

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear friends,

The Christian Church at any one time will be judged on whether it successfully passes on the good news of Christ to the next generation.



The Methodist Conference will be receiving some worrying statistics this year, statistics that don't make for comfortable reading. During the last ten years membership of the Methodist Church has fallen by about 30 per cent. Attendance has fallen by a similar proportion. Children's attendance has seen an even greater reduction of about 58 per cent.

Now, of course, statistics always have to be interpreted and set in context and, of course, statistics fail to allow for the possibility of God doing something new – which always remains more than a possibility if past performance is anything to go by. But one can't help feeling – looking around at our churches – that these figures tell it as it is. And sometimes the truth can hurt.

It seems that we have a choice: we can hide behind the one liners that '97.3% of all statistics are made up' and that '43% of statistics are worthless' and dismiss reports of the church's demise – saying that such a demise has been predicted before and not come to anything – or we can take seriously the situation that we find ourselves in and which these recent statistics highlight.

As we make this choice we need to realise or remember a couple of things, I think. The first is that the problem might not be with the life and message of the Jesus we seek to follow but rather what we've subsequently done with it. It could well be that the Church in its present form needs to die in order for God to breathe resurrection life into it. As emotionally attached to the Church and its customs and

traditions as we might be, surely we have to be prepared to let go of some or all of these if they're no longer helping us to pass on the good news of Christ to the next generation, surely we have to be prepared to let go of some of the things we love about the Church if that's what God needs and wants us to do.

The other thing that we need to realise or remember – and it's connected – is this: the future of the Church is ultimately in God's hands not ours. The Church won't stand or fall by the success or failure of our initiatives, mission strategies and the like – however important they might be or seem to us to be. We like to be in control but we're not, God is. Now that's not to say that we should sit back and do nothing – far from it, God has given us minds and bodies to use and we do need to think about what we exist for and question what we're doing in the light of any answers we come up with – but it should free us from the fear of failure that can paralyze us and prevent us from living life to the full.

Knowledge that the Church is in God's hands should allow us to forget worrying about percentages and targets and instead focus our attention on living out our lives in such a way that draws others to us as a community and therefore to God. In that way we might well pass on our faith in the good news of Christ to the next generation.

With every blessing,

Paul

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Well done to Derek and Mary Heaton for raising over £80 at their Plant Stand for St Raphael's Hospice at this year's Wimbledon Village Fair. It was a fantastic day both weather wise and in the number of stalls, rides and exhibitions which meant attendance broke all records.



Spring Harvest 2014 'Unbelievable'

Having booked our accommodation back in June 2013 and then with the help and support of many people over the following months by way of fundraising, we packed our bags (some of us having to pack the kitchen sink as well) we loaded the cars and off we went to Butlin's Minehead for what we all hoped would be an enjoyable and refreshing time.

Arriving at Butlin's we booked in and found our accommodation picked which bedroom we wanted (I had already sorted this out – *to stop any arguments*) unpacked and with the help of the programme planner we worked out what we would be doing over the next 4 days.

The young people sorted out what they would be doing while there and once sorted, off they went swimming. (In fact they went swimming just about every day) those of us who are no longer in the teenage bracket sorted out at our leisure what and at which venue we would be taking part in.

The working out of what to do is never easy as there is so much to choose from.

A typical programme for each day is 9am to 9.30am BIG START in the Big Top where those of us who get up in the morning, go for ½ hours fun and games (very family friendly and a great way to start the day – well I think so). Then it's the main event of the morning Bible Study 10.am to 11.15pm an 1¼ hours Bible Study may seem a long while but it's so well done that the time flies – when I saw that the person taking the Bible Study was the Principal from Moorland's Theological College I was apprehensive to say the least. But within 10 minutes I was enthralled and it was (for me) the best part of each day. After a coffee break from 11.45am to 1pm we could go to what this

year were called Spaces (practical sessions taking a look at the day's theme and you could choose from 6 different spaces, which apply truth to the situation you are most interested in or where you find yourself).

Following lunch there are many different Seminars, covering topics from Family Life to Puppet workshop, from Dance workshop to Multimedia in worship, from Art workshop to Storytelling workshop and many others.

Butlin's also open up the fairground in the afternoon – so the children and young people and anyone else could just enjoy the rides etc. or just chill out.

In the evening; always a rush getting everyone back to the apartments for dinner and out in time for Evening Worship again you could choose from the main worship in the Big Top of one of the alternative worship sessions (I did go to the main worship on 1 occasion, but for the rest of the time I attended Presence: Space to Worship and more relaxed and quieter time – I find these days that the main worship is too noisy).

The evening worship was from 6.45pm to 9pm, and then just when you thought the day was over at 9.15pm to 11pm included the afterhours events took place and these ranged from the resident (Spring Harvest) comedian to Adrian Plass, from Rise Theatre Company to the singing group IONA, and much more.

This gives you an idea of the Adult programme, and the Young People and the Children also have their own full programmes (included; All Age Worship for the Children and their families and a very very noisy time of worship for the young people).

By day 3 you can tell who have never been (or like the young people you think you are indestructible) to Spring Harvest before because, they look like Zombie's – they have tried to go to everything.

I have learned over the years that you have to pace yourself. None of

the events are compulsory, you can take or leave any or all of them – it's completely up to you.

I can only reiterate that for me it is great to be at Spring Harvest with friends from our church and circuit and other likeminded people – a time when I can and do recharge my batteries.

As you read this article we will have booked for Spring Harvest 2015 and to date 22 of us from this church and circuit will be going to Butlin's Skegness. We will also be holding our fundraising Big Brunches starting in September – so watch for the date.

Each year, Spring Harvest has a theme which runs right through.. The Bible is central to it all and, from toddlers to adults, everyone learns from the same passages, in a way to suit them. This year the theme was 'Unbelievable'. In 2015 the theme is 'Immeasurably More', which is based on Ephesians 3:20-21, and exploring the potential of a God of immeasurably more.

*"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." **Ephesians 3:20-21***

If you would like any information then please talk to either Emily Bacon (Who from 2016 will be the organiser) or myself.

Tony Loft

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We wish Margaret Adams, Margaret Redway and Tony Loft safe journey as they travel to Uganda on Tuesday 24th June to help with Care for Uganda.

Please remember them and the organisation in your prayers as well as those that Care for Uganda helps.



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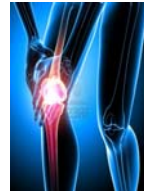
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For further information contact:

Mike Fuwa

Tel: 07956 369579



The 2014 Embrace the Middle East Calendar not only features beautiful pictures of the Middle East, but also Bible verses and recipes on the reverse.

Here is one of the recipes for cookies that would be excellent for any summer trips.

Barazek

Sesame cookies, which melt in the mouth

Ingredients

- 450g (1lb) sesame seeds
- 5 tbsp honey
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp butter
- 170g (6oz) sugar
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 400g (14oz) plain flour
- 450g (1lb) semolina
- Pinch of salt
- 3tbsp warm milk
- 110g (4oz) chopped pistachio nuts



Method

1. Preheat an oven to 190°C (gas mark 5)
2. Cream together the eggs, butter and sugar until light and fluffy
3. Sift together the baking powder, flour, semolina and salt. Add to the egg mixture and mix thoroughly. Add enough warm milk to form a soft dough.
4. In a separate bowl, mix the sesame seeds with the honey
5. Cut the dough into small walnut-sized balls and dip each into the pistachio nuts. Flatten to form a 5cm (2 inch) round cookie and place (pistachio side down) onto a greased baking tray.
6. Cover each cookie with the sesame seed and honey mixture, then bake for 15 minutes or until golden brown.

Martin Way May Fair



On Saturday 10th May 2014 Martin Way Methodist Church opened their doors up for another May Fair and fun was had by all!

Due to the wet weather promised by the Weatherman it was decided to setup all the Stalls around

the hall and up the corridors. Well it didn't rain (until we were packing up) but the north wind did blow! So unfortunately no room for the bouncy castle but all the other stalls were fitted in!

We had Plants, Books, craft, health, cookery, jewellery, face painting, cake stalls and lots of fun games for the whole family to enjoy including the jar tombola and lucky dip!



In the Kitchen the team was serving up Drinks, Cream teas, sandwiches with crisps and ice creams – enjoyed by all.

It was great to see the Church buzzing with so many people enjoying all the stalls and games alike!

At Midday we had the parade of the May Queen Abigail Fuwa and her attendants, and then Players Academy presented three songs which had everyone swaying along too. It was fantastic to get a small glimpse at what they get up to each week when they meet in our hall!



May Queen Abigail



Academy Players

Many Thanks to Anne Conquest and the rest of her team who helped get this Fair up and running. It was wonderful to see the young and old alike enjoying the fun of the Fair!

Abby Herring

Thanks to Roy for the photos

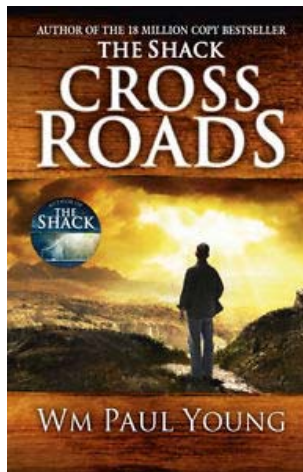


Tombola Stand

Martin Way Summer Book Club

Come along and join us for this one off book club Martin Way Methodist Church - We have chosen to read 'Cross Roads' by William Paul Young, author of the bestseller 'The Shack'.

Multi-millionaire Anthony Spencer is trapped in a coma and finds himself in a surreal world that reflects the skewed priorities of the life he's lived on earth where he meets a stranger who turns out to be Jesus and a grandmother who is the Holy Spirit.



Pleading for a second chance, he is sent back to earth to redeem himself. There he must fight to put right the mess he's created, experiencing events through others' eyes before deciding how to use the miraculous gift he's been given. Before his illness he had set events in motion that he now needs to undo - but will he have the courage to make the right choice?

The book is available from most good bookshops and Amazon. Copies are also available through Merton libraries.

On Tuesday 19th August we will meet together to discuss this book, so if you want to join us please read the book before then.

The venue for Book Club is yet to be decided but if you are interested in joining us – please contact myself or Jane Smith know in advance. We will be happy to offer lifts to and from book club – please just ask.

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**CHRISTIAN
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VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

June Press Releases from CSW

June has been filled with highs and lows – the news of Meriam Ibrahim’s release, followed swiftly the family’s detention at Khartoum airport 24 hours later.

Meriam isn’t the only person who needs God’s intervention on her behalf and your prayers are vital – please continue to pray for the following situations?

SUDAN: Meriam Ibrahim and family still detained

Meriam Ibrahim, whose death sentence for apostasy was quashed, is still being held after being detained along with her family at the airport. Meriam is being investigated by the police for alleged irregularities with her travel documents. The police have refused to release the family on bail whilst they carry out their investigation.

Pray that Meriam and her family would be unconditionally released by the police and that the police would conclude their investigation without charging Meriam.

ERITREA: Your prayers this week could change Eritrea’s future

On Thursday the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council (HRC) will discuss, and hopefully adopt, a strong resolution condemning the continuing, severe and widespread human rights violations committed by Eritrea against its citizens and calling for the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the violations outlined in reports by the Special Rapporteur on human rights in Eritrea. This is a bold step and one which needs to be underpinned by prayer if it’s to be successful.

Pray that the resolution calling for the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry would be adopted by consensus at the Human Rights Council this week;

Pray that if the resolution goes to a vote this week, HRC members would vote unanimously for a Commission of Inquiry.

IRAN: Behnam Irani returned to prison after disappearance

As you may know Pastor Behnam Irani, who was jailed on political charges, was assaulted earlier this month and was removed to an unknown location. He has now been returned to Ghezal Hesar, but his physical condition and where-

abouts during the time of his disappearance are unclear.

Pray for emotional and physical healing for Pastor Irani, and for strength and comfort for his wife and young children.

CUBA: Rev Mario Felix Leonart Barroso and his wife detained by authorities

Rev Mario Felix Leonart Barroso and his wife Yoaxis have regularly been targeted by the Cuban government. They were detained by police last weekend, and although they were released two hours later, police have confiscated their computer. We're concerned that state security officials could plant information on their computer in order to justify criminal charges.

Pray that the laptops are returned quickly and that no information is planted which could endanger Mario Felix and Yoaxis;

Pray for protection for Mario Felix, Yoaxis and their two daughters.

EGYPT: Since the overthrow of President Mubarak in 2011, Egypt has been in turmoil. The situation for Christians and other religious minorities has been extremely difficult, with attacks and arrests a common occurrence, particularly during the Morsi era.

The political situation is changing, but in January 2014 Egyptians voted overwhelmingly in favour of a new constitution, and the country will soon be voting for a new president. It's now important to pray for Egypt's future.

NIGERIA: A prayer for Nigeria's missing girls

God of grace and comfort, we pray for your mercy.

We pray for the girls brutally kidnapped in Nigeria.

We ask that you might be with them.

In their times of deepest darkness, be a bright beacon of hope.

We pray for your protection of them and ask that they may be freed quickly.

Lord, guide those searching for them.

Grant wisdom and discernment and perseverance.

We pray for the parents, family and friends of the girls.

Lord, strengthen them in their time of sorrow and fear and give them hope and the consolation of your presence.

Lord, we pray for all victims of violence: those who feel abandoned and forgotten; the nameless abused.

May they know that you love them and that others care.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Extreme Rumour

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.

CHINA: Chinese believers

"We have heard a rumour that people in the West are saying that there is no persecution of Christians in China," began the letter from a group of Chinese believers.

"More than one hundred brothers are imprisoned here, and many young Christians under eighteen are under strong pressure from the police. Some were thrown in manure pits; others were beaten with electric-stun batons; some were beaten so much they could not stand and could only crawl.

A few could not endure this. They revealed the names and addresses of their fellow workers to the police. They were sentenced, whereas those who said nothing were eventually released because in insufficient proof."

Persecution is normal for us. In many cases, we are released after interrogation. Then we return to our original area to preach."

Some teenagers want to dedicate themselves to God for full-time Christian service. Turned out of their homes, they are willing to spend their entire lives in this dangerous wandering fashion as evangelists. We see this with fear and trembling, fearing that after preaching the gospel ourselves, we may be castaways.

We have paid a great price for the gospel--much blood and sweat, many tears shed, many lives sacrificed, and much braving of wind and rain."

Rumours that the persecution of Christians in China has ended are surely false. In fact, these rumours may be tools that the enemy uses to suppress the prayers and support that these persecuted believers need. Often we feel that if we tell ourselves that something isn't so, then maybe it isn't. If we shield ourselves to the accounts of persecutions and the stories of sheer survival, then we may begin to believe oppression doesn't exist. We cannot hide or deny the truth long enough for it to change, however. Our brothers and sisters are being persecuted today in restricted nations. Knowing this, what is your response? Will you pray? Serve? Give? Spend some time thinking and praying about your reaction.

Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are being mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. (Hebrews 13:3)

July



CHURCH DIARY

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
Sun	13	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Valerie Ashcroft
Tue	15	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
		7.00 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Summer Party with Friends</i>
Fri	18	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	20	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	22	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	27	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Charlotte Elvey
Tue	29	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer

*Please refer to the Website (www.martinway.org.uk)
or Weekly Notice Sheet for any additional information*

CHURCH DIARY



Sun	3	10.30 am	All Age Worship led by Tony Loft
Tue	5	8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	10	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	12	8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	17	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Brenda Cannon
		6.30 pm	Healing and Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	19	8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	24	10.30 am	Morning Service
Tue	26	8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	31	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Paul Timmis

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We wish all of those who celebrate a birthday
during these months a very

Happy Birthday

and especially to:

Francesca Heald on 5th July

Anne Jenkins on 12th July

Jessica Hazen on 26th July

Rebecca Smith on 11th August





Give, Act and Pray

**Christian Aid
2014**

Mike and I would like to thank those who have sponsored us this year Circle the City walk.

Once all the money is collected we will have raised over £350.00 for what is a very worthwhile charity.

If you did not sponsor us this year but would have liked to have – it's not too late I will happily accept any donation you may wish to make.

Once again thank you for your ongoing support.

Tony Loft

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Lily Dakin

It is with sadness we report on the passing of Lilly Dakin. She died on the morning of Wednesday 4th June at the Royal Free Hospital. She never fully recovered from the min-stroke and operation, but was fully aware and chatting up until a few days before her death. The family had given her a lovely Photo Memories Book on her 90th birthday in early May whilst in the hospital. Her funeral was at East Finchley Methodist Church on Monday 23rd June.

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Welcome to a new arrival

Congratulations to Martin and Ruth Harker on the birth of their little boy, Nathan John.

He was born on Wednesday 18th June, at St Helier Hospital.

Items for the **September Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox, (email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 19th August** at the latest