

Martin Way Methodist Church

serving the communities of

Morden & Merton Park



Minister: Rev Paul Timmis

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Buckleigh Avenue, Merton Park, SW20 9JZ

Newsletter

February 2018

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MINISTER'S LETTER

This month, we head into Lent once again. Like Advent before Christmas, this too is a season of preparation as we travel with Jesus towards Holy Week, Easter and beyond. Unlike Advent, which very quickly gets overtaken by a clamour for all things Christmassy, there is a reasonable chance of us being able to find time to take this season seriously if we want to. The question is, 'How much do we really want to?'



Journeying with Jesus through Lent isn't easy. Such a journey sees us "follow" Jesus through his wrestlings in the wilderness, on the long road to Jerusalem, into the joy and adulation of Palm Sunday and on to the pain and humiliation of the cross - with the torment of Gethsemane, the betrayal, the false accusations, phoney trials and hearings and countless acts of torture all sandwiched in between. There are many points on this journey when it is tempting to look away, numerous times in this story when it would be preferable to stop listening. If only Easter could rush to greet us and spare us this ride, we might think - as when Christmas engulfs Advent and conveniently allows us to side step the darkness and judgement of which it speaks.

But herein lies a difference. For all that the Church would have us seek to do our best to observe Advent - and I wish we could appreciate it more - there's something about Christmas that works anyway. Jesus' birth is such that it touches us and sparks something within us on so many levels, even if we've skipped some of the back story.

But Easter without Lent is another matter entirely. The joy of Easter Day simply cannot be understood on any level without us having first somehow felt the pain of the events that precede it.

As you are more than aware, my forthcoming sabbatical will see me disappear from church life part way through Lent and not return amongst you until after Pentecost. Seven years ago, my first sabbatical took place during the same calendar months but, because of when Easter fell and how our travel plans unfolded, I missed much of Lent. Not preparing services and sermons made a profound difference to me - to the point

that, when one Sunday in Denver, Colorado, we arrived at church for worship, I was genuinely shocked to be handed some Palm leaves! The various services subsequently attended during that Holy Week pulled me back on track, but not taking seriously the journey to that point, not fully entering into the journey beforehand did affect the sense of connection that I had with it. This year it will be different.

It won't be easy, of course, but make the most of Lent with all its twists and turns, peaks and troughs. Without these, the Easter morning acclamation 'Alleluia, Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!' will lose some of its joy and power.

With every blessing,

Paul

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Embrace the Middle East

We have just received a multiple package updating us with all the latest information about the charity. Please help yourselves from the Vestibule where they are on display as usual and respond accordingly if you are able to any of the following of the three enclosures in the January magazine:

- The gift and card catalogue (including Easter cards etc)
- The half-priced "Winter Sale Sheet" of Christmas cards
- The February/July prayer diary

Thank you for your support throughout 2017, especially the stamps donated - bless you.

Mary and Derek Heaton

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Flower Rota

The Flower Rota for 2018 is now on the notice board. Please sign up if you would like to donate flowers. We are always looking for people to help with the arranging and distribution so do have a word with Sue, Lesley or Brenda if you can help in any way.



**A sparkling production of dance, theatre, song
and poetry for all the family!**

**Springs Dance Company brings its
festive, witty and poignant Advent
performance *Journey of the Magi***



The performance is an ingenious mix of dance and theatre.

Inspired by T.S. Eliot's poem *Journey of the Magi*, the performance helps audiences reflect on not only the famous journey the wise men made following the star to Jesus, but also the journey each of us makes every year in preparing for Christmas Day. Through exploring images in the poetry, Springs Dance Company has devised a presentation of some of the all too familiar processes we go through and witness when dealing with the expectations and realities of the festive season. *Journey of the Magi* is a mix of laugh-out-loud funny, moving and entertaining scenes enjoyed by children and adults alike. The show not only entertains but also provokes consideration for change.

Does the start of this page look familiar? It should. as it was one of the articles in the December newsletter, only now the event is past but very much worth commenting on.

Sometimes in a promotion it can sound 'too good to be true' but not in this case. A great number attended and some of us got a seat in the front row! I learnt that the Company had laid a temporary floor which amazed me. Also the improvised back stage where the performers exited, not a sound was heard.

The story told in dance (the ballet was wonderful, not that I'm an expert) and music was captivating and moving. I was almost speechless at the quality of the performers and performance. All of this, from highly trained professional dancers/ choreographers, and it only cost £5 for a very memorable evening.

A real joy and blessing.

Moira Bailey

William Williams

Throughout Wales the hymns of William Williams have been sung with gusto for three hundred years. He has been described as the sweet singer of Wales – and is arguably Wales most famous hymn writer.

Recently I was talking with a Musical Director of one of the local Churches in Merton and he asked which hymns have had an influence on my life and without hesitation I mentioned the hymns of William Williams. Imagine my surprise when he stated that he had never heard of him. Sadly there are only two of William’s hymns in Hymns and Psalms.

Here is a little of his story...



William Williams actually wrote over 900 hymns in either Welsh or English, the most famous being “*Guide me O thou great Jehovah*”, which has been in the Top 10 of the Songs of Praise for years; was sung by the Welsh Regiments in the trenches in the First World War to keep their spirits up; is sung with great gusto before the Wales home rugby matches at the Millennium Stadium; and was even read out as a poem at the ordination of George Carey as Archbishop of Canterbury.

In Wales today although many of his contemporaries are largely forgotten, Williams is remembered not only because of his hymns. But also recent fresh interest centres on his poetry as a whole as well as his prose. He has been described as the first romantic poet in Wales and as such has

exercised considerable influence not only on his contemporaries but also on his successors.

Dr Martyn Lloyd Jones says “*Certain literary authorities in Wales who are not Christians themselves are ready to grant that he is in their judgement the greatest of all the Welsh poets*”, he goes on to say “*that this is something of very real significance, because here you have such an outstanding natural poet now under the influence of the Holy Spirit writing these incomparable hymns*”.

In Wales today he has almost iconic status as a poet and bard of Welsh culture, poetry and prose. In the Town hall in Cardiff there is a sculpture of him carrying a book in his hand.

For one who was such a prolific writer, it is interesting that he wrote nothing about himself. He did not write an autobiography or keep a diary. Maybe he was too busy in his work or perhaps didn't consider that what he was doing warranted it.

The first biography appeared in Welsh 22 years after his death written by his friend Thomas Charles of Bala. It was called “*The Spiritual Treasury*” and was not much longer than an essay as it was only 12 pages. It was not until 1867 that a biography and study of his works was written by J R Kilsby Jones, a Congregational minister, in his book roughly translated “*All the poetic and prose work of William Williams*” it ran to 846 pages.

Thomas Charles was to write of William Williams: – “*When God fills people's souls with the knowledge of Christ, who can keep it in. I have observed and seen in the mountains of Wales the most glorious work that ever I saw. The gospel has run over the mountains between Breconshire and Monmouthshire as the fire in the thatch*”.

Doctor Martin Lloyd Jones described William Williams as the best hymn writer there has ever been saying – Quote “*The hymns of William Williams are packed with theology and experience, You get greatness, bigness and largeness with Isaac Watts, you get the experiential side wonderfully in Charles Wesley but in William Williams you get both at the*

same time and that is why I put him in a category entirely on his own – he taught the people theology through his hymns”.

In his analysis of Christian Hymns, Cliff Knight describes the hymn like this.... *“This hymn based on the journey of Israel through the wilderness, is no doubt inspired by Williams own travels up and down Wales as he journeyed on horseback over 2,000 miles a year, often suffering cruel opposition and physical violence.”*

Although the hymn *“Guide me O thou great Jehovah”* is based on history, it has a message for the Christian today as he journeys through life. There are many times when life seems hard and times when in weakness, the Christian calls on the mighty God to sustain him with His powerful hand. Food and guidance are His daily provision until we reach Canaan’s side.

In our lives as believers, which can be very perplexing at times, I trust that this will be our daily prayer *“Guide me O thou Great Jehovah – I am weak but thou are mighty, hold me with thy powerful hand. May we all have our eyes fixed on Canaan where we will all sing Songs of praise.”*

As well as giving voice to our praise and worship of almighty God as congregations of God’s people, these hymns of William Williams can also be very helpful in our private devotions, enabling us to focus on the doctrines of grace.

From his birth in an isolated farmhouse deep in the Brecon Beacons, to his hymns still being sung nearly 300 years later across the world, This is the life and work of William Williams – The sweet singer of Wales.

Gwen Wildman

Acknowledgements:

William Williams and Welsh Calvinistic Methodism –

Paper by Dr Martyn Lloyd Jones for the 1968 Westminster Conference.

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Next to theology I give to music the highest place and honour. Music is the art of the prophets, the only art that can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us.

Martin Luther

EYES WIDE OPEN

Sharing moments all around us in pictures.

Early morning at Nonsuch Park



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.

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



Friday 2nd March 2018

'All God's Creation is Very Good'

Suriname

Genesis 1:1-31

A heri grontapu di Gado meki bun doro, dóro!

As in the beginning, God created from chaos. But everything that was created found its place in creation. All were related to each other – the earth with the light, the waters with the sky, the tree seeds with the living creatures, and the humankind with God. None could exist without the other, and the source of all was God.

There was goodness in that integrated system of relationships. But essential to that was the commitment to care. And we know that we are failing!

Women from Suriname lift up their voices to remind us that we are caretakers of God's creation! They are bringing to our attention the urgent need for caring at a time when more than 180 countries have signed the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. A commitment to keep the earth cooler depends on public policies implemented by governments, but also on our personal lifestyle.

As one of our Guiding Principles affirms "prayer is rooted in listening to God and to one another." Through the worship service, we listen to the

multicultural and multi-ethnic people of Suriname. They take us to their communities and through their concerns. History is before our eyes! The flora and fauna are remarkable! The everyday life is weaved into the prayers.

How good is God’s creation? That is the question to meditate and respond to with a personal commitment to care for creation. But it can also be an opportunity for the WDP motto “Informed prayer and prayerful action” to be affirmed in the community. What is it that we, as the WDP movement, can do to keep God’s creation good?

Suriname officially known as the **Republic of Suriname** is a sovereign state on the northeastern Atlantic coast of South America. It is bordered by French Guiana to the east, Guyana to the west and Brazil to the south. At just under 165,000 square kilometers (64,000 square miles), it is the smallest country in South America.



Although organised and led by women, this is essentially a day of prayer for everybody as we demonstrate our solidarity with our sisters & brothers in other countries and all are welcome to attend. Further information and resources, can be found on the WWDP website at www.wwdp.org.uk

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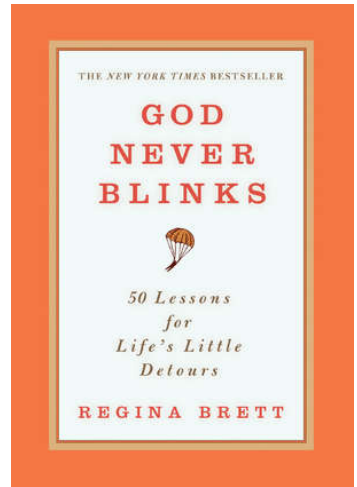
BIG BRUNCH HAS RETURNED!

The next Big Brunch is on **Saturday, 24th February**, serving from 10.30am until 1.00pm. The last one of the winter will be on **Saturday, 17th March**.

Come along and enjoy a full English breakfast including coffee/tea, fruit juice and toast for only £4. You'll also be supporting our youngsters for their trip to Spring Harvest 2018.

50 Lessons from *God Never Blinks* by Regina Brett

1. Life isn't fair, but it's still good.
2. When in doubt, just take the next small step.
3. Life is too short to waste time hating anyone.
4. Don't take yourself so seriously. No one else does.
5. Pay off your credit cards every month.
6. You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.
7. Cry with someone. It's more healing than crying alone.
8. It's OK to get angry with God. He can take it.
9. Save for retirement starting with your first paycheck.
10. When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile.
11. Make peace with your past so it won't screw up the present.
12. It's OK to let your children see you cry.
13. Don't compare your life to others'. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
14. If a relationship has to be a secret, you shouldn't be in it.
15. Everything can change in the blink of an eye. But don't worry; God never blinks.
16. Life is too short for long pity parties. Get busy living, or get busy dying.
17. You can get through anything if you stay put in today.
18. A writer writes. If you want to be a writer, write.
19. It's never too late to have a happy childhood. But the second one is up to you and no one else.
20. When it comes to going after what you love in life, don't take no for an answer.
21. Burn the candles, use the nice sheets, wear the fancy lingerie. Don't save it for a special occasion. Today is special.



22. Overprepare, then go with the flow.
23. Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.
24. The most important sex organ is the brain.
25. No one is in charge of your happiness except you.
26. Frame every so-called disaster with these words: "In five years, will this matter?"
27. Always choose life.
28. Forgive everyone everything.
29. What other people think of you is none of your business.
30. Time heals almost everything. Give time time.
31. However good or bad a situation is, it will change.
32. Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends will. Stay in touch.
33. Believe in miracles.
34. God loves you because of who God is, not because of anything you did or didn't do.
35. Whatever doesn't kill you really does make you stronger.
36. Growing old beats the alternative - dying young.
37. Your children get only one childhood. Make it memorable.
38. Read the Psalms. They cover every human emotion.
39. Get outside every day. Miracles are waiting everywhere.
40. If we all threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab ours back.
41. Don't audit life. Show up and make the most of it now.
42. Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful.
43. All that truly matters in the end is that you loved.
44. Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.
45. The best is yet to come.
46. No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up.
47. Take a deep breath. It calms the mind.
48. If you don't ask, you don't get.
49. Yield.
50. Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.

“The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.” Psalm 34:17

Recently, CSW has been thinking about endurance in prayer. It’s a theme that occurs to us often because of the long-term nature of the cases we work on and how it can take months or even years to see a breakthrough. It’s at those times that your faithfulness is especially precious and, like Paul in Colossians 1:3-4, ‘We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God’s people’.

India:

Please join us in praying for three Nepali Christians who were arrested in India for ‘spreading Christianity’. They were arrested on 10th January, in Uttar Pradesh state, where they were visiting. You may be reminded of similar instances in India, or the case last year involving eight Christians in Charikot, Nepal, who were put on trial after they distributed Christian pamphlets at a school.

This arrest under similar circumstances could be discouraging: but we know that you are faithful in your prayers and will stand with us again, as you stood with others!

Burma:

We’re so grateful for your continued prayers for freedom and democracy in Burma. Last year Rakhine State exploded in violence as the Burma Army began to attack the Rohingya, a mostly Muslim ethnic group that the Burmese government refuses to recognise as citizens. This means that they have almost no rights, and the attacks against them have escalated into horrific proportions, with thousands shot and killed and many more forced from their homes. The Rohingya badly need your prayers at this time.

Please pray for an end to the violence, rape and destruction in Rakhine State; pray for a dramatic change of heart and mind in the government, army and wider society towards the Rohingyas, that they would recognise their humanity and citizenship, end the persecution and bring the perpetrators of

crimes against humanity to justice.

“The Rohingya are relying on the international community; the EU must not let them down.” This is from a statement made by our Europe Team Leader, Dr Susan Kerr, in November following our call on the EU to put pressure on Burma to end the crisis. A strong international condemnation is needed to bring about change: pray for this today.

Restrictions on humanitarian aid to displaced people in Rakhine State is only making the situation worse: government blocks are denying the people the food, aid and shelter they badly need. Pray that these restrictions would be lifted soon.

As terrible as the situation in Burma is, we know that our supporters have been campaigning faithfully for change, sometimes for many years. Thank you so much for your hard work: today, thank God for the progress we’ve seen towards freedom and justice in Burma, and for further change to come.

The Rohingya aren’t the only ones facing discrimination and death: the Kachin, Shan, Karen and other ethnic groups are also the target of violence and human rights abuses. Pray that they, too, would receive divine justice and protection.

Please pray for Dumdaw Nawng Lat and Langjaw Gam Seng, two Kachin Christians who were given unjust prison sentences in October 2017. In 2016 they guided journalists around a Catholic church that had reportedly been bombed by the military. Pray these men would be released soon, and that the charges against them would be dismissed.

God of justice and peace, today we lift the crisis in Burma to you and ask that you spread your peace over Rakhine State. Still the violence, we pray, bring healing to those who have been wounded and provide shelter, food and aid to everyone who needs it.

Amen.

For more information go to:

www.facebook.com/cswuk/

https://twitter.com/csw_uk

www.youtube.com/user/ChristianSolidarity

www.instagram.com/csw_uk/

CSW is a Christian organisation working for religious freedom through advocacy and human rights, in the pursuit of justice.

**CHURCH
DIARY**



Tue	1	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	4	10.30am	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	6	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	9	12.30pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	11	10.30am	Morning Service led by Brenda Cannon
Tue	13	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00pm	Time for Prayer
Sat	17	2.00pm	Jumble Sale held by the Morden Park Evening Townswomen Guild
Sun	18	10.30am	Morning Service led by Tony Loft
		6.30pm	Healing & Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	20	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.00pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Unusual moments in my working life</i> - Members' insights, chaired by Graham
		8.00pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	23	12.30pm	Luncheon Club
Sat	24	10.30am	Big Brunch
Sun	25	10.30am	Morning Service led by Arigon Sinani
Tue	27	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00pm	Time for Prayer

*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 February a very

Happy Birthday
and especially to:



Ashleigh Hillhouse on 1st February

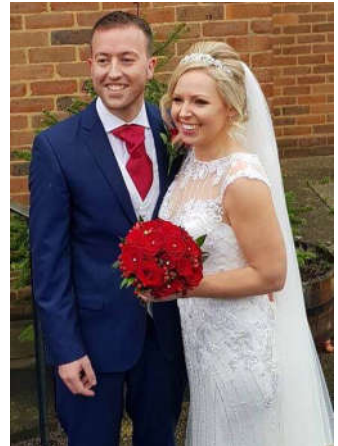
Joshua Fuwa on 20th February

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Church Family News

Congratulations to Lucy, daughter of Anne and Simon Conquest, who married David Myers at Martin Way on Saturday 23rd December 2017.

We wish them both all the joy and happiness
that married life brings.



Congratulations to Ashleigh Hillhouse, who not only celebrates a birthday this month, but also had a successful audition and selected to dance in the pantomime Cinderella at Epsom playhouse.

She danced in twenty performances and had a wonderful experience.

A CHANGE AT THE LANTERN CHURCH



As many people will be aware, Rev Margaret Adams is due to retire in the summer of 2018. Over the last few months the Circuit Stewards have been working with the Leadership Team of the Lantern Church to find a new minister to fill the vacancy that will be created by her departure.

This process has now been successfully completed, and we are happy to report that (subject to approval by the Methodist Conference next June) Deacon Dawn Canham is appointed to serve in the Wimbledon Circuit from September 2018, with pastoral charge of The Lantern Church. Dawn is currently serving in the Melton Mowbray Circuit.

We look forward to Dawn joining our Circuit later this year.

There will be a Circuit Service of Farewell for Margaret on Sunday 1st July, 3pm at The Lantern Church, Worple Road, Raynes Park which will be followed by tea. If you wish to attend the tea please RSVP me for catering purposes at 62amls@gmail.com

Angela Linton-Smith
For the Circuit Stewards

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THANKS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED

Martin Way made donations to a number of causes from our special Christmas Collections. Thank you to those who contributed their time and talent as well you who donated money.

Action for Children - £1,361.40 (£672 from carol singing at Morden Station and £689.40 from Christmas services)
This is an increase of £450 compared with last year.

Methodist Homes for the Aged (from the Christmas post box) - **£183.47**
This is an increase of £40 compared with last year.

Roy Ellis

Items for the **March Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox,
(email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 18th February** at the latest

Are you looking for a part-time or full-time income?



We are Recruiting

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.



For further information contact:

Mike: 07956 369579

www.mof.flp.com

www.iforevercare.com

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 (occasional)	4.00 - 5.30 pm
	Platform 10¾ YPF (1st & 3rd Sundays)	8.00 - 9.30 pm
TUESDAY	Coffee & Chat	10.30 - noon
	Men's Supper Club (3rd Tuesday in month)	7.00 pm
	Time for Prayer	8.00 pm
WEDNESDAY	Frogs Club (for Carers & Toddlers)	10.00 – 12.00
	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)