularly need:

Ring-pull tinned food (specially meat and fish)
Men's boxer shorts (medium)
Warm thick socks
Shower gel
Disposable razors
Shaving cream/gel

For Further information:

See their website for more information about their work.
www.mertonfaithinaction.org

Extreme Longing

Taken from: Extreme devotion, the voice of the martyrs from the co-authors of Jesus freaks. Serious followers of Jesus pay a price, and extreme followers often pay the ultimate price. Each story is true.

"Sometimes I miss those days of persecution!"

The words came from an Iranian pastor who had escaped to the West. In Iran, arrest and police harassment were common experiences. He had even lost his home and job because of his faith. Now he was free to live and worship wherever he wished. How could he long for the days of persecution?

"Sometimes I miss those days," he said, "because I was so alive. I felt every day that Jesus was with me."

The pastor had planted a church near the front lines of the Iran-Iraq war. He earned money by driving a taxi and grew his church by sharing Christ with his passengers. In two years, he had won souls from nine language groups. Many soldiers worshiped with them each week, and he had fifteen Muslim converts.

The pastor and his wife counted on God for everything. When the bombs of war fell around them, they prayed for his protection. When there wasn't enough money, they prayed for his provision. And each day God came through for them.

Their ministry was rewarded. Ten members of his church have gone on to become pastors. Even now, the pastor can see fruit from the time of ministry at the front lines.

If you've never been in love, you cannot understand what it is to be heartbroken. If you've never lost a loved one, you cannot truly relate to those who mourn. You cannot understand a longing for something you have never experienced. Those who have been persecuted for their faith describe a peculiar longing. They long not for the persecution as much as they long for the sense of fellowship their persecution brought them. They don't miss the torture as much as what the torture taught them. The end result far outweighs the suffering. If you want to experience a deeper walk with Jesus, you must be willing to obediently sacrifice for him. This is also a type of suffering.

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. (2 Corinthians 4:17)

CHURCH DIARY

SEPTEMBER



Tue	1	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	4	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	6	10.30 am	All Age Worship led by Valerie Ashcroft
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	8	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Wed	9	8.00 pm	Leadership Meeting
Sat	12	10.30am-1pm	Big Brunch
Sun	13	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Davis Eagle
		2.30-5.00pm	Care for Uganda Cream Tea
Tue	15	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.00 pm	Circuit Meeting at Worcester Park
		8.00 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>history of Jerusalem from Biblical to Modern Times</i> - Suki Tchilingirian
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	18	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sat	19	10am-1pm	Big Brunch
Sun	20	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Mon	21	8.00 pm	Finance & Property Meeting
Tue	22	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	27	10.30 am	Harvest Festival (Café Worship) led by Rev Paul Timmis - <i>gifts this year will be going to The Homeless Drop-in Centre</i>
Tue	29	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer

Wed 30 8.00 pm Church Council Meeting

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:

Abigail Fuwa on 15th September

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We will be holding a **Cream Tea on Sunday 13th September 2.30 to 5pm** at Martin Way Methodist Church in aid of Care for Uganda.

The Welfare Officer Brother Monday & Field Officer Julet from Uganda will be with us - so please come along and meet and talk with them. Please speak to me for further details.

Tony Loft

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Big Brunch returns!

On Saturday 12th September
The Big Brunch restarts.
Running from 10.30am until 1pm,
come along and enjoy the food
and the company.



Cleaning up the Church



During the last few weeks Tony and Roy have had a clear up in the:

- Link Room and loft
- Hall Store Room
- Table Store
- Organ Loft and roof space above it
- garage (thanks for your help Guides!)
- other general areas of the church.

Most of the rubbish ended up in a skip, but the old choir music is being retained until the end of September when it will be taken to the tip for recycling. If anybody knows of someone who might like it, please approach them and let Roy know if they are interested. Similarly, if anyone knows someone who wants old hymn books, please let Roy know.

In future we would ask that nobody places rubbish at the rear of the church either outside the kitchen or behind the Coffee Lounge. In 2013 a skip cost £264 and it is likely to cost more this year. We could avoid this cost if everyone took their own rubbish to the tip.



We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Tony and Roy for all their hard work and time! This is not the first time they have committed their time and energies into doing things like this around the church and I am sure it won't be the last! They have always played an active role in the life & community of Martin Way Methodist Church and a lot of it being behind the scenes unseen by most people! Thank you to them both - what would we honestly do without them!

Abby Herring

Items for the **October Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox, (email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 20th September** at the latest