

# **Martin Way Methodist Church**

Buckleigh Avenue, Merton Park, London SW20 9JZ

(020) 8542 8211

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**Minister: The Rev Paul Timmis**

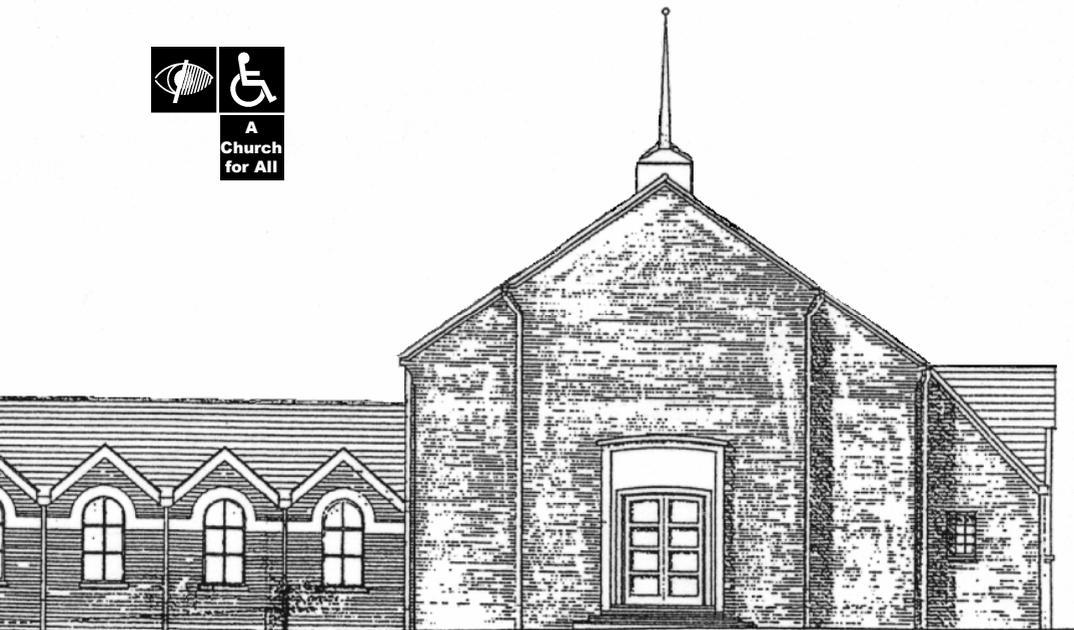
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# **NEWSLETTER**

## **MAY 2017**



## **MINISTER'S LETTER**



*What is truth?*

Not long ago we “heard” these words uttered from the mouth of Pontius Pilate in response to Jesus’ claim that he had come to bear witness to the truth. It’s a good question and one that we constantly need to be asking ourselves, not least when we - who are called by Jesus to continue his work - find ourselves in the midst of an election campaign.

At such a time as this, truth so often seems to fly out of the window. Newspapers and other media outlets back their party of choice and colour the “truths” that they print/proffer that they might fit with the greater narrative that they wish to promote. This would be easier to accept if editors were more open and honest about their allegiances and prejudices and if less people adhered to the flawed principle, ‘I read it in the paper so it must be true’.

A couple of weeks ago the Methodist Recorder reported that, as a church, we were being called by the President and Vice-President of the Conference to engage with election issues.

Rev Dr Roger Walton (my Director of Studies during the final two years of my training for ministry!) and Rachel Lampard put out a statement that included these words:

“Discussion of political hopes rarely happens without conflict. We have different ideas of justice, fairness and priorities... As we face another General Election, we encourage people not to fight shy of disagreeing with each other, but to disagree well.

As the Methodist Conference statement on political responsibility says: ‘It is fundamental to the church’s fellowship that polarities should be held together in a dialogue of listening and speaking, in mutual respect, love and prayer.’ Listening to one another can help us to a deeper understanding, to hear what God might be saying to us, and then to use our vote thoughtfully and prayerfully.”

To assist us in our conversations and to help us all seek out the truth as we engage with the issues being “debated” during the election campaign, The Joint Public Issues Team has produced a resource, Faith in Politics: The 2017 General Election. For those with access to the internet it can be found here: [www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/faithinpolitics/](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/faithinpolitics/) For everyone else, paper copies are available in church. Please read it if you can - and talk about it with others. Engaging in such matters is central to our calling.

One of the opening paragraphs of that document says this:

“As a Christian people we believe that not only has our world and those who live in it been made by God, but the systems and structures that hold us together are part of God’s purpose too. We are called to draw attention to the needs of the oppressed, to speak out with the marginalised, and perhaps to highlight issues that are overlooked by mainstream coverage. We need to ask “who is our neighbour?” when we vote.”

Two questions then to consider in the days ahead: *‘What is truth?’* and *‘Who is our neighbour?’*

With every blessing

*Paul*

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Truth is the foundation of all knowledge and the cement of all societies.

*John Dryden*

Truth is not only violated by falsehood;  
it may be equally outraged by silence.

*Henri Frédéric Amiel*

When I needed a neighbour,  
Were you there, were you there?  
When I needed a neighbour, were you there?  
*And the creed and the colour*  
*And the name won't matter,*  
Were you there?

**Modern hymn lyrics by *Sydney Carter***



**CHRISTIAN  
SOLIDARITY  
WORLDWIDE**  
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

## **May Press Releases from CSW**

*The eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love.*

Psalm 33:18

We've got not one, but TWO amazing answers to prayer to tell you about this week!

### **Rev Hassan and Mr Abdumawla released from prison in Sudan**

*"I am now with my children and my family, they are happy, some are crying. They can't believe it" - Rev Hassan, free after 17 months in detention.*

Reverend Hassan, a church leader, and Mr Abdumawla, an activist, were released from prison last month! Both men were serving unjust 12 year sentences for espionage, inciting hatred between sects and propagating false news, but were set free after receiving a presidential pardon.

Thank you so much for all your praying, campaigning, tweeting, and more on behalf of these two men as well as Rev Kuwa and Mr Jašek, who had stood trial alongside them.

### **Li Heping released from prison in China**

Meanwhile in China – **Chinese human rights lawyer Li Heping has been released!** Originally detained in 2015 during the Chinese government's crackdown on human rights defenders, Li hasn't been able to see his family for almost two years.

It's wonderful that he's back home now – thank you so much for your faithful prayers for him. But there's still a very long time to go before Li, his wife, and their children will be free from government surveillance and intimidation. Join us in giving thanks for Li's release, and asking God to watch over his family's future.

**It's been a truly humbling week here at CSW.**

**Join us in praising our God who tears down the prison walls!**

*"He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the captives." Isaiah 61:1*

Finally, we have a message for you from Rev Hassan:

*“Thank you so much for your help and your prayers, for what you have done for us.”*

**In summary, please pray:**

- Thanking God for Li Heping’s release
- That Li’s colleagues, many of whom are separated from their families and facing harassment and intimidation, would also be able to return home
- Thanking God for Reverend Hassan and Mr Abdumawla’s release
- For the men as they readjust to family life.

This week’s Prayer Diary:

**India**

Though India officially guarantees religious freedom for all its citizens, the election of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought with it a rise in Hindu nationalism that sees Hinduism as the only true religion of India.

Add to this vaguely defined anti-conversion laws that can be used to punish religious minorities, and a climate of increasing danger for human rights defenders, and we have a situation that desperately needs your prayers.

- Please pray for Pastor Jacob Joseph who was leading a Sunday service when his church was attacked by a mob. On the same day the pastor’s house was attacked. The police have ordered the pastor not to conduct church services in the area.
- In December we asked you to pray for Pastor Santosh and his wife Nilima, who were stopped while carolling and harassed by four men who are believed to belong to a Hindu fundamentalist movement. Give thanks that they remain safe.
- Today, join us in asking God to grant energy and protection to John Dayal, one of India’s most prominent voices supporting human rights – especially the rights of religious minorities.

In India, faith and social class are closely linked. This means that if someone who is a Dalit (one of the castes that receives special provision from the state) converts to Islam or Christianity they lose their protected status. Pray that this law would be repealed or amended soon.

*Lord, today we lift India to you in prayer. We pray, and protect those who are at risk simply because of their faith. We pray that you will move powerfully in India and spread peace and justice for all its citizens, Amen.*

## **Eritrea**

It was Eritrea Independence Day on 24th May. Pray this verse over Eritrea for their Independence Day: *"And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel - and God knew."* (Exodus 2:24-25)

*Lord, we pray for Eritrea and its people. Move powerfully in that country and spread your peace and justice there we pray. Please watch over the CSW advocates as they work and bring about real, lasting change for Eritreans. Amen*

Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

*The CSW team*

*Visit [www.csw.org.uk](http://www.csw.org.uk) for latest news and information*

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## **A BIBLICAL PUZZLE**

Can you find these 16 books of the Bible in the following passage?

**Acts, Amos, Esther, Hebrews, James, Job, Judges, Kings, Lamentations,  
Luke, Mark, Numbers, Peter, Revelation, Ruth, Titus**

I once made a remark about finding, merely by fluke, hidden books of the Bible, which kept people looking so hard for the facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalised. The truth finally struck home to numbers of readers, others found it a really hard job. We want it to be a most interesting exercise. Yes there will be difficult ones to spot, some may require judges to help them. I admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be lamentations or gnashing of teeth when it is found. One lady said she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now, for there really are sixteen names of books of the Bible hidden in the paragraph. One cleric found fifteen in twenty minutes - but it took him ages to find the sixteenth.



We all had a very good and interesting time at Spring harvest this year. With Justin Welby taking centre stage on Palm Sunday what a very interesting and inspiring person he is. Also later in the afternoon I watched a very moving interpretation on the Passion of Christ. It was very thought provoking and enjoyable time.

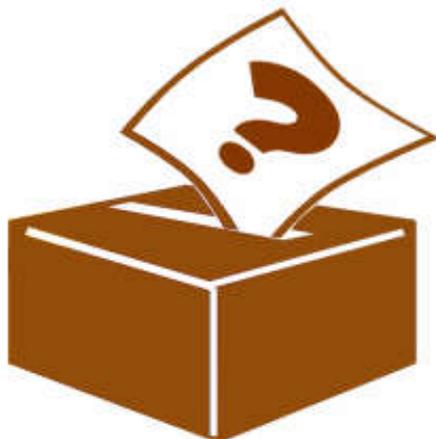
I would whole heartily recommend the experience to everyone.

We have already booked our places for 2018, so please come along if you can and explore your faith and also have a good time meeting new people and listening to very informative and inspirational people.

*Sylvia Baxter*



Wimbledon Churches invite you to



## General Election Hustings

**Thursday 1 June 2017**  
**7.30 – 9.00pm**

**at Trinity Church Wimbledon**  
**Mansel Road, SW19 4AA**

Come and hear your Wimbledon constituency candidates answer questions on the issues that matter to local voters. All five candidates have been invited:

**Conservative**

**Green**

**Labour**

**Liberal Democrat**

**UKIP**

- Stephen Hammond
- Charles Barraball
- Imran Uddin
- Carl Quilliam
- Strachan McDonald

**Please submit your questions in advance**, by email to [minister@trinitywimbledon.org](mailto:minister@trinitywimbledon.org) or by post to the venue address above.

*The questions to be asked at the Hustings will be selected from among those received by Tuesday 30 May.*

## **An Evening of Entertainment with Rock Choir and Friends**

On Saturday 13th May the Rock Choir came back to Martin Way Methodist Church where they were joined by students from The Purcell School for young Musicians.

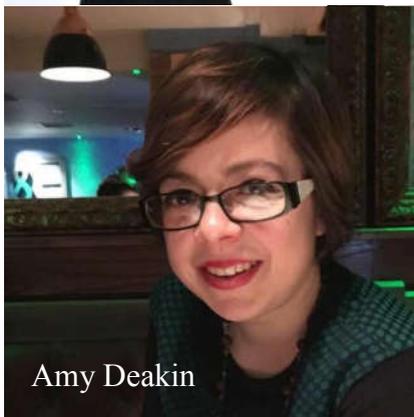




Polina Makhina



Andrew Garrido



Amy Deakin

It was standing room only in the church as the Rock Choir led by the energetic Elliot Sutcliffe entertained the audience with songs ranging from the Beatles to Katy Perry. In addition to the choir were Andrew Garrido, who offered some classical piano, Polina Makhina on violin, Sheya McAllister and Hannah Pearson, both talented vocalists and Amy Deakin, a humorous poet with her own unique view of Morden.

At the end of the evening the students were persuaded to join the choir and the fun filled evening was rounded off with the Queen classic *'Don't Stop Me Now'* with even some of the audience joining in.

Apart from great enjoyment the evening raised £667 for the Church Flush Fund.

The Rock Choir has promised to return in November, so keep a look out for the dates and make sure you come along.

*Andrew Fox*



## **Neighbouring St James Anglican Church Turns 60**

Please join us down the road as we celebrate our 60th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Church. There will be a Diamond Jubilee Communion Service at 7 p.m. on St Peter's Day, 29th June. A party will follow the service and everyone is most welcome

There will also be a special service with the Bishop of Southwark on St James Day, July 25th at 7 p.m. All welcome.

For more information contact Father Jim on 020 3016 5156.

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## **CSW Conference 2017**



**CHRISTIAN  
SOLIDARITY  
WORLDWIDE**  
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

It was a privilege once again to attend the CSW conference held on 22nd April at St Paul's church, Hammersmith.

The keynote speaker was Eritrean gospel singer Helen Berhane. Back in November 2004 I can remember when CSW issued a statement to say that Helen was released having been in prison and incarcerated without charge or trial. Joyce Plant, at the time had been sharing Helen's story at our Prayertime, of how she had refused to stop preaching the gospel through her songs and Joyce urged us to pray for her release. Now we were able to meet Helen in person, listen to her amazing testimony and hear her singing.

Helen spoke movingly of the time when she spent 32 months in a shipping container and also in underground cells at the Mai-Serwa military camp. Conditions in the shipping container was dirty, freezing cold at night,

stifling hot during the day, no mattresses to lie on, buckets for toilets, insects which bit repeatedly causing skin reactions etc. She described countless torturing and beatings she and the others that were held endured, all because they would not recant their faith or promise not to participate in church-related activities. Throughout this time, Helen recalls how close she felt with her fellow prisoners because of the sufferings they were experiencing. She also found power in the Word of God and used the time to share the gospel through her singing and preaching. Despite being told to stop singing and to stop preaching to the guards, Helen could not stop as God gave her a new song to sing.

There was a hushed silence as Helen recounted her story, particularly as she described the time when she became so ill that she was prepared to die. Many of the other prisoners had died of their injuries. Just as she would not stop singing during her ordeal, even thanking God for 'everything' including the biting insects, she could not stop speaking at the Conference about her experiences and of God's presence that sustained her. She spoke over the time allotted to her. No one could stop her. What a testimony and what an inspiration.

*Some thoughts on the seminars from Gwen:*

'What does it really take to change a nation?' as a title to one of the seminars seemed to me to be a question worth exploring. So it was that I chose to attend this seminar as it focused on Burma, a country close to my heart since my visit in 2009. CSW Advocacy Director Joel Edwards was chairing the seminar.

As we were reminded from the speakers, Tun Khin, Seng Pan, Kwaw Win and Ben Rogers, not all is peaceful in Burma. Like many, I was led to believe that since Daw Aung San Suu Kyi became State Counsellor and Leader of the National League for Democracy in 2016, the country was politically more stable. Recent media coverage of her visit to London have indicated that there is indeed an undercurrent of instability surrounding the government and the military.

From the President of the Burmese Rohingya Organisation United Kingdom, Tun Khin, we heard how the Rohingya people are still denied citizenship, are horribly tortured and killed, to the extent that as an ethnic group, are almost wiped out. Tun urged us to be a voice for the voiceless for them.

Seng Pan, is a Kachin activist and helps Kachin displaced people and Kachin livelihoods in Burma. She spoke of the plight of 120,000 Internally Displaced People's currently taking shelter at temporary camps in Kachin and Northern Shan states. Many are cut off from aid.

Kyaw Win founded the Burma Human Rights Network in London. He is a human rights activist born and raised in Rangoon. He emphasised in his work with Muslim minorities, that many of them have been terrorised by Buddhist monks So many have been killed and mosques, home and businesses burnt.

All three speakers spoke about serious brutalities akin to ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and human rights deprivation. Listening to these horrific stories was something we cannot relate to in the west. We feel helpless. As Ben Rogers reminded us there is something we can do; to pray, pledge and petition.

### ***Justice and Forgiveness***

'How can we move on when brutal conflicts and crimes committed have been on an unimaginable scale'? This was the first challenging question in Sarah Snyder's seminar. In her work on Reconciliation where Justice and Forgiveness are two opposing dynamics, pursuing justice, restoring hope and accountability is not an easy task but, as Sarah emphasised, restoring accountability and faith is key.

As the Archbishop of Canterbury's Advisor for Reconciliation, Sarah has worked for many years in countries suffering conflicts to promote faith-based reconciliation. Bringing wrongdoers to justice Sarah reminded us, is not an easy task, neither is breaking the cycle of violence when there is a narrow view of justice. Also, rebuilding communities where there is mistrust, suspicion and dislocation is complicated and challenging. Letting go of the 'victim syndrome' and getting to the place of forgiveness often takes time.

Sarah then shared some Scripture verses on forgiveness, and showed the cross that she was wearing, a reminder of the vertical dimension of our faith as well as the horizontal living out of our faith, that reconciliation is cross-shaped. Often, she says that there is a fear of using the term forgiveness by politicians, saying it's too religious, preferring to use 'co-existence' or 'harmony' as opposite to revenge. But the act of

forgiveness and the power of forgiveness, because we ourselves have been forgiven can lead to the healing of wounds.

After hearing of conflict and strife, it was good to be reminded of the positive power of forgiveness.

*Some thoughts on the seminar from Moira:*

***From Pastor to Prisoner seminar with special Chinese guest.***

Information was given via answers to questions regarding the current situation for the Christian church in China i.e. house churches not the government controlled churches which are churches registered with the official association of churches, called the Three Self Patriotic Movement. Unregistered or 'house' churches are vulnerable to government interference- including attempts to control their finances. In addition some lawyers in the congregation have given legal help to other churches facing problems with the local authorities, this has made Living Stone church even more unpopular with the government.

There is a price to pay for the Christians who resist the government; Pastors and Lawyers are accused of made up charges and are often given prison sentences.

The challenge from this session was to stand with our brothers and sisters in China to strongly pursue freedom of worship by prayer and encourage our brothers and sisters by writing to them.

As we were leaving the session we were offered a book written by Paul Hattaway 'China's Christian Martyrs'. A poignant reminder and fuel for intercession; we have a big part to play in seeing God's answers to prayer.

Many of you receive the CSW magazine Response and Prayer Diary but attending one of their conferences is an opportunity to meet in person some of the people we read about. I can't believe the conference is only an annual event as it comes around so quickly. The event is both challenging and stimulating. Maybe one or two could attend from the Housegroups; excellent fuel for discussion and prayer!

For further information speak to Gwen or Moira.

# CHURCH DIARY



|       |    |              |  |
|-------|----|--------------|--|
| Thurs | 1  | 7.30 pm      | General Election Hustings at Trinity Church,<br>Wimbledon  |
| Fri   | 2  | 12.30 pm     | Luncheon Club  |
| Sun   | 4  | 10.30 am     | Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis   |
| Tue   | 6  | 10.30am-noon | Coffee and Chat  |
|       |    | 8.00 pm      | Time for Prayer  |
| Sun   | 11 | 10.30 am     | Morning Service led by Valerie Ashcroft  |
|       |    | 6.30 pm      | Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis   |
| Tue   | 13 | 10.30am-noon | Coffee and Chat  |
|       |    | 8.00 pm      | Time for Prayer  |
| Weds  | 14 | 8.00 pm      | Church Council Meeting   |
| Fri   | 16 | 12.30 pm     | Luncheon Club  |
| Sat   | 17 | 10.30 am     | Summer Brunch  |
| Sun   | 18 | 10.30 am     | Morning Service led by Arigon Sinani   |
| Tue   | 20 | 10.30am-noon | Coffee and Chat  |
|       |    | 8.00 pm      | Time for Prayer  |
|       |    | 7.00 pm      | Men's Supper Club - <i>David Greenwood</i> -<br>'Flying for Life' (MAF), coordinating<br>charity communications by air |
| Sun   | 21 | 10.30 am     | Morning Service led by David Eagle   |
| Tue   | 27 | 10.30am-noon | Coffee and Chat  |
|       |    | 8.00 pm      | Time for Prayer  |
| Fri   | 16 | 12.30 pm     | Luncheon Club  |

*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 this month a very

*Happy Birthday*

and especially to:

Nathan Harker on 18th June

Alice Day on 27th June

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MyRaynesPark is a community arts festival, run by the local churches. Every summer they organise a Raynes Park festival for the residents of SW20, helping to celebrate arts and culture within our community.

This summer the Festival will run from 5th-14th June 2015, and the theme is *Are You Sitting Comfortably... Let's Begin.*

For more information visit their website: [www.myraynespark.co.uk](http://www.myraynespark.co.uk)

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### **Church Family News**

Anne & Simon Conquest would like everyone to know that they are now first time proud grandparents to Luke Henry Conquest who came into the world on 7th April 2017.

His parents Daniel and Doro are enjoying parenthood in Germany, and we are looking forward to them coming over in June when they can show him off and introduce him to his Great Grandmother Jean Gear (her 10th great grandchild)



## BIG BRUNCH – SUMMER BRUNCH

Big Brunch, which raises funds to enable us to take our youngsters to Spring Harvest, has now closed until September BUT you do not have to wait until then to get your bacon and eggs. Big Brunch is morphing into '**Summer Brunch**' which will open on the following dates:

**Saturdays 17th June and 15th July**



So come along between 10.30am and 1pm for a Full-English for £4, the profits from which will go towards our '**Flush Fund**' to refurbish the gent's and all-access toilets.

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**ALZHEIMER'S  
SOCIETY  
CUPCAKE DAY**

Come along and join our Cupcake Day - and remember to bring your appetite!

**When** - Thursday 15th June from 10.30am onward.

**Where** - 7, Malden Park New Malden KT3 6AS.  
(Home of Anne & Simon Conquest)

Can't join us? you can still join the rise against dementia by making a donation to [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/AnneConquest1](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/AnneConquest1)

To find out more about the Alzheimer's Society visit their website at [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

*Anne Conquest*

Items for the **July Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox,  
(email: [roife@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:roife@hotmail.co.uk)) by **Sunday 18th June** at the latest



# Forever Living Products

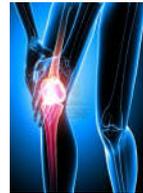
The Aloe Vera Company

**BRING ALOE  
INTO YOUR LIFE**



**Beneficial for:**

- \*Healthy Digestive System
- \*Skin Disorders
- \* Arthritis
- \* Asthma
- \* Bowel Dysfunction
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- \* Diabetes
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and many more.



**Young, Old or Middle-aged  
Pure Aloe Gel will do you *good***



**You can't change your life if  
you don't change your thinking**

**FOREVER** 

**For further information contact:**

**Mike Fuwa**

**Tel: 07956 369579**

**Email: [mfuwa@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:mfuwa@blueyonder.co.uk)**

## Church Activities

|           |   |                 |
|-----------|---|-----------------|
| SUNDAY    | Morning Worship   | 10.30 am        |
|           | Morning Communion (once a month)                              | 10.30 am        |
|           | Evening Communion (once a month)                              | 6.30 pm         |
|           | Sunday Club   | 10.30 am        |
|           | SIGMA—the Circuit Choir (as advertised)                       | 4.00 - 5.30 pm  |
|           | Platform 10¾ Young People's Fellowship<br>(1st & 3rd Sundays) | 8.00 - 9.00 pm  |
| TUESDAY   | Coffee & Chat   | 10.30 - 12 noon |
|           | Men's Supper Club (3rd Tuesday of the Month)                  | 7.00 pm         |
|           | Time for Prayer   | 8.00 pm         |
| WEDNESDAY | Morning Frogs Club (Carer & Toddlers Group)                   | 10.00 - 12 noon |
|           | Afternoon Frogs Club (Carer & Toddlers Group)                 | 1.00 - 3.00 pm  |
|           | Rainbows (1st Merton Park)                                    | 5.30 - 6.30 pm  |
|           | Guides (2nd Merton Park)                                      | 7.30 - 9.00 pm  |
| THURSDAY  | Brownies (2nd Merton Park)                                    | 6.00 - 7.30 pm  |
| FRIDAY    | Luncheon Club (Fortnightly)                                   | 12.30 pm        |

House Groups, Coffee Mornings, Concerts, etc (as advertised)

