

MINISTER'S LETTER

There are times in life when we don't know what to think, times when we don't know what to do. This is probably one of them.

On the morning of Thursday 24th February, we woke to the dreadful news that Vladimir Putin had done what he had repeatedly said he wouldn't do: he had given the order for his troops to invade Ukraine.



Since then, we have watched events unfold in horror, disbelief, and perhaps even dread. Some will recall the dark days of war in Europe from earlier in their lifetimes but, for many of us, this is something entirely new. Of course, many will remember the Yugoslavia Wars in the early 1990s, but what is happening now in Ukraine feels different. We are witnessing scenes that we never believed we would see - war on European soil instigated by the leader of one of the world's major powers. Unsurprisingly, and as a result, we are being confronted by very personal human stories that are truly heart-breaking. These are worrying times. We can only begin to speculate as to what motivates Putin and what his aims and objectives really are; what the response of the West and the rest of the world will ultimately be; and how this will all end.

When we don't know what to think, when we don't know what to do, we should pray. This is what we often conclude as followers of Jesus, even if we might simultaneously feel that, at some level, this isn't enough.

However many feelings of impotence we might be experiencing, we have to believe that, even if we don't know exactly how it works, there is a transformational power to prayer; that prayer can and does change things even if we don't know how. There might be other things that we can do as well - some of which we might discern through the act of praying - but prayer should never be equated to "doing nothing".

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Fyodor Dostoyevsky has the character Zosima, an Elder in a local monastery, offer these words of advice to fellow monks:

‘Do not forget to say your prayers. If your prayer is sincere, there will be every time you pray a new feeling containing an idea in it, an idea you did not know before, which will give you fresh courage; you will then understand that prayer is an education.’

Dostoyevsky wrote from experience. Years earlier, he had been arrested and sentenced to death for belonging to a literary group that was deemed subversive by the Russian authorities of his day. Narrowly avoiding the firing squad, he subsequently spent the next four years in a Siberian prison camp. In those dark, dark days, surrounded by acts of brutality and torture, he so experienced the love of God that he found himself transformed.

Sometimes all we can do is pray. It can be enough to unlock something and change everything. So let us pray. Courage and education are much needed now.

With every blessing,

Paul

A Prayer for peace in Ukraine offered by the Methodist Church:

Holy and Gracious God

We pray for the people of Ukraine and the people of Russia;
for their countries and their leaders.

We pray for all those who are afraid;
that your everlasting arms hold them in this time of great fear.

We pray for all those who have the power over life and death;
that they will choose for all people life, and life in all its fullness.

We pray for those who choose war;
that they will remember that you direct your people
to turn our swords into ploughshares and seek for peace.

We pray for leaders on the world stage;
that they are inspired by the wisdom and courage of Christ.

Above all, Lord, today we pray for peace for Ukraine.

And we ask this in the name of your blessed Son.

Lord have mercy. Amen

Possible actions

For those who want to help the people of Ukraine, the Guardian newspaper has suggested some ways in which we can do this.

There are, it reports, several Ukrainian charities working on the ground:

Sunflower of Peace (<https://en-gb.facebook.com/sunflowerofpeace/>) is a charity that helps paramedics and doctors, and has been fundraising for supplies, which include first aid medical tactical backpacks.

United Help Ukraine (<https://unitedhelpukraine.org>) focuses on providing medical supplies and humanitarian aid, and raising awareness of the conflict.

Voices of Children (<https://voices.org.ua/en/>) aims to help children affected by the war in eastern Ukraine, providing support through art therapy, psychologists, video storytelling and a number of other methods.

The **British Red Cross** (<https://donate.redcross.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-crisis-appeal>) has launched an emergency appeal to help Ukraine. The charity will be updating its webpage with news on the work its team is doing, and how support will be used to help people. (Unicef has also launched an appeal: <https://www.unicef.org.uk>).

Additionally, the Guardian article says that we can support local journalism

English-language news outlets based in the country, such as **Kyiv Independent** (<https://kyivindependent.com>) and the **New Voice of Ukraine** (<https://english.nv.ua>) are covering developments on the ground as the conflict unfolds, using local journalists. The Kyiv Independent says it was created by journalists in order to defend editorial independence. For those on Twitter, this site (<https://twitter.com/i/lists/101285580>) covers many local journalists in Ukraine.

Finally, the report invites us to write to our local MP to lobby the British government to place further sanctions on the Russian government and its associates. You can get in touch with your local MP via email or post to their constituency address. Instructions on how to get in touch can be found on [parliament.uk](https://www.parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-an-mp-or-lord/contact-your-mp/). (<https://www.parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-an-mp-or-lord/contact-your-mp/>)

Beyond the article in the Guardian, a number of charities including Save the Children and Amnesty International have urged the UK Government to play a major role in providing sanctuary and to welcome thousands of refugees from Ukraine. We could write to our MP to support this call.

All We Can and the Methodist Church in Britain have launched an emergency appeal in response to events unfolding in Ukraine.



<https://www.allwecan.org.uk/donate/ukraine/>

A blessing for Ukraine by Kate Bowler (posted on Twitter @KatecBowler)

God, the unthinkable has happened.
Swiftly, relentlessly,
by stealth and through open destruction,
the peace and beauty of the ordinary,
has been shattered in a day.

O God of justice and might,
We call to you to come and bring this suffering to an end.
Comfort these trembling hearts.
Shield the vulnerable.
Strengthen those with the resources and the resolve
to protect what they love
in the face of such overwhelming force.

Grant wisdom to the nations of our world,
to our leaders,
and to us,
to grasp the unfathomable,
to see evil in its true light,
and come against it unflinchingly.

Dear Ukraine,
though we shudder to watch what is happening
We will not look away.



Easter is coming!

Please take the time to read the Letter from the Meaningful Chocolate Company.

I have put up a Poster and a list for anyone who would like to buy the Real Easter Eggs (With Easter story) on the Notice Board in the Corridor.

If you require any further information please speak to me.

Tony Loft

ORDER DEADLINE—14th MARCH

Let's Celebrate The Easter Story in 2022

Our theme for this Easter is 'Let's Celebrate'. For many, this Easter will be a return to familiar Easter celebrations. All Real Easter Eggs come with an Easter story in the box. The stories range from simple guides to 24 page activity book versions. So, buy a Real Easter Egg this spring and encourage others to give one to their loved ones, a school or sponsor a food bank donation.

Where to buy

The full range can be ordered at www.realeasteregg.co.uk or by calling 01948831043.

Supermarkets lose faith

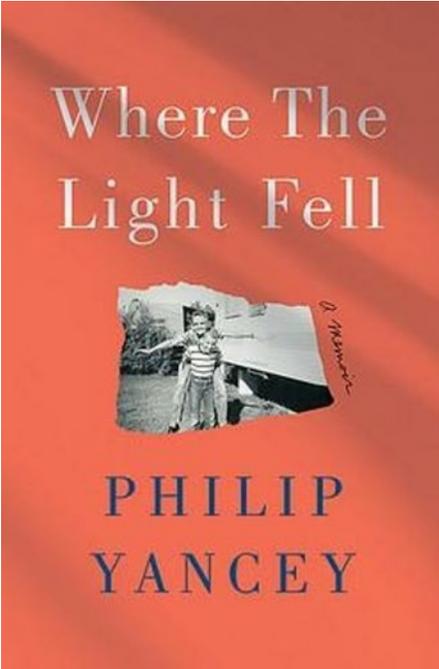
The 2022 Real Easter Egg will not be available in any supermarket. If you are one of the 80,000 people who usually buy at the supermarket then you need to order direct. But be quick as there will not be enough eggs to go round this year. Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in this part of the world every year, The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and which supports charitable projects. The Original, White and Dark eggs include a 24 page Easter story-activity book. They are Palm Oil and plastic free, and include a competition. The Dark also contains a simple Easter guide, designed for adults and 3 dark Mini Squares. The Fun Pack has an Easter story activity poster and 6 milk chocolate eggs. The Special Edition has a designer Easter card, a simple guide to Easter, an orange milk chocolate bar and a luxury milk chocolate egg.

See the full shop list on the Notice Board in the corridor or order at www.realeasteregg.co.uk

Book Review — by Gwen Wildman

Where the Light Fell – A Memoir

I have read most of Philip Yancey's books and this one has been the most gripping page-turner of them all.



This is an honest memoir about growing up within a fundamentalist Christian community in the south, with an emotionally abusive mother and a brother who was brilliant but damaged.

Both Philip and his brother Marshall endured a strict upbringing by a single religious zealot mother who was struggling to cope. A dysfunctional family.

Philip writes from personal experience of hurt and suffering but also writes about what led him to grace.

To quote one review – “This book illumines Yancey’s ability to bring comfort to those bruised by the church, and hope to those who cannot imagine finding a healthy faith”.

-oOo-

Thanks to everyone who made a donation when using the Christmas post box this year. We have been able to send **£165 to Methodist Homes for the Aged (MHA)** to help them in their vital work which is particularly important at this time. My thanks also to Amelie and Matilda for their help in sorting the cards.

Geraldine

LOCKDOWN WALKS—Part 4

In the last Newsletter I had pictures of my lockdown walks asking you to guess where I had been walking. I thought for a change I would show you some of the beautiful flowers and wildlife that I encountered on my walks. It is really incredible the



amount of beauty and lovely places to visit around the greater London area. All of these pictures were taken in February and March 2021.



The pictures remind me of the following words from this hymn. “For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies, For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night, hill and vale and tree and flower”

I hope you enjoy the pictures as much as I enjoyed seeing them.

Sylvia



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Supports Healthy Digestion

Promotes a healthy immune system

Helps maintain natural energy levels

Assists natural beauty

Young, Old or Middle-aged

Pure Aloe Gel will do you good.

For more information Contact Mike on 07956 369579

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We are looking for:

- The employed looking for additional PART-TIME income
- The unemployed looking for FULL-TIME employment.
- Retired/looking into retirement with no hope of enough retirement income.
- Mothers at home who want to look after their children and want a steady income.
-
- Graduates/undergraduates with no employment and no work experience.
- Students who fear huge students loan debts after graduation.

WHO ARE WE:

- We are a global company contributing to the UK economic growth through employment opportunities.
- We create an environment for self-employment working your own business generating your own desired income.
- We create a learning and earning environment where each individual can with dignity be what they want to be.
- You will be working for yourself but not by yourself. We have an impeccable support system to guide you every step of the way.



For further information contact:

Mike: 07956 369579

CHURCH DIARY



MARCH

Tue	1		Shrove Tuesday
		10.30am- Noon	Coffee and Chat
Wed	2		Ash Wednesday
		8.00pm	House Group
Sun	6	10.30am	Holy Communion led by Revd Paul Timmis
Tue	8	10.30am- Noon	Coffee and Chat
Wed	9	8.00pm	Church Council
Fri	11	12.30pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	13	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Brenda Cannon
		6.00pm	Holy Communion led by Revd Emma Cusack
Tue	15	10.30am- Noon	Coffee and Chat
Sun	20	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Revd Paul Timmis
Tue	22	10.30am- Noon	Coffee and Chat
Fri	25	12.30pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	27		Mothering Sunday
		10.30am	Morning Worship led by Viv Newitt
Tue	29	10.30am- Noon	Coffee and Chat

Please email items for next month's Newsletter to
newsletter@martinway.org.uk by **Sunday 17th April**.



April

Sun	3	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Tony Loft
Tue	5	10.30am-Noon	Coffee and Chat
Fri	8	12.30pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	10	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Richard Graham
Mon	11-15		Spring Harvest (Skegness)
Tue	12	10.30am-Noon	Coffee and Chat
Thur	14		Maundy Thursday
Fri	15		Good Friday
Sun	17		Easter Sunday
		10.30am	Café Worship/Holy Communion led by Revd Paul Timmis
Mon	18		Easter Monday
Tue	19	10.30am-Noon	Coffee and Chat
Fri	22	12.30pm	Luncheon Club
Sat	23		St Georges Day
Sun	24	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Brenda Cannon
Tue	29	10.30am-Noon	Coffee and Chat
Sun	1 May	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Tony Loft

EASTER

