

Martin Way Methodist Church

Newsletter – October 2005

Minister – Rev John Nyota

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear friends,

I do not know about you but this has been a very enjoyable and interesting summer. I had the chance to go back to Kenya with my family who had not set foot there for 3 years. It was a lovely time to visit with my family and friends and getting to catch up on their life developments. There were times to hug with joy at their great achievements but there were also times to embrace and cry our hearts out because of some loss. Whatever the case we were very happy indeed to be with each other.

Apart from my family we took a group from this circuit, most of whom had never been to Africa before. We were involved in creating links with my village, Baraimu so that we can share with them in their and our joys and struggles. All of us came back feeling that we had mutually enriched each other and are looking forward to being together again. The chore of organising and looking after everyone was made lighter by having to a large extent a bunch of very understanding and exciting group. What a joy that they agreed to be my guests in my mother's home!

Well, like everyone who had been on holiday, summer was coming to an end and like it or not it was time to come back. And as summer gives way for autumn to close in and bring its seasonal change, many of us find the patterns of our days changing also. School has resumed and summer's carefree feeling is gradually coming to an end. As families, our focus shifts as we attend to the responsibilities a new season brings.

In the summer months many of us have travelled and been away. Now we start up our familiar routines also. A committee here, a committee there, helter-skelter we all run! Families and church community have a lot in common when it comes to the start up of new routines. Both know the importance of staying focused, doing a few things well (not trying to do everything) and adding new routines carefully and intentionally.

None has set this example better than the new communication team! They have picked up the good work that Rosemary did with church magazine and made it a magnificent piece. Thanks to this wonderful team! This sets the pace for us as a church as we seek to go places with God. Our aim as a church is to deepen our relationship with God. We hope to support those at the initial stage or those wishing to top-it-up through the Alpha course coming up in January. Please see the details as you read on. Also we intend to make the church a home for all through diversifying our styles of worship. Currently we have one Sunday for family service, another for communion, and two others of regular worship. We intend to use one of the other two with a more relaxed worship, than we have at the moment. Let us encourage each other to continue their regular fellowship with God

This year, I invite you to recommit yourselves to familiar and new habits of faith. Let us work together as the best kind of family, where each is committed to the other and all are committed to the greater purpose we share!

John

THE SAD STORY ABOUT NOBODY

This is a short story about four people named; Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it.

Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn't do it.

It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

Anon

OUR TRIP TO BARAIMU VILLAGE ~ KENYA

After 10 months of preparation and meeting once a month, a group of 26 people from the Wimbledon Circuit and Epsom set off on a journey into the unknown on Monday 8th August 2005.

We all met at Heathrow Airport late afternoon for our 8½ hour overnight flight to Nairobi, Kenya. Our first day in Kenya was spent in and around Nairobi where we got our first glimpse of poverty as well as luxury.

On the Wednesday (10th) we wake up to rain and after having a very nice breakfast, prepared for us by the staff at the Methodist Guest House Nairobi, we set off early (9am in Kenya is early) with Comfort Shuffle coach company – not sure where the Comfort comes in with the roads being bad (I will no longer complain about the road humps here – they are very small compared to the very large holes in the roads in Kenya!). We arrived about 7pm some 160 miles and 10+ hours later in Baraimu Village to the most fantastic welcome I have ever seen or been involved in. To say that we were mobbed would be an understatement, I must have shaken hands and said hello to 100 people – yes 100! They had been waiting all afternoon for us and although it was now dark (being on the equator the day is 12 hours and so is the night) we were welcomed. The children sang and danced for us, Oh if only you could have been with us – you would have felt like us the friendship that poured out that night in one small corner of Kenya.

After our welcome we went to Kibuline Secondary School, which was to be our home for the rest of the week – some 40 minutes walk away from the village where we sorted out our sleeping arrangements in 2 empty class rooms where bunk beds with wooden slats and a piece of thin foam as a mattress had been erected, but we also got sheets and a blanket (all new). Once we got to bed (we were so tired - comfort was not an issue) we slept better than we all thought.

At this point I must mention the school children as it was summer holidays most of the children had gone home. Hence the reason we were able to stay at the school, but some who board at the school had stayed, and as the school had a generator (which was switched on between 5am and 10.30pm) they would go to lessons at 5.30am and work and would still be there at 10pm when we were thinking of going to bed – they all said that to get on in Kenya you have to be educated, and boy they certainly put the hours in.

Thursday (11th) we woke up to rain. We had breakfast together, which consisted of cereals, fresh fruit, bread and jam tea and coffee. Barrie

Tabraham led us in morning devotions where he talked about the Israelites conquest of Canaan and the giants they encountered, his point (I think) was that we all have giants that frighten us but with God's help we can overcome them, and as we return to the village we would meet and see some of these giants but by the Grace of God we would be upheld. Some of us walked to the village and on arrival we were met by the villagers and children with what seemed like a second welcome. Later in small groups we were shown around the village, which included the houses, the animal sheds and the crop fields. We also met a number of people who are involved in the Toto Simba Project and again made very welcome, later we all took part in a celebration in the church (which is still being built after 25 years - as they get money so they do a bit more) the singing was led by the small children and the women's fellowship (they number about 20 ladies aged from 20 up to 50 +) after the celebrations we had dinner in the church - how some of our ladies managed to cook for all of our group on 2 small gas burners I am still trying to work out but they did and the food was good. After dinner we returned to the school passing many of the homes we had visited earlier (in Kenya villages are spread out over a large area - not like here where the village is often built around a village green the main reason for the difference is that each house is on a plot of land which are called 'Shambas'). After returning to the school we chatted to the school children (after they had finished studies) we made for our beds for a night's sleep, hoping that the tiredness would outweigh the discomfort.

Next Month I will continue with our Adventures.

Tony Loft

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH - OCTOBER 2005

I had not booked to go away in August, but I found myself unexpectedly away from home and spending six days in St. Helier Hospital. One morning I went for a blood test. At 5.30 that afternoon I had an urgent phone call telling me to get to the hospital immediately. Thanks to the alertness of the blood checkers I narrowly avoided kidney failure, so I shall never grumble at being sent for a blood test again!

Going to hospital is like being transported to another world. For one thing time is different with the day beginning at six in the morning! But while I

was in there it struck me that a hospital IS like a world in miniature. There are so many people involved and each has his or her special part to play. Probably few ever think that what they do is important. Nor do they stop to consider that what they do is part of a larger whole. But the successful running and routine of a hospital is like a huge jigsaw puzzle with each person working there, whether as a doctor, nurse, tea-lady, cleaner or whatever, is a piece in the puzzle. Without their piece the puzzle cannot be complete.

How like the world in which we live. You and I and everyone else has a part to play in God's plan. He uses us, if we will allow him to, to show his love to others. We may not be the equivalent of a top-ranking surgeon but it does not matter. Those doing the most menial tasks are still important. God loves you and me and every one of our fellow human beings and his dearest wish is that the love he shows to us should be reciprocated and passed on to others. When Jesus tells us to love one another he uses a Greek word, which means to have an ACTIVE concern for the well-being of ALL other people. How different the world would be if everyone did just that!

Bill Cox

GREEN FINGERED?

How often have you looked out at or spent time in the Church Gardens? A big thank you needs to be said to Pauline Riley for the way that she and her small team of workers keep the patio area and tubs so beautiful. But gardening doesn't do itself, and the land that Martin Way has needs a lot of work and Pauline desperately needs more helpers. Graham Currie cuts the grass at the front (did you know that and has anyone ever said thank you or offered to do it for him?) but some of the flowerbeds at the front need some tender care. Any offers?

OUR NEWSLETTER

Thank you for all the positive feedback about the new layout of the Newsletter. As you may have noticed I have started to include a few new ideas that were mentioned to me in the first issue, but please bear in mind this Newsletter is for everyone in Martin Way and the circuit to let everyone know what is happening within and around our church.

So if you feel you have any good ideas or been somewhere interesting or you are planning to organise something special please let me know, or even better write an article about it. If a good book, tape or CD has inspired you why not give it a review that might encourage others to look out for it. It would be nice to include any Birthdays, Special Occasions or Anniversaries within our church family in future issues, so please let me know of any you are aware of.

If you happen to be a writer of stories, puzzle maker or just have an idea that would look good within the pages, please feel free to put pen to paper so your article can be included. As we are now in the 21st century you could always email me your articles!

Andrew Fox

I'M JOSEPH, YOUR BROTHER

For those of us who find reading Bible reading tedious and boring I recommend you start with Joseph Story. In this, most sustained story in the Bible (14 chaps), there is material for every kind of novel you have read or movie watched so far. Are you fascinated by say sibling rivalry, power games, conspiracies or romance, lust, scandals, wild dreams. Then your appetite is the limit! In fact Andrew Lloyd Webber, a secular actor, has enjoyed considerable success in theatres for his lyrics in the musical Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.

But I wish to look at the Joseph story for a different reason, the concept of and practicality of forgiveness. Like the dysfunctional family of Joseph, races have offended each other so much, simply because they count them as not 'one of us'. That is when we want to look at it in a broader sense. Otherwise we (I and you) have done terrible things to each other here in this church and out there with those we love most or interact with on a daily basis. We have sold many a Joseph to Egypt so that we may never see them again. But they never get away. They are always close to us. Our guilt or bitterness continues to haunt us and chew our intestines. It is an opportunity for we the Josephs to go back to them our brothers and say, 'I am Joseph your brother'.

In the 1960s Pope John XXI I I, who had one of most important papacies of the last century, primarily because of his work with Vatican II, met

with a delegation of Jewish leaders. This was the first official meeting between Catholics and Jews since the end of World War II, and the relationship was strained, if not utterly broken, because of the church's silence during the holocaust. The first words spoken at that meeting by Pope John set the course for the entire remainder of the meeting. Drawing from the Joseph narrative, the verses we heard today, Pope John started the meeting by saying, "I am Joseph your brother." Jews and Catholics alike recognized those words immediately as words of healing and reconciliation and forgiveness. When Pope John Paul II visited Jerusalem, the first pope to visit Jerusalem since the end of the war, he repeated those words. "I am Joseph your brother." The message could not have been clearer: he had come to heal.

The Joseph story, for all its entertainment value (and it is as entertaining as any story in scripture, I loved it when I was a child in Sunday School) - the Joseph story is not first of all about following your dreams. The Joseph story is a remarkable narrative of family healing and reconciliation and forgiveness. And then, to top it off, there is a startling claim that's made at the end - in a portion we didn't have time to read this morning - that God is bigger and more powerful than all of the evil we intend for each other. God uses evil for good.

Unhealthy families have a way of passing their problems along from one generation to another? It should be no surprise, given what we know of Jacob's troubled family relationships, that his sons have inherited the same unhealthy dynamics. The problems begin, apparently, when Jacob showed favoritism to the youngest child. Jacob showered Joseph with affection and gifts, creating resentment and hatred among the older brothers. Joseph, it must be said, did not help his own cause when he told his brothers his dreams of grandeur.

One day, having had enough of him, the brothers decide to kill Joseph, which seems to be a time-tested way of dealing with difficult family situations. Reuben, the oldest brother, plays a heroic role in the story by coming up with an alternative plan. They decide to fake Joseph's death and throw him in a dry well instead. Frankly, I'd call that a sorry basis for Reuben's heroic reputation. Later, when some Ishmaelites come along, their annoying little brother was sold into slavery. I think you know what happens next. Joseph rises to the highest levels of the Egyptian

government. He becomes Prime Minister of Egypt, second in power only to the Pharaoh. Finally, in the climactic scene of the narrative, Joseph's brothers come to Egypt in search of food. A famine has come upon the land, and the eleven brothers are now in the position of beggars. They do not recognize Joseph, but he recognizes them. And – he forgives them.

Forgiveness, I would say, is one of the biggest spiritual issues that we wrestle with – we who take our Christian faith seriously, we who do our best to live Christ-like lives. For most of us, forgiveness is one of the thorniest and most difficult areas of the Christian life. Over the next couple of months I want to lift up some insights about forgiveness that I find in this story.

John Nyota

THE HARVEST LOAF

Fergus was a little mouse; he was pale brown with dark black eyes, a long tail and powerful legs. Despite his size, he could leap a long way. He had lived in the church graveyard for many peaceful years. But this autumn, things were going wrong. September had started very pleasantly, warm and sunny, then suddenly it all changed. Day after day it rained. Lightning struck the tree in which he had built his nest and he was forced to move to a new temporary nest under a bush. Then, one October afternoon, after a real cloudburst, he was flooded out and, in desperation, took refuge in the church. As luck would have it, it was the day before the Harvest Festival, so the heating was on and the church was decorated ready for the morning service.

After drying himself off he felt hungry, so he went exploring. He found some nice berries among the decorations but was confused by the tins and boxes. Then he caught a wonderful smell coming from the altar. Reaching the top was not difficult for him. One leap took him from the floor to a chair, and a second from the chair to the altar. Then he saw it, in front of him, the Harvest Loaf! It smelt beautiful and looked even better, the colour of dark shiny nuts. He was just about to sink his teeth into it, when he saw the design of the Harvest-mouse in one corner; it's currant eye gazing at him. He couldn't eat that, it was too special, but he still felt hungry. Perhaps if he just nibbled a different corner it wouldn't matter.

The next morning he was awoken by sounds of doors being unlocked and people moving about. Quick as a flash, he leapt from the altar to the floor, crept along the shadows at the side of the church and shot out the door. Outside the weather had changed; it was now sunny and fresh. After such a cosy night and good feed he felt full of vigour, so dashed off to find a tree to build a new nest for the winter.

Meanwhile, in the church, a group of people were standing around the altar, gazing in astonishment at the remains of the Harvest Loaf. All that was left was the mouse shape from the corner, still with its current eye.

Buckland Parish Magazine

THE ALPHA CONFERENCE

The Alpha Conference initially planned to take place at the Methodist Central Hall was held at Holy Trinity Brompton on the 27th and 28th June. Six members from Martin Way attended namely Moira Bailey, Dennis Clarke, Joan Harding, Tony Loft, Joyce Plant and Gwen Wildman. The two jam-packed days consisted of talks, seminars, small group discussions and prayer groups for those starting out with Alpha as well as for leaders and teams who want to improve their courses.

It was interesting to note that Alpha started from small beginnings and has now become a by-word displayed on London taxis and buses and in nine other UK City Centres. In 1977 Charles Manham, a clergyman at HTB began looking for a means of presenting the basic principles of the Christian faith to new Christians in a relaxed and informal setting and devised the Alpha course. Its possibilities as a tool for evangelisation began to emerge in 1993.

To date more than 6.7 million people worldwide have found it a worthwhile experience, completing the Alpha course in churches, homes, schools, universities and prisons. The web address www.istheremoretolifethanthis.com has been bought by Alpha and in September will carry a special web page directing seekers to a local Alpha course.

The course was both stimulating and worthwhile in particular hearing the testimonies of those having completed the course and whose lives had been drastically changed as a result. We came away as enthusiastic as the

organisers in HTB with some new ideas about starting a course in Martin Way church. The course emphasised the importance of prayer which is central to any new undertaking and without which nothing will happen. We have been praying for guidance during this time of preparation and planning. The advertising and recruiting will start in September and we will launch the course the week of 9th -14th January 2006. Please continue praying for this, as the support of the church is also needed and who knows what God can do with small beginnings.

Gwen Wildman

TAIZÉ

Last month we had an article about Taizé Prayer and Praise Meetings, for anyone interested in attending any of these meetings, you can find out additional details by contacting Jean Mann on (020) 8542 5929.

FAIRTRADE RECIPES

Mocha Ginger Biscotti

Makes about 10 biscotti

Biscotti are very hard Italian biscuits, which are lovely, dipped into coffee for breakfast or a mid-morning snack.

100g plain flour	30g Fairtrade cocoa powder
1 ½ teaspoon of ground ginger	½ teaspoon baking powder
120g unrefined (golden) Fairtrade sugar	Pinch of salt
½ tablespoon Fairtrade ground coffee	2 eggs, beaten
30g dark Fairtrade chocolate, roughly broken up	

Heat oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4. Sieve flour, cocoa, baking powder, ground ginger and salt into the bowl of a food processor. Add sugar, coffee and chocolate. Process until finely ground. Slowly pour in the beaten eggs and continue to process until mixture binds together into a firm dough. Carefully add milk by the teaspoonful if dough is too dry. On a floured surface, roll dough into a log and place on a baking sheet lined with baking parchment.

Bake for 30 minutes. Remove from oven and turn down to 150°C/300°F/gas mark 2. Allow log to cool, then, using a serrated knife, cut into 1cm wide slices. Lie slices flat on baking sheet and return to oven for 15 minutes or until firm. Allow to cool completely on a wire rack.

YOURS FAITHFULLY

To: Jesus, Son of Joseph, Carpenter's Shop, Nazareth

From: Jordan Management Consultants, Jerusalem

Dear Sir

It is our opinion that the twelve men you have picked to manage your new venture lack the background, educational and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the team concept.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper. Andrew has no qualities of leadership. The two brothers James and John place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale.

We feel it is our duty to let you know that the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau has blacklisted Matthew. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus (also known as Judas) have radical leanings, and both registered high on the manic-depressive scale.

Simon is a well-known Zealot and holds membership of one of the Jewish revolutionary movements. Bartholomew seems to be very unassuming and will probably not amount to much. Philip is too much of a pragmatist and sceptic to be of much help.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, has a keen business mind and contacts in high places. He is highly motivated and ambitious. We recommend Judas I scariot as your trusted controller and right-hand man.

We wish you every success in your new venture.

Jordan Management Consultants

St Andrew's Church Magazine

Health is not valued until sickness comes

An Old English Proverb

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

Monday, October 10th

A day to highlight the worldwide problem of mental illness

World Mental Health Day was observed for the first time on 10th October 1992. It was started as an annual activity of the World Federation for Mental Health by the then Deputy Secretary General Richard Hunter. The official day of celebration and commemoration is set on October 10th of every year.

Mental ill health is a major global concern. According to the World Health Organisation it is projected to reach 15% of the global burden of disease by the year 2020, by which time depression will disable many more people than AIDS, traffic accidents, heart diseases and war combined.

Too often, people who are mentally ill are shunned by others who are afraid of them, or isolated from the community for their own protection. Even now, some mentally ill people, in countries such as India and Ghana, may be kept in chains and denied their basic human rights. Throughout the centuries, people have been feared and mocked, or even regarded as evil spirits. Such was the attitude when Jesus was on earth. He recognised their isolation, spoke to them without fear, and was able to calm their troubled spirits. We pray for that same healing influence now, on all who suffer from sickness of the mind and for those who have become victims of mentally disturbed people.

This month, please remember in your prayers mentally ill people worldwide and especially those who are working to help them.

CHURCH DIARY FOR OCTOBER

Sun	2	10.30 am	Harvest Festival led by Rev John Nyota followed by Ploughman's Lunch
		4.00-5.30pm	SIGMA
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	3	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	4	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	5	7.45 pm	Midways Group - People who need us Guest speaker - Lt. Col. Colin Fairclough (Salvation Army retired)
Sat	8	10-12 noon	Midways Group Coffee Morning - Proceeds to St. Raphael's Hospice
		10.30-12 noon	St. James Annual Book Fair
Sun	9	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr David Morgan
		4.00-5.30pm	SIGMA
Mon	10	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	11	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	14	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	16	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	17	2.45 pm	Fellowship
		8.00 pm	Family Committee
		8.00 pm	Taizé Meeting at St John Fisher Church
Tue	18	10-12 noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club
			Guest speaker - Russell Humphreys - Thailand
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	19	7.45 pm	Midways Group - A Miscellany guest speakers - Brian & Irene Goldsmith
Sun	23	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr Bill Cox
Mon	24	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	25	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	28	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	30	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev John Nyota
		4.00-5.30pm	SIGMA