

Martin Way Methodist Church

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NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2017



MINISTER'S LETTER

The sacking of a football manager rarely raises the eyebrows these days, so commonplace is such news. At the time of writing, this week has seen English football register its 36th and 37th managerial casualties of the season. Whilst many of these departures will have passed you by - and I'm sure that for those not interested one jot in football that will be the vast majority of them - you will have done well not to have noticed that one manager losing his job has made the headlines this week.



I am referring, of course, to the dismissal by Leicester City of Claudio Ranieri just nine months after improbably landing the club the Premier League title, one of the most remarkable of sporting stories ever. Despite Leicester's poor run of form and perilous current league position, the response to this news has been one of dismay and disgust. Gary Lineker, one of Leicester's most famous sons, saw it as an act of betrayal. However true Lineker's reading of the situation may be, radio phone-ins in recent weeks have contained plenty of irate Leicester fans calling for Ranieri's head. How quickly crowds can turn.

I mention all of this because, by the time you read this, we will have once again entered into the season of Lent. In the weeks ahead, as we move from the high of the mountaintop experience known as The Transfiguration, we will follow Jesus and his followers as they head towards Jerusalem. When they eventually enter the city a large crowd will all but proclaim him king and his followers will get swept along with that. As a direct result, one of his friends, trying to ride the wave of popularity but misreading the situation, will betray him. Within days that same crowd will call for Jesus' head. How quickly crowds can turn.

Now, obviously, I'm not wanting to compare Claudio Ranieri with Jesus even if the former had crowds singing his name and hailing him as a messiah not so long ago. What I'm seeking to illustrate, at the outset of our own Lenten journey, is that crowds can turn and turn quickly.

Seeking the approval of the crowds is an instinctively human thing to do. It is appealing. As human beings we like to be liked, we like to be popular, and nothing says this like lots of people lauding what we say or do. It's perhaps no wonder then that much of today's politics seems to be about saying and doing things that might be popular and therefore keep someone in power - rather than being about what might be the compassionate and loving thing to do. Given the fickle nature of crowds, however, this is a risky strategy.

As Jesus' followers we are called to be different. As much as we all want to be liked (and it is nice!), our primary concern cannot be about courting popularity. Our first call as disciples isn't to be liked but to be true to the gospel of the one we have chosen to follow. This, as Lent, Holy Week and Easter reminds us, is a costly path. Being compassionate and loving people demands that we challenge and expose self-interested voices and actions. This might mean that at times we have to take our stand against the crowd however unpopular that makes us.

At the turn of the year, we made our covenant promise. As we embark upon Lent, I offer you some of the words that prefaced our promise: a reminder of what this season demands of us.

*Christ has many services to be done:
some are easy, others are difficult;
some bring honour, others bring reproach;
some are suitable to our natural inclinations and material
interests, others are contrary to both;
in some we may please Christ and please ourselves;
in others we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves.
Yet the power to do all these things is given to us in Christ, who
strengthens us.*

With every blessing

Paul

Thoughts from our House Group....

Our house group has been looking at ‘Growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ’ (2 Peter 3:18) that no matter where we are in our spiritual journey or how mature we are in our faith, we will always have much room for growth. Recently we have been discussing and sharing stories of Helen Roseveare, missionary, doctor and author who died in December. We’d like to share her story.



Helen Roseveare was born in England in 1925. Because education was a high priority for her father, Helen was sent to a prestigious all girls school when she was 12. After that, she went to Cambridge. It was during her time in college that she became a Christian, truly understanding the gospel for the first time. She left her Anglo-Catholic background and became an evangelical. Her focus was to finish her medical degree and prepare herself for the mission field.

“If Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him.” That was her mission’s motto. In 1953, Helen sailed for the Congo with hopes of serving Christ as a medical missionary with WEC (Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ International). For so many years she’d dreamed of being a missionary. As a young girl, she’d hear stories of her aunt and uncle’s experiences on the mission field, and now she was eager to have her own stories to tell.

There were many challenges for Helen, she endured a burglary and an attempted poisoning, but always in her mind the situation was improving. She felt that she had to stay, because there was so much need and so many people depending on her. On August 15, 1964 the rebels took control of Nebobongo, and Helen was in captivity for the next 5 months. On the night of October 29, Helen was overpowered by black rebel soldiers in her little bungalow. She tried to escape, but they found her and dragged her to her feet, struck her over the head and shoulders, flung her to the ground, kicked her, struck her over and over again. She was pushed back into her house and raped brutally without mercy. Helen suffered

more sexual brutality before her release. God used this in her life to minister to other single women missionaries who feared that they'd lost their purity due to a rape and thus their salvation. Helen knew that her relationship with God had not been damaged. She had not failed God in any way because of the rapes. Finally, on December 31, 1964 she was rescued. Helen had a sense of joy and relief, but also a sense of deep sorrow as she heard of many of her friends' martyrdom.

Helen was an outstanding speaker and Moira has had the privilege of hearing her many times during her WEC years and shared with us inspirational stories of Helen's missionary work in the Congo. Moira remembers that when Helen spoke 'You could hear a pin drop'. When Helen came to Emmanuel church in Wimbledon, the then Minister Rev. Jonathon Fletcher is purported to have stated that it was the best meetings they have had in the last 30 years. Roger Carswell interviewed Helen at an evangelical event at Emmanuel, and asked her after she had described the violence and rape to which she had been subjected, what she would leave with her audience. She simply replied "Keep looking to Jesus".

Roger Caswell gave the eulogy to Dr Helen Roseveare at her funeral in December 2016 and records many incidences of Helen's relating to answered prayer. One of which was not in print as Helen had lost contact with the person concerned and so did not want to print without his permission.

This is the story as related by Roger:

Helen travelled the world attending conferences and representing WEC and on this occasion it was her first time in the USA with a full itinerary extending several weeks. She was leaving for Seattle on this particular morning and was required to be at the airport early for the 7.30am flight. To her horror on arriving she discovered that she had left her travel documents, passport and money behind at her host's home who had driven her to the airport, a two hour journey away. When asked where she was going she replied that she didn't know as all the arrangements had been done on her behalf. On being told 'no tickets, no flight' on more than one occasion, but would she know someone who would act as her

guarantor...?, Helen stepped aside from the queue and prayed.

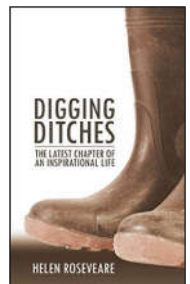
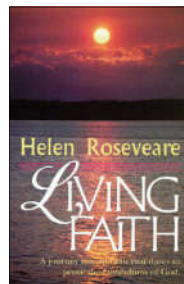
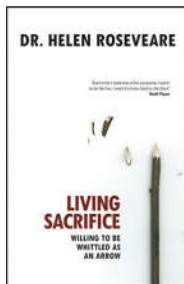
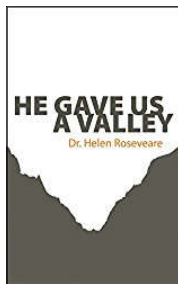
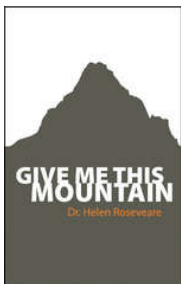
She then went to the back of the queue and when she repeated her dilemma to the, by now, impatient person at the check-in desk, asked her for a telephone directory and look up names with Reverend's starting with A. Helen picked a name at random and the person at the check-in dialled the number and Helen could only decipher one side of the conversation. When she had finished the conversation, she said 'Yes, this person knows you and will gladly act as your guarantor. He'll be here in 20minutes!'

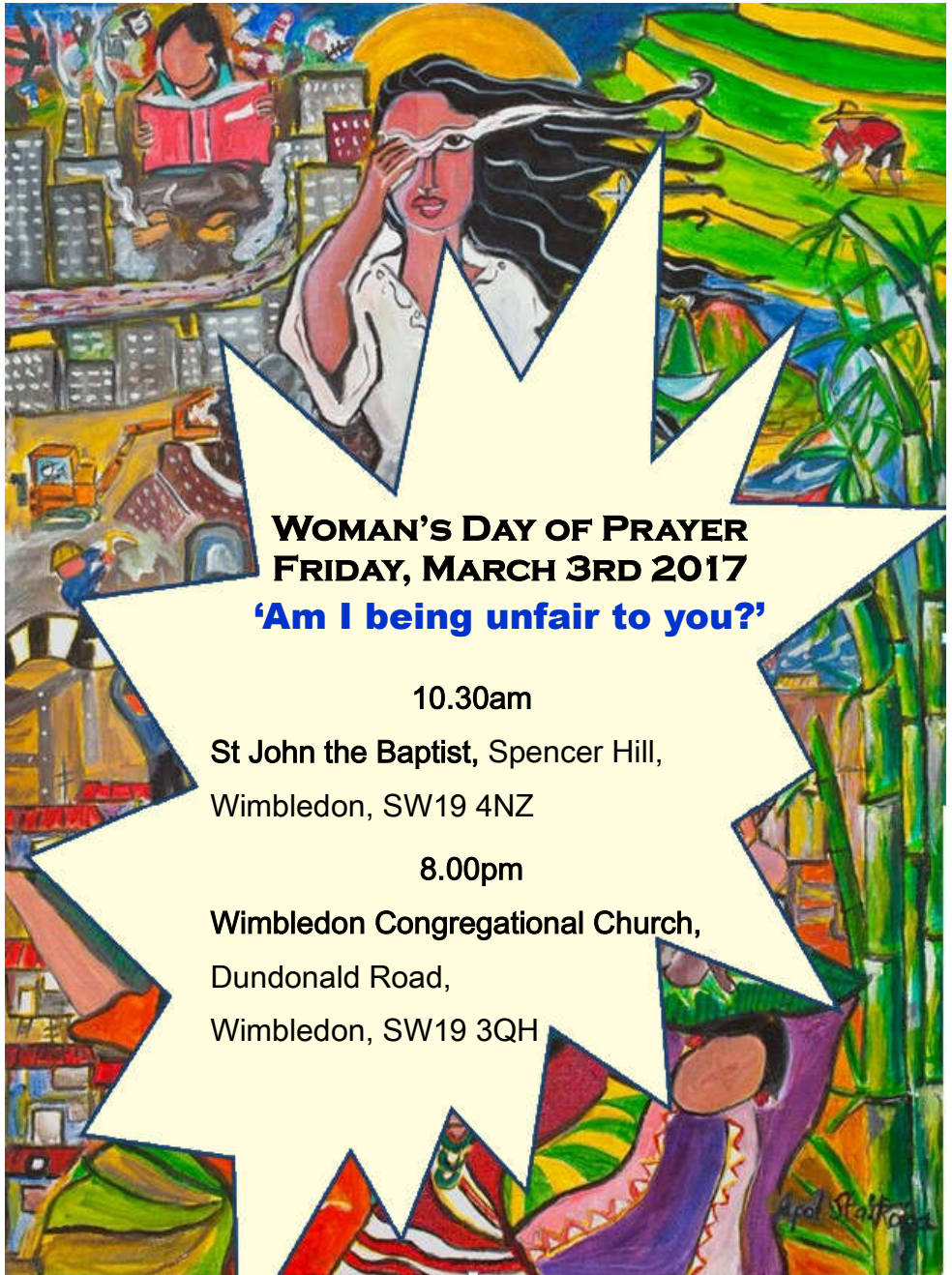
Sure enough this person, an American, arrived with a story to tell that he was eager to relate to Helen and meet her in person. He and his girlfriend had been in Afghanistan and got into drugs and one night both were violently sick. They stumbled upon the British Embassy and got somewhere to stay. Whilst the girlfriend was asleep, he discovered a book written in English entitled 'Give me this mountain' by Dr Helen Roseveare and that night he became a Christian.

'Give me this Mountain' and Helen's many other books; 'Enough', 'He gave us a Valley', 'Living Sacrifice', 'Living Faith', 'Living Holiness', 'Digging Ditches', 'Living Stones', 'Living Fellowship' are worth reading. One of her many quotes is worth remembering: "God never uses a person greatly until He has wounded him deeply. The privilege He offers you is greater than the price you have to pay. The privilege is greater than the price." The Christian life – growing in knowledge and grace requires us to give up whatever endangers our relationship with God. We will stumble if we look away from Him to ourselves and circumstances. Let's take a cue from Helen and keep looking to Jesus.

To be followed next month

Gwen Wildman





WOMAN'S DAY OF PRAYER
FRIDAY, MARCH 3RD 2017
'Am I being unfair to you?'

10.30am

St John the Baptist, Spencer Hill,
Wimbledon, SW19 4NZ

8.00pm

Wimbledon Congregational Church,
Dundonald Road,
Wimbledon, SW19 3QH

Although organised and led by women, this is essentially a day of prayer for everybody as we demonstrate our solidarity with our sisters and brothers in other countries. All are welcome to attend.

EYES WIDE OPEN

Sharing moments all around us in pictures.



Celebrating Eileen's Birthday at Coffee & Chat

Please submit your images, digital photographs or scanned artwork to Andrew (Newsletter Editor) at roife@hotmail.co.uk. Every picture tells a story (or so they say) but if you want to add just a few words to accompany your image, please do.



**CHRISTIAN
SOLIDARITY
WORLDWIDE**
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

**February 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

The Untold Cuba

Our new article, **The Untold Cuba** (https://csw_uk.atavist.com/the-untold-cuba) takes you deeper into the stories of the men and women living under Cuba's Communist government.

Berta will go to church wondering if she'll make it to the service this time. She's one of the Ladies in White, a group of human rights activists who peacefully protest after Mass each Sunday. For this, they are arrested to stop them going to church and carrying out their protest. They're also often beaten. The last time Berta was arrested, state security agents told her, "[Government agents] will not let you nor any Lady in White attend Mass on any day."

Stories from the Wilderness

It's nearly time for our brand new podcast series! **Stories from the Wilderness** (<https://24-7prayer.com/blog/2670/introducing-stories-from-the-wilderness>) is a series of videos that will be released every weekday in the lead up to Easter. Produced in partnership with 24/7 Prayer, the videos will show our interviews with six Christians who have been through the wilderness of persecution – and met God in their personal desert.

We'll be talking to Helen Berhane, a gospel singer from Eritrea. Helen was arrested during a raid on an underground house church meeting that she was leading. Her country has one of the most repressive regimes in the world, and Helen experienced the tortures that many Eritrean Christians and others endure. Beaten and starved, she was kept in a shipping container prison for almost three years.

Helen was released in 2006, following a severe assault; she managed to flee the country and now lives in Denmark. You can hear her incredible story very soon at Pursue Justice.

In summary, please pray:

- For God's protection over Berta and her fellow Ladies in White as they try to attend Mass in Cuba
- For God to move powerfully to change the attitude of the Cuban authorities towards religious minorities
- For protection for the many protesters, human rights activists and church leaders who work for freedom

Pursue Justice

We're excited to announce that our Pursue Justice conference will return to London this year! Join us on Saturday 22nd April for an amazing day of worship, inspiring speakers, and practical ways you can take action for religious freedom worldwide.

Date: Saturday 22 April 2017

Time: 12-4pm (Doors 11am)

Venue: St Paul's Church, Hammersmith, Queen Caroline St, London, W6 9PJ
St Paul's Hammersmith is fully wheelchair accessible and BSL interpretation will be provided on the day. If you require this service or any special assistance on the day please contact Heather Fenton (admin@csw.org.uk or Tel: 0845 456 5464). The Kettle & Crust cafe within St Paul's Centre will be open during Pursue Justice Conference for tea, coffee and food purchases.

Keynote Speaker: Helen Berhane

Helen is an Eritrean gospel singer whose story is challenging, inspiring, and deeply moving. She was arrested in a 2003 raid on a house where she was teaching young Christians. Beaten and imprisoned, she spent 32 months in a shipping container without adequate ventilation, light, sanitation or food. While in prison Helen was regularly tortured, and a severe and sustained assault by a prison guard almost killed her and left her unable to walk. Helen was released in November 2006 and escaped to Sudan, where she had to keep a low profile. She was finally granted asylum in Denmark, where she recovered from her injuries.



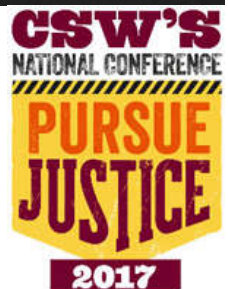
Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

The CSW team

0845 456 5464

admin@csw.org.uk

Visit www.csw.org.uk for latest news and information



CHURCH DIARY



Fri	3	12.30pm	Luncheon Club
		10.30am	Women's Day of Prayer service at St John the Baptist , Spencer Hill, Wimbledon, SW19 4NZ
		8.00pm	Women's Day of Prayer service at Wimbledon Congregational Church , Dundonald Road, SW19 3QH
Sun	5	10.30am	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Mon	6	8.00pm	Finance & Property Committee Meeting
Tue	7	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	12	10.30am	Morning Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
		12.30pm	General Church Meeting
Tue	14	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	17	12.30pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	19	10.30am	Morning Sunday Service led by Tony Loft
		6.30pm	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	21	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>'You the Jury' with Peter Thompson, Barrister - Cases from the Old Bailey</i>
		8.00pm	Time for Prayer
Sat	25	10.30am	Big Brunch
Sun	26	10.30am	Mothering Sunday Café Worship led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	28	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	31	12.30pm	Luncheon Club

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

We wish all of those who celebrate a birthday
in March a very

Happy Birthday

and especially to:

Ruby Day on 3rd March

Matthew Loft on 9th March



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**Looking For
A Keeper Of The Kitchenalia**



A young mother offered an totally empty flat in Merton said: "I don't even have a teaspoon!" The Christian CARE Furniture Project was able to respond to her need as it receives donations of a wide assortment of kitchenware from people downsizing and doing household clearances.

We are looking for someone to take on a new, flexible volunteer role - the preparation of the packs of kitchenalia - lovingly and appropriately selected - for families in need. If the volunteer can store the items as well, that would be wonderful.

For more information please contact the Christian CARE Association on:
020 3302 0181 / 07932 628840 / christiancaremerton@gmail.com

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Flower Rota

The new Flower Rota is now on the Notice Board in the corridor. If you are willing to donate flowers or help with the arranging please sign up.

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Church Family News

It is with sadness we have to report the death of Anne Hewitt, the mother of Jane and Shelly. Her committal was on Friday 24th February which was followed by a Service of Thanksgiving at the Church.

BIG BRUNCH



Big Brunch will be open again on **Saturday, 25th March**, so come along between 10.30am and 1pm for a Full-English for £4 and support our youngsters going to Spring Harvest in 2017.

Big Brunch normally takes a break after March until September but this year we are contemplating opening up for one Saturday in each of May, June and July, the profits from which will go towards our '**Flush Fund**' to refurbish the gent's and all-access toilets. Please let us know if you think this is a good idea and watch this space for confirmation of dates.

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TABLE-TOP SALE

Just to let you know that the Table-Top sale held on Saturday, February 18th, raised £350 towards our '**Flush Fund**'.



Many thanks to all who helped made this a success and special thanks to Sylvia Baxter for organising the event and for the delicious lunches.

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GENERAL CHURCH MEETING

Advance notice that this year's General Church Meeting will be held after the service on **Sunday, 12th March**. It is an open meeting where we can meet, reflect on the past year and discuss plans for the future.



It is also an opportunity for you to raise any questions you may have. Please put the date in your diary and come along on the day to have your say.

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



Forever Living Products

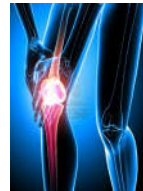
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For further information contact:

Mike Fuwa

Tel: 07956 369579

Email: 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 (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)

