

# MARTIN WAY METHODIST CHURCH

## NEWSLETTER - December 2000/January 2001

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

**Tel. 020 8542 4758**

Dear Friends

It doesn't seem possible that it is now nearly a year ago since we stood as a family on the Embankment, watching the 'river of fire' travel down the Thames in the magnificent firework display to celebrate the beginning of the year 2000. To be part of such a vast, but good-natured crowd of people was quite an occasion. I am reminded of the millennium resolution, the prayer that so many of us used as a promise, a hope, for the new millennium:

Let there be respect for the earth  
Peace for its people  
Love in our lives  
Delight in the good  
Forgiveness for past wrongs  
And from now on a new start.

Jesus is the love in our lives that enables us to have a sense of respect, to work for peace, to delight in good and to be forgiven for past wrongs, and it is therefore a very appropriate prayer for Advent, Christmas and the New Year. The month of December is incredibly busy, can be very expensive, and many people travel to spend time with family and friends. In amongst all this activity we try and find time to reflect on the meaning of the Christmas story. Advent is a time of preparation, preparing for the coming of Christ as a baby in Bethlehem and as a living presence in our hearts and lives. Amidst all the practical preparations for the Christmas celebrations I hope you will find time to rediscover the wonder of the moment in history when Christ was born; to enjoy the elements of surprise and tenderness, and and to experience the depth of the love of God in sending Jesus. The Christmas services offer something for everyone, and you will find details of some of the themes in the centre of this newsletter. I look forward to sharing with you in all these worship events and in renewing our covenant with God in the Covenant Service on January 7th. With best wishes for a very happy Christmas and New Year

*Anne*

## **FROM JOHN BUTLAND OUR TREASURER**

I am still hoping to have applications to sign Gift Declarations from those who have not previously covenanted their giving, so that the Church can recover tax on their contributions. Remember if you pay tax then all you have to do is sign the declaration to put into effect the recovery procedure. This can be cancelled at any time by notice in writing.

## **POSTAL COLLECTION**

The Post Box will be available in the church vestibule from 3rd December for your Christmas cards for your friends who come to church. Please be sure to put the recipients full name on the envelope [Edie Winrow, who nobly undertakes the task of being the sorting office, has not yet mastered the art of mind reading] and please contribute an appropriate amount of postage money saved which will go to our church funds. The post will be ready for collection on 17th December. Absolute guaranteed delivery to hand, unbent and unsullied by grubby post sacks!

## **CHRISTMAS SPECIALS**

We shall be enjoying a fine Christmas Lunch on Sunday 17 December. Tickets obtainable from Maralyn Loft and Lesley Mortley. £5 for adults; £2-50 for under 12's and under 5's free.

The Happy Wanderers Christmas Concert is on Saturday 16 December at 7.30 pm. Tickets @ £2.50 each (including refreshments) will be available from members of the Group or on the door. Proceeds are in aid of Christian Care in Merton.

Christmas Coffee and Chat will be on Tuesday 19 December. After that the next one will be on Tuesday, 19 January 2001.

Items for the next issue of the Newsletter (February) should be with the editor, Rosemary Keen, by Sunday 14 January at the latest.

## **BIBLELANDS**

Copies of this year's Christmas Card and Gift catalogue are now available in both vestibules. Please help yourselves. Any support you are able to give will enable you to share in BibleLands work helping many needy children. They thank you for your prayers over the past year and for the donations of stamps etc.

## **ADVENT MESSAGE**

As Advent approaches I'm reminded of a hymn which touched and changed my life. It was about the same time of year and as I attended Sunday School we sang the hymn "No Room" from Golden Bells Song Book. The words spoke to me and I responded by offering Jesus a place in my heart and life. I pray it will continue to be a blessing and challenge.

No room for the Baby at Bethlehem's inn,  
Only a cattle shed.  
No home on this earth for the dear Son of God,  
Nowhere to lay His head,  
Only a cross did they give to our Lord,  
Only a borrowed tomb.  
To-day He is seeking a place in your heart,  
Will you still say to Him 'No room'?

O Lord, in my heart there's a welcome for Thee.  
Gladly I now would say,  
Come in, blessed Saviour, my heart and my life  
Henceforth would own Thy sway.  
Long hast Thou waited and long knocked in vain  
Outside my heart's closed door;  
Oh, cleanse me from sin, then, dear Lord, enter in  
And dwell there for evermore.

Every blessing in Jesus  
*Moiria Bailey*

## **CHURCH FAMILY NEWS**

Congratulations to Anne and Doug Neale on the birth of their granddaughter Emily to Janet and Miles. thirty years ago Janet was a member of our Sunday School and Junior Choir.

Happy birthday to Sue Chapman who will be 40 in December.

## **CONGRATULATIONS**

Congratulations to Steve Pallister for completing the Great North Run.

Anne-Marie writes: - Steve completed the Half-Marathon in 1 hour 47 minutes finishing 9777th out of 38,000! He has raised £450 for the National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease. Thank you for all the sponsorship support and words of encouragement.

Hopefully he's going to run the London Marathon next year - watch this space!!

## THANKS

Thanks to all who supported the Alexander House Bazaar. The proceeds amounted to £961.00

## OVERSEAS MISSIONS

Derek Heaton writes: -

What happened at our Overseas Mission Weekend reminded me of what Ivy Bass shared with many of us in 1988. About a dozen of us from Martin Way were then on a pilgrimage around the Holy Land. At that time we were very fortunate in being able to visit the Helen Keller School for Blind Children in Jerusalem. This school was owned and run by the Bible Lands Society whose headquarters are in High Wycombe. What we saw at the school prompted many of us to work in support of this charity. Ivy herself had long been a supporter of Bible Lands and had shared her knowledge of their work with us, but didn't get any other supporters. After our visit she said happily "It took you all to go and see, to be moved"; then we all supported.

Well this also happened on Sunday 29th October when our guest speaker at the morning service was Brian Ellis. We all learnt first hand of his and his colleagues' wonderful work in their charity Vision Aid Overseas. Through questions and answers we learnt about the needs of people of all ages in many parts of Africa whose eyesight problems are severe; how with love, care and specialist examination many folk with poor eyesight can now see - something we all take very much for granted. We learnt about the hours and expenses given voluntarily by the specialists. It was so moving we all knew we had to do more, and right away that Sunday morning donations were £169.37. We acted on "personal hands-on work". For that Martin Way - very many thanks.

Not forgetting the previous day Saturday 28th when many braved the gales and rain to enjoy lunch, games and chats. Thank you all for supporting and spending. This could not have happened without all those who gave precious time to help us in every different way. You know who you are. Very many thanks!

*Derek Heaton*

[The grand total raised over the weekend was £309.83]

Spread the word to your friends and keep the old spectacles flooding in (NOT the cases)

Spectacles can be given to Roy Ellis or to Derek and Mary Heaton

## **TOY AND GIFT SERVICE 3 DECEMBER**

For many years we have held an annual toy service in December, where children have brought unwanted toys to give to underprivileged children. This year we invite you to support "The Windmill Project". This is a charity run by the Sisters of Notre Dame in Clapham. Basically it is a college set up for women from refugee families where they can learn various skills e.g. basic English, computing, bookkeeping, child care etc, skills which will enable them to enter the work force and become independent. These women have had some very harrowing experiences, but are determined to start afresh and support themselves and families.

Gifts that would be much appreciated are small luxury items - bubble bath, shampoos, nice soap, talc, nail varnish. Also welcome would be basic household items such as coffee mugs, tea towels and anything that would help set up a home. Magazines are very popular, particularly those with recipes. A lot of women see the ingredients in the shops but don't know how to cook them. Toys are also very acceptable either to be given out to individual children or to be used in the nursery and crèche. Second hand toys and items in good condition would be much appreciated.

At our Gift Service everyone, not just the children, will be invited to bring forward their gift. We look forward to seeing you there.

## **SUNDAY CLUB NEWS**

We have the children in the Sunday Club across the range of crèche, beginners (Sparklers), juniors (All Stars/Trail Blazers) and seniors. Anne Conquest and Sue Boyd lead the Sparklers group, Brenda Cannon leads the All Stars/Trailblazers group and Geraldine Ellis leads the senior group. Mike Mortley as our Sunday Club Co-ordinator is around most Sundays. Mike is very involved with the Sunday morning sessions and quite often steps in to lead one of the groups or offer much needed support. The beginners and juniors follow the Scripture Union notes that have recently taken on a 'new look' though the content is much the same format. The children seem to enjoy the sessions which contain mime, drama and stories. There are always plenty of activities to choose from. Very often a suggestion is made to include a member or members of the congregation, so if you're willing to 'have a go' and join us occasionally then please have a word with one of us, We try to make use of new and up-to-date material to introduce the children to the gospels. We took the children on an outing during the summer to

see "The Miracle Maker" an animated film about Jesus' life. It is based on Luke's gospel and is told through the eyes of a child. We have also used video cartoons called "The Story Teller" (as seen on TV). The children seemed to have enjoyed these and we found it was useful material to use during the six week summer holidays when we usually join together for all age sessions.

Most of the leaders are here every Sunday morning but occasionally for various reasons one or two may not be able to attend. With that thought in mind any extra support would be welcome. If you love Jesus then come and share His love with them. Their response is forever surprising. They too have so much to give.

*Brenda Cannon*

### **Now a note from Geraldine**

The senior group of the Sunday Club has quite a large age range but seems to be quite successful. Children from the age of 10 join us and we at present have children ranging between 10 and 15. They all get on extremely well together and I am pleased to report that some Sundays I have as many as 10 in the vestry. At the moment there are 12 on the 'register'. I admit that I was not happy with the Scripture Union lesson notes but felt I did need some guidance. The Scripture Union notes were too much like a school lesson and did not involve enough discussion, games etc.

Mike came into church one Sunday and said he had been looking in a shop up in London and had found some books which he thought I might find useful. Well, all I can say is "Well-done Mike and thank-you". The books are excellent. Admittedly I do not stick to a particular theme all the time, but the ideas, Bible activities, games etc. are great. The ones I like the best are by John Buckeridge and are called simply Youth Work. They come in different volumes and up to now I have used a volume on Belief, Culture, Christian Living and Lifestyle. I am now using a big volume including new lessons on all these and more. The topics I have covered, just for example, include self-esteem, setting goals in life, the power of anger, caretakers of God's world, hypocrisy and the influencers. All these topics make the children think about their own and other life-styles. There is usually a worksheet to photocopy and the sessions include games, discussion starters, talks, Bible studies with many optional extras. I certainly enjoy planning and taking the sessions and I hope the children not only enjoy them but get something from them.

*Geraldine Ellis*

## **RAINBOWS - HELP NEEDED!!!**

Are you active, 'child-friendly' and able to give one hour a week helping with a Rainbow pack? The 1st Merton Park Rainbows (girls aged between 5 and 7) meet on the church premises on Wednesdays between 5.30 pm and 6.30 pm under the leadership of Geraldine Ellis. At present the group is limited to 10 and has a long waiting list. Geraldine's helper is leaving at Christmas and without a replacement the pack may have to reduce in size and the waiting list may get even longer. If you are interested and able to spare some time, please speak to Geraldine (8542-9241)

## 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	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Ken Woodward - Theatre)
Tue	5	7.30 pm	Supper Club Social
Sat	9	3.00 pm	Arthritis Care Carol Service
Sun	10	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
		6.30 pm	Service of Holy Communion
Mon	11	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Graham Currie)
Tue	12	8.00 pm	Bible Study and Prayer Group
Wed	13	10.30 am	Holy Communion
Sun	17	10.30 am	Holy Communion led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
		8.00 pm	Youth Choir Event
Mon	18	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Carols and Mince Pies)
Sun	24	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Anne Rusbridge
		5.00 pm	Christingle Service
		11.30 pm	Holy Communion Service
Mon	25	10.30 am	Christmas Day Family Service
Sun	31	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mrs Janet Hamblin

## CHURCH DIARY FOR JANUARY

Sun	7	10.30 am	Covenant Service
Mon	8	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Peter Stockton - Guide Dogs)
Tue	9	8.00 pm	Bible Study and Prayer Group
Wed	10	10.30 am	Holy Communion
		7.45 pm	Midways (Music from the Shows - Members Evening; bring your favourite music)
Thu	11	8.00 pm	Finance and Property Committee
Fri	12	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	14	10.30 am	Morning Service
Mon	15	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Mrs V Cooper - Paintings)
Tue	16	7.30 pm	Supper Club (Rev John Dakin)
Sun	21	10.30 am	Morning Service
		6.30 pm	Churches Together United Service
Mon	22	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Mrs Betty Dodge Entertains)
Wed	24	7.45 pm	Midways (Derek & Mary Heaton - Oberammergau)
Thu	25	8.00 pm	Worship Consultation
Fri	26	12.30 pm	Lunch Club
Sun	28	10.30 am	Morning Service
Mon	29	2.45 pm	Fellowship (Sheila Morrissey - Decorated Eggs)

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