

**MARTIN WAY METHODIST CHURCH  
NEWSLETTER, NOVEMBER 2000**

**Minister: The Revd Anne Rusbridge  
29 Poplar Road, Merton Park  
London, SW19 3JR**

**Tel. 020 8542 4758**

Dear Friends

*Christ is like a single body with its many limbs and organs  
which, many as they are, together make up one body.*

*1 Corinthians 12, v.12*

How exciting it has been these last few weeks to discover the great variety of activities that take place on our church premises during the week. Activities to suit all different ages and tastes, worship, learning, social and caring. It is a wonderful illustration of the body of Christ at work, the many gifts, talents and skills working in harmony with one another, in the power of the Holy Spirit. We are living in an age when people demand choice and many people are less prepared to make a long term commitment to anything, and it is good to see these groups so well supported.

Have you ever felt that you would like to be more involved in church life but reluctant to take on the responsibility or unsure about what might be involved? In the New Year I shall be running a series of 'taster' sessions in various areas of church life - pastoral care, working with children and young people in the church, running small groups, being a steward. If you are interested, please let me know.

I am aware that there are many people who would like to be involved in preparing or leading worship on Sundays and there will be an opportunity to join a worship consultation early in the New Year to share ideas and plan Sunday worship for 2001.

Mike and I are planning a short holiday at the beginning of November. If there are any important matters to be dealt with, please contact Tony Loft.

With best wishes,

Anne

## Church Family News And Notes

Sincere congratulations to David Chapman who celebrates his 40th birthday this month - Life begins at!!

The Coffee and Chat regulars miss Joyce Matthews but are very glad to hear that she is settling in at East Grinstead and is making new friends there. She sends greetings to everyone.

The **Alexander House** Annual Bazaar is to take place on Saturday, the 4th November from 2.00 p.m. until 4.00 p.m., and we shall be pleased to have your support. **Tickets at 50p** are available from John and Jean Butland, Valerie Currie and Jean Gear. Cakes for the cake stall, and goods for the bric -a-brac stall would also be appreciated. The address of Alexander House is **12 Clifton Road, Wimbledon.**

## Looking Ahead - Dates For Your Diary

### Supper Club Social

Friends are invited to join us for our annual Social Evening which this year will be on Tuesday 5th December at 7.30 p.m. Tickets are £2.50 and are obtainable from Bill Cox. (Phone 8540-6630) Everyone is welcome.

**The Happy Wanderer's Christmas Concert** will be held on Saturday, the 16th December at 7.30 p.m. Programmes will be available at the beginning of December from any members of the Group, and proceeds are in aid of Christian Care in Merton. **Please** book the date and give us your support.

*Jean Butland*

### Pantomime 2001

Book the date now! **22-24 February 2001** the famous pantomime of "Jack and the Beanstalk". Don't miss this opportunity of seeing our talented performers.

### An opportunity to help the Church finances at no cost to yourselves!

Taxpayers - Be sure to read John Butland's news on the next page.

### Situation vacant!

### Wanted - A New Christian Aid Secretary

I have been co-ordinating the Christian Aid work of Martin Way for a few years now. Recently, however, I agreed to take on the role of co-ordinating the Junior Missionary Association collections and so need to hand the Christian Aid work on to someone else. If you are willing to take on this role, or would like

information in order to consider whether or not you feel able to take it on, then please see me after a morning service or contact me on 8544 0956 (evenings). A volunteer is needed soon so please give this matter your consideration.  
Thank you.

*Janet Fernando*

## **November - A Month To Remember**

Remember, remember, the 5th of November, gunpowder, treason and plot - an assassination plot that did not come off. We remember those who have been victims of assassination and all who live with that fear today.

We remember on the 11th November all those who have lost their lives in war and their families. We need to remember the wars in our recent history in order that we do everything we can to work for peace in the world.

Remember 19-25 November, Prisons' Week. A message from the Rt. Hon. Paul Boateng MP: -

"Christ challenges all of us to change. We are called to transform ourselves and through our relationship with Him, one another and the world we share. This isn't easy but then we weren't promised a soft option. We can be sure though of His love...

What's all this got to do with Prisons? Everything. Jesus was more concerned with prisons than palaces...Where life was most difficult and the most common emotion was despair and desperation, our Lord saw the potential to make things better, to bring hope and peace of mind. We are challenged in "Prisons' Week" to think about making ourselves agents for change not only in but with prisons, and all of us who live and work in them. We need to realise this potential for change in ourselves and in others. In this was we bring closer the coming of God's kingdom. The day when we will really know what true freedom is. No bars. No walls. One world bathed in light and love."

## **SENIOR YOUTH CLUB**

In the past year there has been an average attendance of 15 young people on Monday nights. They have enjoyed Ten Pin Bowling and Ice-Skating.

The fundraising has been very good too, not only through the popular Big Brunch but also with the Quiz Night and the Youth Weekend Event providing extra funds.

In April this year members of the Club decided to Adopt A Child (under the NSPCC scheme) by each member giving an extra 10p per week. The money collected has enabled the Club to give £3.00 per month to the NSPCC, while any monies left over can be given on a six monthly basis to an international children's charity.

## **MEMORIES OF SUMMER**

Joyce, Fred and Joanne joined the church summer camp to Swanage. We were very favoured with the weather and although rain was frequently forecast, it did not arrive. We had many sunny days on the beach. Some of us tried to go walking and others, including very small children, walked for long distances. Several evenings were spent in Swanage with plenty of shops being open.

The camaraderie was great, and we received lots of help in taking Joanne to places we didn't feel able to tackle and bringing her safely home from a walk I failed to finish. Many thanks to all who were with us.

*Joyce Plant*

## **KEEP FIT! BEAT THE WINTER BLUES!**

Ladies, do you want to keep yourselves lithe and lissom but need company to encourage you to exercise? Why not join the group who enjoy their weekly Keep Fit class every Friday evening in the church hall. 7.30 to 9 p.m. You will be most welcome.

*For further information see Mary Davies (8540 8714)*

## **LIGHTFORCE INTERNATIONAL**

This year the Women's Anniversary Weekend Coffee Morning\* was in aid of the work done in Albania by LightForce.

Albania is a republic bordered by Macedonia, Montenegro, Greece, Serbia and the Adriatic coast. It is almost as large as Belgium and the land is predominantly mountainous. It has a population of 3.3 million and its capital Tirana has a population of 600,000.

In Roman times it was the province of Illyria (visited by St. Paul) and from 1486 to 1912 it was part of first the Byzantine and then the Turkish Ottoman empire. As a result it is the only European country with a predominantly Muslim religious population. Most people depend on agriculture for their livelihood but the main industries include food processing, timber, textiles and petroleum

refining. The people, especially in the villages, are very creative and talented in woodcraft, woven cloth, carpet-making, embroidery and lace-like cloth.

There are over 400 relief aid agencies from all over Europe and the USA working in Albania

LightForce International has worked in Eastern Europe since 1980 and began working in Albania in 1992. It has a permanent base in Ishull Lehze which includes a residential centre and warehouse from which it can distribute aid in Albania itself and transfer goods to centres in Kosova.

As well as providing food, clothing and blankets its workers have constructed and repaired homes and equipped hospitals and schools. It has centres in Northern Albania and in Kosova.

In 1999 during the Kosova conflict LightForce gave shelter to Kosovar refugees at its Base at Lehze.

Its work covers not only humanitarian aid but also development projects. These include a jeans factory, a small farm, agricultural contracting, provision of micro-credits for small business creation and community improvements (such as transport, refuse collection and beach cleaning).

It works with local churches and Christian communities in being responsible for a Missions Training School, organising camps for children and also running a Christian coffee bar.

\*The Coffee Morning raised £120

## **VISION AID OVERSEAS**

Twenty million people simply need spectacles to lead a normal life. Vision Aid Overseas is the charity dedicated to helping them. It was formed in 1985 by a group of British optometrists who had volunteered that year to work in eye camps in Tanzania. Brian Ellis (the guest speaker at our World Mission Weekend Sunday morning service last month) and his wife Maureen had been members of this group and Brian became the founder chairman of the charity which was named World Vision Overseas. It enables optometrists and dispensing opticians to give their skills and expertise to the poor and needy in developing countries.

In a Third World country the absence of a Welfare State means an ageing tailor who cannot see to thread a needle cannot work and his family starves. A pastor unable to see to read his Bible cannot lead his fellowship. A child for whom the world is a blur cannot be educated. Forty million people in the world can be

classified as blind, and of those, twenty million simply need spectacles. But those vital spectacles may only be available two to three days journey away and cost the equivalent of four months salary.

Vision Aid Overseas sends out, for two week periods, teams that work from dawn to dusk in hospitals, towns and villages examining the eyes of all who come, referring surgical cases to a local surgeon and giving the necessary correct spectacles to others. Through charity shops, church, Rotary Clubs and appeals all the glasses will have been donated by their former owners in this country and many of you will already have contributed in this way. The library of spectacles will have been cleaned, adjusted and catalogued according to lens power by volunteer prisoners working in prisons throughout the UK.

In recent years Vision Aid Overseas has supplemented its eye clinics with the teaching of basic eye testing techniques to selected national nurses so that, on their departure, the provision of eye care can continue. Small workshops, often staffed by the physically disabled, have been established to provide a supply of spectacles.

## **NEW GIFT AID REGULATIONS**

We are very grateful for the efforts of those who have Covenanted their gifts in the past and, as many of you will be aware, new Gift Aid regulations came into force from the 6th April this year. These are intended to simplify the process for the return of tax to the Church from those who make payments to the Church from taxed income. The new system **replaces** Covenants, so that long-term commitment will no longer be required, i.e. the four year term of a Covenant in the past.

All that is now necessary is for a Gift Aid Declaration to be made stating that the donor is a tax payer. The declaration can be **cancelled** at any time by writing to me - as Church Treasurer and Gift Aid Secretary. You must obviously pay tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax reclaimed - if you cease to pay tax then the Declaration must be cancelled.

It is a condition of the new scheme that all donations are recorded, so that it is possible for them to be traced back by the Inland Revenue should they decide to do so. This means that the Church will need to have a complete record; e.g. giving through the envelope system, or paying by Banker's Order where the Church bank statement records the name of the donor, and the amount of the gift. This latter system would seem to be the most straight forward, and I can supply details of the Church bank account for anyone wishing to set up a Banker's Order.

It has taken some time for the Finance Board to clarify details and there are still some points which are not clear - such as does the Church Treasurer/Gift Aid Secretary (i.e. me!) need to know how much is given into the envelope system and by whom. It is also not clear what sort of record needs to be kept of those who pay their monthly Covenant sum by way of cheque. I am trying to clarify outstanding points with the Finance Board!

I will be writing shortly to those who currently have Covenants, either with the General Fund or the Building Fund, sending them a Gift Aid Declaration form the declaration part of which has to be filled in - not signed - and returned to me as soon as possible, and I would stress the "as soon as possible".

Theoretically, loose cash offerings by taxpayers should now become a thing of the past. If anyone in the congregation who pays tax and has not previously had a Covenant would like to participate in the new scheme, do not hesitate to speak with me.

I am sure that everyone will appreciate that by participating in the new scheme, if you have not previously Covenanted, then the income to the Church increases without anyone giving more - it comes from the Inland Revenue!

*John Butland*

Got any rivers to cross, you think are uncrossable?  
Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?  
God specializes in things thought impossible.  
He does things others can't do."

O.Elizson

Items for the next issue of the Newsletter (December/January should be with the editor, Rosemary Keen, by **Sunday 12 November** at the latest.

## CHURCH DIARY FOR NOVEMBER

Wed	1	07.45 pm	Midways (Janet Fernando - Working with the Deaf and Hearing Impaired)
Thu	2	07.30 pm	ADMINISTRY training evening
Fri	3	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	5	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Dr Arthur Miller
Mon	6	02.45 pm	Fellowship (Bill Cox)
Wed	8	10.30 am	Holy Communion
		08.00 pm	Ministerial Staff and Circuit Stewards
Sat	11		Church Stewards' Training Day
Sun	12	10.30 am	Remembrance Sunday Morning Service led by Mr Andy Walker
		06.30 pm	Holy Communion led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
Mon	13	02.45 pm	Fellowship (Ms Barbara Davidson - Merton Refuge)
Tue	14	08.00 pm	Bible Study and Prayer Group
Wed	15	07.45 pm	Midways (Rev Jenny Impey - A Look at Africa)
Thu	16	08.00 pm	Mission and Service Committee
Fri	17	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sat	18	07.30 pm	Youth Weekend Event
Sun	19	10.30 am	Youth Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
		06.30 pm	Celebration Praise led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
Mon	20	02.45 pm	Fellowship (Rev John Dakin)
Thu	23	08.00 pm	Local Preachers' meeting
Sun	26	10.30 am	Holy Communion led by Rev Rodney Hill
Mon	27	02.45 pm	Fellowship (Mrs Dorothy Turner - Puppets)
Wed	29	07.45 pm	Midways (Audrey Ward - Christmas Decorations)

## CHURCH DIARY FOR DECEMBER

Fri	1	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	3	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
Mon	4	02.45 pm	Fellowship
Tues	5	07.30 pm	Supper Club Social
Sat	9	03.00 pm	Arthritis Care Carol Service
Sun	10	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
		06.30 pm	Service of Holy Communion

**Please refer to the Weekly Notice-sheet for additional information**