

# Martin Way Methodist Church

Newsletter - September 2005

Minister - Rev John Nyota

## A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR LONDON SOUTH-WEST DISTRICT

Dear Friends

On the morning of Thursday, 7 July, I was travelling up to Waterloo on the train for a day of meetings. The indicator panel at West Byfleet station was announcing that the entire Underground network was closed owing to a 'power surge'. On board the train, we were then told that all bus services had been suspended. The train stopped unwontedly at Clapham Junction, and we were advised that unless our journey was essential, we should return home. The rest you know.

The terrorist bombings in London were despicable but entirely predictable. This is not intended as a criticism of the security and intelligence services - who knows how many other potential terrorist attacks they have managed to avert on our behalf in recent months? - but I do believe it was the predictable consequence of this country's decision to join the war against Iraq in 2003 - the greatest British foreign policy disaster since Suez in 1956. The Government line is to link the bombings with the attack on the Twin Towers on 11 September 2001, as though they were a continuation of the assaults by the aircraft in New York, but I am not convinced by that argument. Nor am I convinced by words invoking the spirit of the Blitz. There is nothing particularly defiant about having to travel by Underground or bus when most people who work in London have little choice other than to use public transport. Nor am I much moved by those who talk up the threat posed by terrorists to our way of life. What concerns the bombers is not a wish to impose on us something close to their own ideal of a theocratic state, but the more immediate injustices in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East.

Meanwhile, the survivors of the bombings and the families and friends of those who died have to come to terms with terrible trauma, scarred bodies and scarred minds; there is much healing to be done. Church leaders stand together with Muslim leaders as an expression of solidarity,

and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, calls on faith communities to 'work together for our shared understanding of the life God calls us to'. Are we up for that in the great, diverse, multicultural city that is London? This is about the long, hard slog of what has been called 'the wider ecumenism' and how we understand one another as people of faith with distinctive responses to the God who calls - something less newsworthy, as we adjust to what passes for normality in our daily lives.

Against that backdrop, I turn to what was originally going to be the subject of this letter: this year's Methodist Conference held at Torquay from 23 to 30 June. This may seem trivial by comparison with the events of 7 July. It was not a long, hard slog exactly, but that is precisely the point. The annual Conference enables us to take a snapshot of the Methodist Church, reflecting our distinctive responses to the God who calls in the context of what passes for normality in our daily lives.

We inducted a new President, the Revd Tom Stuckey, and Vice-President, Mr John Bell, for the coming year. The ordination services reflected the continuity of the ministries of presbyters and deacons in our circuits and churches; and it was a joy to see four presbyters from this District - the Revds Emma Aikins, Libby Godden, Rachael Hawkins and Tricia Williams - being 'received into Full Connexion' and ordained. We received an inspiring report on faith-sharing entitled Time to Talk with God; and I hope that your church will find time to explore this in the year ahead. We know from statistical surveys that Methodists can be and are active in expressing their faith in practical ways; they are less confident about being able to speak about the faith that is in them. So I hope that Time to Talk with God will prove to be a useful tool.

Inevitably, there was a lot of internal business to undertake: we endorsed the report on the three new Districts for London and the South-East, and work continues to bring those three Districts into being in September 2006. We looked closely at issues relating to leadership, governance and management in the life of the Church, as well as some of the financial constraints now facing us as a Church. We talked about the possibility of Methodist bishops, though we have been talking about them for over 30 years and still have not come to a mind. However, local churches and circuits will now have an opportunity to comment on this report as well.

We put other housekeeping matters in order, as any large organization must.

There were important debates about domestic abuse, human sexuality, Zimbabwe, and the MAKE POVERTY HISTORY campaign. There were stories to tell and strong, sincere and sometimes raw feelings. Many dimensions of our humanness were on view: here were real issues about real people, real life and real faith. Here we were trying to discern what the Holy Spirit was saying to the Church: about abusive relationships where women - and men - suffer; about whether we can truly affirm the place of gay and lesbian people in our churches (a debate which was sensitive and measured, but oddly funereal in tone); about the brute realities of political power in Zimbabwe; and about how we could raise people's consciousness and, in advance of the Gleneagles summit and the Live8 concerts, seek to influence the consciousness of the G8 leaders about justice for the poorest and most wretched people on the earth (a better outcome there than for policy on climate change, as it has turned out).

Little of this made headlines in the media, with the exception of some reporting on the debate on human sexuality. Parts of our Agenda were 'business and usual'; other parts had a greater sense of urgency; and, occasionally, there were flashes of passion and excitement - much like life in general. Somehow, life does go on, not very heroically and with few outward signs of disturbance most of the time. What matters, in the face of natural disaster or human evil, is whether as Christians we respond with fatalism or hope. We are people who believe we are called to discern the presence and involvement of God in his creation, sustaining it at every instant of its existence. This holds even in the face of great evil and suffering - how else can we understand the significance of Jesus' death on the cross? - and offers us hope through the transformation of death to new life. The last word is love.

Best wishes,

*Yours ever, John*

## THOUGHT OF THE MONTH—SEPTEMBER 2005

September already? That means two-thirds of the year has already gone! How much of that time have you wished away by looking forward to the weekend, a holiday, a special treat and so on? When we stop and think about it we realize that time is one of God's most precious gifts to us. And each of us is allocated exactly the same amount of time with each new day. We are given 86,400 seconds each day; no more, no less. What we do with that time is up to us. We cannot save some of today's time to use tomorrow.

Someone visited an elderly gentleman and took him a book to read. "Perhaps this will help you to pass the time," she said as she handed over the book. "Thank you," said the gentleman, "but I don't like the words 'pass the time'. Your book will help me to 'use the time'. At my age I am grateful for every minute of every day that is given to me!"

And these words were addressed to a young couple very much in love with each other ... "You never know how much you share with someone till the sharing ends. Grab every minute there is. Don't waste any time. You never get it back!"

Thank God for the time he gives you and ask Him to help you use it in the best possible way.

*Bill Cox*

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### The Serenity Prayer

God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.

## A NEWSHOUND RETIRES

As Rosemary relinquishes the editorship of Martin Way's Newsletter and hands over the baton to the Communications team, we share a few things about her that you may not be aware of.

10 years ago Rosemary joined Martin Way Methodist Church in search of a Bible Study Group. She is passionate about reading and theatre, in particular Shakespeare and in 1964 completed a marathon by seeing all his plays in one week!

Her time as editor has flown by, and she recalls that time passed quickly from one month to the next. Of course it wasn't all plain sailing. She had to work quite hard getting people to write articles and then sometimes keep following up with requests to have them on time. Filling a newsletter regularly each month for 5 years is quite a task.

Then there was photocopying the newsletter with a temperamental photocopier. Copying alone could take 2-3 hours, or longer if she was unfortunate and had to change the toner! Joan Harding recalls that her large sturdy table held all the pages to be collated, folded and stapled. This was sometimes done whilst listening to a play on Radio 4.

Rosemary was also responsible for the collation of the excellent Anniversary Booklet. What joy it gave her. Being an Archivist, she was in her element being able to pour over the archive minutes for relevant information.

On behalf of all of the church members we thank you Rosemary for your contribution, dedication and perseverance in producing our Newsletters and just think - NO MORE TONER CHANGING!

*Jane Smith*

**MRS SYLVIA CLARK**

6th MAY 1920 - 17th MAY 2005

Wife of Eric and Mother of Stephen and Robert

Sylvia grew up in Raynes Park, living in Dupont Road with her brother Edward, daughter of Harold and Winifred French. She often talked about her friends there and her walks along the local shops. The family moved to Monkleigh Road, Morden, a new house in the 1930's. Sylvia attended Wimbledon County School in the 1930's and to this year received the magazine of the Wimbledon County School Staff and Old Girl's Association - and went to reunions at the school. She made good friends there; one or two Sylvia knew until this time.

Sylvia then went to work at an office in London and it was there she met her future husband, Eric Clark. He had moved down from his family home in Hull, Yorkshire, to a family flat in North London. They married during wartime at Raynes Park Church and had their honeymoon in London. Sylvia and Eric lived with Sylvia's parents in Monkleigh Road until 1953, their first son Stephen being born in 1951. They moved to their own house at Worcester Park in 1953. However, they returned to Morden in 1956, to Westcroft Gardens, the next road to Monkleigh Road to live near Sylvia's parents. Their second son Robert was born in 1960. Sylvia loved and cared so much for her husband, Eric, her two sons, Stephen and Robert, her family. When she saw them off from the house, she would say 'come back safe'.

Sylvia's parents had been going to Martin Way Methodist Church since the early 1960's. Sylvia and Eric joined them for worship around 1970 onwards. Sylvia's mother died in 1982, her father in 1985 and both funerals were held at the church. Eric, Sylvia's husband, Stephen's and Robert's father, died in 1986. Sylvia was supported by her many friends at Martin Way Church, following Eric's funeral at the Church and during the years that followed.

At the Church, Sylvia went to Midways Group, Monday and Thursday meetings and always helped on the Midways Cake Stalls as well as attending other activities. She was on the Flower Committee and regularly arranged flowers and helped at Seasonal Festivals. She also enjoyed meeting her friends for coffee and chat after the services and often participated in the mid-week Communion Services. Sylvia was generous, loving and always ready to help out and possessed a lovely disarming smile.

Before she had to give up driving she would often visit church friends who were house bound and take them out somewhere. Even after she gave up driving she made sure to get a lift to various meetings or events, relying on friends when Stephen was not around. Sylvia spoke a lot about her family, friends and her sons.

Sylvia had until, near the end, had good health, and her decline into illness, was quite sudden and her death was a shock to everyone.

*As remembered by Doreen Warren, Rosemary Keen and Joyce Plant*

## HARRY POTTER

Once again the Harry Potter mania has reached the bookshops and children around the British Isles. Parallels between Harry and the young Jesus seem rather far-fetched and not immediately obvious. In one sentence towards the end of 'Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets', Dumbledore (for those who do not know, he is Harry's Headmaster at Hogwarts School) is speaking to Harry. He says, "It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our own abilities".

Whether or not you have read the books, whether or not you approve of stories of witchcraft and wizardry, it seems that this is a profound statement. It does not really matter whether you are talented or not, it is how you use the situation in which you find yourself that shows what kind of person you really are. And that is where being a Christian is important, because it is Jesus who helps us to make the right choices and to be the best people we possibly can.

*Trinity News*

## OUR SUNNY SWANAGE HOLIDAY ?

SWANAGE = sun, sea, sand, surf -- not this year!!!! Sun, sea, rain, rain & more rain would be more accurate. For those of us who were brave enough to weather the storms a good time was had by most. We had a lovely couple of days basking in the not so sunny heat then we all looked and felt like drowned rats. Still, all was not lost. It meant we could indulge in the alternative activities set aside for just this eventuality - cinema (Madagascar is a must for anyone over 5!), dinosaur museum, teddy bear museum, seaside arcades, riding the flumes at the local leisure centre, taking the steam train into Corfe and Swanage many other exciting trips.

The beauty of the week at Swanage, aside from the great time communing with friends, is the opportunity to not only sit on the beach all day every day - although some do prefer that, don't they??? - but to find other things to do which many may not do without others there to them. And of course there are the many sports to take part in - beach cricket, beach Olympics, golf and of course Bob's famous boat trips out to 'Old Harry'.

How wonderful to be stuck in a small tent with seven other people trying to eat dinner and not spill it on someone's sleeping bag!!! You certainly find

out who your friends are. And surely that is the main objective of the time spent with such a diverse group. We all had a great time doing our own thing along with everyone else - and the children just love the great outdoors no matter what they end up doing - even if it is running in and out of other people's tents with their wet shoes on.

Here's to many more years. (Hopefully with a little sunshine thrown in)

*Marie Randall*

## TAI ZÉ PRAYER AND PRAISE

We ended our summer meetings with thoughts and tragic stories of the bombing of London by 'Terrorists'. Our prayers were for the victims, their relatives and also for the work being undertaken by the searchers looking for evidence in the deepest part of the London Underground bearing the hot stuffy airlessness and persistent discomfort. Our prayers echoed all these and anxieties of others while we were blessed with a beautiful evening in Christine and Tom's garden. The extremes were not lost on any of us.

Our sincere prayers must be for the hearts of potential bombers to be changed. 'Please God help us to show yourself to them by remembering your son Jesus who was persecuted for being good and was crucified on a cross because of the ignorance of others, in their not knowing that you would rise again. He is all of us who listen and act upon His word. The bombers know not what they do, they are killing their own hope of redemption by their actions of Hate instead of Love'.

We continue in our Prayers and Praise and hope that the maimed can be reconciled and able to Thank God there is a promise of a future ahead in His strength.

*Jean Mann (Taizé Contact)*

**NEXT TAI ZÉ MEETINGS** - These are held at 8.00 pm on Mondays

19th September	at St.John Fisher Church	lead by Jean
17th October	at St.John Fisher Church	lead by Tom
14th November	at St.John Fisher Church	lead by Hazel
12th December	Christmas 'Shared Meal' hopefully at the home of David Cordey but this is to be confirmed	

## FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

Most of us do not have what used to be called 'a proper English breakfast' except when we go away on holiday. As many people now go abroad they never have 'a proper English breakfast' unless they come to a Big Brunch at Martin Way. We are grateful to those who organise these brunches and hope they will carry on doing so.

Whilst on the subject of food, we should also say a BIG THANK YOU to those who run the Lunch Club on alternate Fridays. What they do is a form of outreach to the community and is greatly appreciated, especially by those of us living on our own. Lesley Mortley and her gallant team deserve our sincerest thanks for all the time and effort they put in on our behalf.

*Bill Cox*

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### FAIRTRADE RECIPES

#### Banana Choc Chip Muffins

Makes 7-8 large muffins

100g plain flour	40g melted butter
40g cornmeal	1 egg, beaten
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda	1 teaspoon baking powder
90g unrefined (golden) Fairtrade sugar	80ml buttermilk
2 ripe Fairtrade bananas, well mashed	
50g Fairtrade milk chocolate, chopped into small chunks	

Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6. Sieve flour, cornmeal, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda together into a large bowl. Stir in sugar. In a separate bowl, mix together the butter, egg, bananas and buttermilk. Add wet ingredients to dry and mix gently (do not over-mix). Fold in the chocolate chips. Fill a muffin tin (ideally lined with muffin cases) to just under the rim. Bake for about 30 minutes until golden-brown and firm to the touch. Allow them to cool in the tin.

## CHURCH DIARY FOR SEPTEMBER

Sun	4	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Janet and Bob Hamblin
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	5	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	6	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	11	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	12	3.45 pm	Fellowship
		8.00 pm	Preacher's Meeting
Tue	13	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Thur	15	7.00pm	Circuit Meeting at Worcester Park
Fri	16	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	18	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota Church Anniversary & BBQ at Horton Park
Mon	19	2.45 pm	Fellowship
		8.00 pm	Family Committee
		8.00 pm	Taizé Meeting at St. John Fisher Church
Tue	20	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club guest speaker - Sandra Winter - the Hand bells Lady
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	25	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Valerie Ashcroft
		8.00 pm	Evening Service led by Janet and Bob Hamblin
Mon	26	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	27	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	30	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club

Please refer to the Website ([www.martinway.org.uk](http://www.martinway.org.uk)) or the

Weekly Notice Sheet for any additional information

Items for the October Newsletter should be with the editor, Andrew Fox  
(email: [roife@aol.com](mailto:roife@aol.com)) by Sunday 18th September at the latest