

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear friends,

Jambo Rafiki,

Sometimes Christianity shows a love for big words. I don't. Is it because I am short and small-bodied? Some say even small brained and I dare not dispute.

Consider the word lent. All it means is that season when Christians focus their minds on the betrayal, denial, suffering, death and resurrection of their Lord, Jesus Christ.

How about Transfiguration! That would make some space scientist sweat buckets not least the little me, a guy for whom English is the tenth language. The word simply refers to a time when some of the disciples saw Jesus' body become clear and transparent, revealing the presence and glory of God? Until then they had not completely appreciated the greatness and importance of this guy who walked, ate, laughed and joked with them. Transfiguration opened their eyes and it was awesome.

Lent is a time for all of us to be transfigured, to reveal that shining part of us that has been buried inside us. On Ash Wednesday, ashes on our foreheads remind us that our bodies have been disfigured by our turning away from true love. Thank God for lent: it is not about despair, it is about hope that we can bring those bodies just as they are: Young bodies, old bodies; growing bodies, dying bodies, sick bodies, hurting, bruised and aching. When we surrender them to God the lover of our bodies, he is the willing and able physician and will give us resurrected bodies.

None would agree with me more on this than Peter. All the gospel writers are unanimous about this character. They all tell us that the disciple who first professed Jesus and who vaunted his willingness to follow Jesus even to death fell asleep, did not pray, fled at the crucial moment, and denied with an oath that he even knew Jesus. He was completely unprepared to take up the cross with the Lord and follow him. It is apparent that Peter's was the most bruised body, completely disfigured at the close of the lent story. His heart was in turmoil. He went back to his old shell, fisher of fish.

Except, thank God, the story does not end at the death on the cross. There



is the resurrection to follow albeit Peter had forgotten all about it. Of course the sequel is a much happier story. Though Peter is slow to believe even after the resurrection, Jesus appears to him and embarks on the process of panel beating his disfigured body back to shape. Peter professes his love for the Lord three times, paralleling his three denials. He takes his place as leader of the Twelve, the evangelist, and a pillar of the Jerusalem church.

From Peter the disfigured to Peter the Figured out (transfigured) I see the following.

Challenge! One need not be a psychiatrist to penetrate the reasons for Peter's failure. He was quite unaware of his own weakness; cocky rather than humble. Contrary to Jesus' repeated plea, he did not watch and he did not pray. So, Peter's story poses rather direct questions to us this Lent: Do we recognize our own fragility? Do we stand before the Lord humbly, conscious that we "hold his gifts in earthen vessels" (2 Cor 4:7)? Are we alert, on the watch? Are our eyes open to see the Lord still agonizing in the garden? Do we recognize his anguish in street people huddled in doorways for protection against the cold? Does his suffering glance, mirrored in the eyes of hungry children or hopeless mothers, touch our hearts?

Encourage! Peter's story is meant to encourage Christians. His death as a martyr later on stood as a clear witness that, having failed initially, he eventually took up his cross with courage and followed Jesus. Surely, when tested especially in difficult times, many of us, like Peter, do fail. Peter's case assures all of us that there is hope: change, growth, conversion are always possible. Can great weakness, grave failures, and repentant love coexist within the same person? Peter's story says *yes*

Grace! Finally Peter's story bears evidence that the Church is populated by saints and sinners! In fact, there is a mixture of the saint and the sinner in each of us. Sin and grace struggle deep within the heart of every Christian, including those in authority. The gospels proclaim that, as in the case of Peter, grace will win out if, of course, we allow the potter to break us and mould our disfigured body into his own likeness.

Lent is not about repudiating our sinful bodies, it is about redeeming our bodies, our history, our relationship to the natural world, our ethics, our politics, our art, our religion. We dare to enter Lent only because we believe that at the end of the journey we will experience the resurrection OF THE BODY.



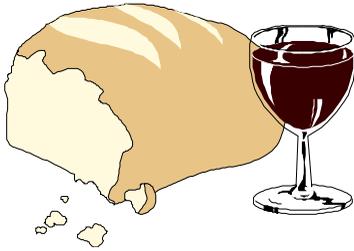
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SIGMA

WELL DONE to all involved in the SIGMA EVENT over the weekend of the 18th -19th February. It was a lot of work for a lot of people but it was well worth it – what a wonderful time everyone had (*those who missed it – you missed a treat!*)

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THOUGHT OF THE MONTH - MARCH 2006



How long is it since you last had something to eat? Perhaps a couple of hours ago you had a hearty breakfast as some folk do, particularly on Sunday mornings. Or perhaps you had a bit of a lie-in and just grabbed a cup of coffee and a slice of toast before you set off for church or work. But I'm sure you've had plenty to eat during the past twenty four hours. I'm sure, too, that you haven't got to worry about where your next meal is coming from. Go into any supermarket and you will find yourself spoiled for choice. There is so much for us to indulge in, not just to meet our basic necessities, but also so much we can buy to give ourselves a "special treat". We no longer have to think up an excuse for buying a tempting looking cake or a bar of chocolate. After all we can't be slaves to diets all the time, can we?

HOW BLESSED WE ARE but how much we take for granted. Perhaps it

would do us all good and make us more appreciative if we could be transported for a few days to some part of the world where there is abject poverty and food is non-existent or in very short supply. Maybe after that we would look at over-laden supermarket trolleys in a different light.

Jesus said, “Man does not live by bread alone.” How true that is. All of us need not only food for our physical bodies but also food for our minds and we, in the so-called civilised part of the world, have far greater opportunity to feed our minds than many millions of people in other parts of the world. We have the ability to read and have easy access to books and literature. Hopefully in our church services we are given food for thought and spiritual nourishment. You could go on for a long time listing privileges we have and just take for granted.

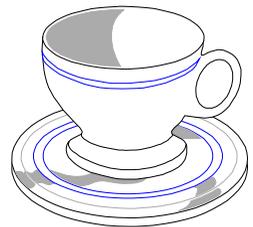
We are constantly being told to lose weight, to watch our calorie intake, to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables each day. Having five portions of spiritual food each day does us good as well. A good dose of prayer, a bit of scripture reading, a short time of meditation, a word of kindness spoken – there are plenty of ways to build up that part of ourselves which really matters. May God help us all to get our priorities right and give us a truly thankful heart.

Bill Cox

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SPRING CLEANING ?

It is nearly Spring (even though it doesn't feel like it!). Can we ask you to look in your kitchen cupboards to see if you have any crockery, bowls, etc. etc. that belong to the Church kitchen? We are about to make an inventory of the kitchen crockery and would appreciate any “returns” as soon as possible.



Many Thanks

Maralyn Loft and Lesley Mortley

CONGRATULATIONS!



Congratulations to Mike and Benita Fuwa on the birth of a Son, who arrived on Monday 20th February at 2.42am, with a healthy weight of 8lb.

Following the Nigerian tradition Joshua Emmanuel Olanrewaju (which means 'continue to prosper') did not receive his name until Monday 27th, seven days after his birth.

May he always be as peaceful as he is in his first photo and may Abigail enjoy having a younger brother.

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MORE CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations also goes to Jennifer Smith on the publication of her first poem, we are very lucky that she has given her permission that we may use it within our Newsletter. Her poem appears in "Dad Rocks" which is available in all good bookshops.



My Daddy

My daddy is the nicest dad,
The nicest a little girl could have.
He's loving, kind and definitely caring,
He thinks of me a lot and is always sharing.
He is quite tall and is lots of fun,
We like playing games, especially in the sun!
He has thick, black curly hair,
And to me he is my giant teddy bear!
He has a good job and gets paid lots of money,
And to me, well, he is quite funny.
No matter what, he is always happy,
He's my daddy and he always will be.

Jennifer Smith (age 12)

FAIRTRADE RECIPES

Banana Celeste

Banana Celeste or Baked bananas with Cream Cheese is a rich pudding from Martinique which is served on special occasions. Cook the pudding in an ovenproof dish or in separate ramekin dishes. This pudding is made with Fairtrade bananas. The Fairtrade Mark means that suppliers have met international Fairtrade standards for providing a better deal for the growers in developing countries.



Preparation time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Equipment needed: Ovenproof dish or 6-8 ramekins, frying pan, mixing bowl, wooden spoon, teaspoon, tablespoon, scraper, saucepan, fish slice, chopping board and a knife.

200g pack soft cheese

50g light brown Fairtrade sugar

1 level tsp ground cinnamon

50g unsalted butter

6 large firm but ripe Fairtrade Bananas

3 tbsp double cream

- Preheat the oven to 180° C, gas mark 4. Cream the cheese, sugar and half the cinnamon together in a mixing bowl using a wooden spoon.
- Melt the butter over a low heat in the frying pan.
- Either slice the peeled bananas lengthways for the ovenproof dish or slice them thinly for individual ramekins.
- Add the cut bananas to the melted butter and fry gently until golden brown on both sides. Distribute the browned bananas evenly, either in a large shallow ovenproof dish or ramekins.
- Spread the cream cheese mixture over the bananas. Drizzle the double cream over the top and sprinkle with the remaining cinnamon.
- Place the banana dish in the oven and bake for 15-20 minutes until the cheese is bubbling and golden brown. Serve immediately.

THE CONTINUING SAGA OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Our story begins at Luke, chapter 10, verse 35:

“The next day, he took out two silver coins and gave them to the inn keeper. “Take care of him,” he said to the inn keeper, “and when I come back this way I will pay you whatever else you spend on him.”

The Samaritan travelled along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho several more times, coming across travellers who had similarly been beaten up and robbed on five more occasions. Each time, he did as before – he bandaged their wounds and took them to the inn where, again, he asked the inn keeper to look after them and promised to pay the bill when he next came that way. In fact, he and the inn keeper became firm friends and the inn keeper even started thinking, “If this goes on much longer, I’ll be able to retire on the proceeds.”

After the fifth occasion, the Samaritan considered setting up in business as a self-employed ambulance man. He saw that this could prove to be quite a lucrative business. So it proved. When they were better, the victims of the robbers paid him back the money he had spent. In fact, they were so grateful and generous that he began to make a handsome profit. But then he thought to himself, “This is crazy; rather than keeping on helping these people after they have been attacked, I could do something to prevent them being attacked in the first place.” So he organised a group and went after the bandits – killing some, capturing others and driving the rest out of the area.

However, not content with that, he approached the Roman authorities about building a new road from Jerusalem to Jericho – the kind that the Romans were good at building. The road was eventually built. It was straight with no sharp corners and so no places where bandits could lie in wait for unsuspecting travellers. The Jerusalem to Jericho Camelway - the C25 - became a popular and safe road for travellers, who often wore badges saying “Sam fixed it for me” (sold to them by the inn keeper).

Which do you think was better – for the Samaritan to continue providing first-aid help for those in need, or for him to deal with the source of the problem? The answer, surely, is obvious.

Derek Little, Wimbledon Guild of Social Services

Reminiscences of a Journey to Kenya (part 3)

8th - 22nd August 2005 by Joyce Plant

Monday August 15th

Barry, Tony and Jenny had to visit the embassy to arrange for a new passport for Jenny, due to the loss of her bag on Sunday, which was to be delivered to Mombassa by the end of the week. They then went on to the Airport to collect tickets.

John put Faith, Cherie and Kim on to an early plane to Mombassa, and then visited the hospital to have treatment to a septic thumb! Everyone met at the airport and eventually on a plane to Mombassa. When John Nyota, Gwen and I emerged from the airport it was to see the coach disappearing in the distance. We thought they would soon miss us and return to pick us up, but no such luck. Eventually a car was supplied to take us to the hotel.



The hotel was quite grand with an extensive foyer, a swimming pool running the length of the building, at least 3 dining rooms, but only one that was included in our tariff. We went down steps to our room which was on the ground floor at the back of the building. All the rooms had a terrace at the back with two chairs and a small table. We had a double bed and a single bed in our room and then we were supplied with another single. I shared the room with Gwen and Glenda, from Ruxley church. There was also a three-piece suite. We had an en suite bathroom and another small area between that and the bedroom proper which had a very good light over a dressing table. There was also a hanging space, three drawers and a wall safe. We had breakfast and an evening meal each day and the menu was varied and the food good, but mainly of an English type. Fruit was readily available but no vegetarian food or Kenyan food.



I did not mind the milk but did not like the bread at all. It was all white and rather sweet.

Tuesday August 16th

The weather was very warm today but not more so than it had been at home for a lot of the summer. One group of people visited Mombassa, the old town I think, but we rested by the pool in the morning. Another, mainly younger group had gone out in a glass bottomed boat, and done some snorkelling and came back very enthusiastic about the fish they had seen. So a group of older ladies decided to go after lunch. We went a long way out and the engine was turned off and we were just floating and the boat began to go up and down. We were offered large flippers and a snorkel tube before entering the water. I was not comfortable wearing this equipment and did not go in the water, but could see all the fish being fed under the boat. Certainly a spectacular display!

Wednesday August 17th



We had booked to go on Safari to Tsavo Wildlife Park. We had an early breakfast and left the hotel at 7.30am.

We travelled in six seater mini-buses, and it was a long ride to Voi. When we arrived the roof was opened and we were advised to stand and look out to get a good view of the animals. We saw many types of

animals and birds, with more elephants than anything else, possibly because in captivity they have no enemies. Most of the natural water holes had dried up, but there had been an underground water pipe from Nairobi to Mombassa, and in several places the elephants had broken through and created some very good water holes. Around the park were several collections of large pipe ready to replace the original! We went to the hotel at 1.30pm for lunch and then a rest until another trip out from 4.00pm to 7.00pm. Supper and early to bed for another trip starting at 6.30 am.

Thursday August 18th

We saw another good selection of animals, but no lions, though our driver did try very hard to get us to a pride that had been sighted, but they had moved off before we arrived.

We returned to the lodge for breakfast and



departed for Mombassa at 9.30am arriving back at 1.30 pm. We had lunch by the pool from the cafe there. Several went swimming in the pool and some in the sea.

Friday August 19th



We arranged for a courtesy coach to pick us up and take us to Bombolulu, a workshop that I had seen advertised in a Christian Aid magazine and which supplies Fairtrade goods. The centre was founded by the Methodist Church in 1969 but is now run by a foundation, The Physically Disabled of Kenya, A.P.D.K. It is very

well organised and fairly commercial, but with many workshops and providing a great variety of goods and of course work for handicapped people. The gentleman who conducted our tour was in a wheelchair. There are many disabilities including deaf people working in the mobility workshop manufacturing quality locally-made aids and make them available to needy people with disabilities. Most applicants prefer the tricycle since they are light, fast and can cover long distances and are equipped with a luggage carrier. The light weight wheelchair is made with local materials and standard bicycle parts. It can be repaired by any technician even in rural areas. The wide front wheel is made of solid rubber which has a long life span and is puncture free and designed specifically to cope with African terrain. Seven workers make fifty wheelchairs in a month.

There were also sewing rooms, woodwork, African leather crafts, and jewellery workshops. All of a high standard, and amongst us we bought quite a selection of goods. It was also possible to see some of the living accommodation.



Saturday August 20th

Eleven of our group went swimming with dolphins and snorkelling, leaving about 5.30am. Gwen, John (Sattaur) and Dawn set out to visit Malindi beach by Matata (public bus).

The rest of the group went to Haller Park - a conservation park built on an old cement works. We had a guide, Mishak, included in the entrance fee. He was very quietly spoken but fluent in English. We saw two quite elderly hippopotami, porcupine, giraffe, a buffalo and several smallish crocodiles. It was also a fish farm with telapi which were sold locally.

Sunday August 21st

There was a selection of church services on offer to attend, but most of us chose the evangelical service in a marquee able to seat 2,000 and most of them were eventually filled. There was a lot of singing with loud, loud speakers, and a preacher who made every point about 7 times, and was still going when we decided to leave after a couple of hours. Very American and not Kenyan! It was quite a hot day and we had a long wait for the coach to come and pick us up. We spent the rest of the day resting and some did swimming.

Monday August 22nd

We are due to leave today but not until evening. Several ladies took a taxi to a disabled guide workshop. The taxi driver had not heard of it but became interested, and will hopefully take more customers. It is quite a small project with one sewing room and all disabled girls. Again various items were bought. We were shown round the whole site and saw various crops of maize laid out to dry. Most of the girls live on the premises. They have been given a large expensive electric cooker but as the electricity is expensive they mostly use calor gas burners for cooking. The amenities were very similar to Kibuline school. The girls are given a thorough training in sewing and tailoring over two years and when they leave they are supplied with a sewing machine to take with them so they can then earn their living.



The holiday has been a very enjoyable experience and most people seem to want to visit again. My daughter was worried and did not think I should travel to Kenya. Remember your age, Mother! I talked it over with God and always felt that he would not let me go if I could not manage. I am eternally grateful that I did go!

Joyce Plant

PUZZLE CORNER

“Narnia's royal ship, the Dawn Treader, is silently floating the stream through the middle of the shiny Last Sea, and from aboard Lucy exchanges a brief look with a surprised mermaid.”



There are 10 differences in the picture shown below compared with the one on the other page, can you find them all?



CHURCH DIARY FOR MARCH

Thurs	2	7.15 pm	Alpha Course
Fri	3	10.30 am	Woman's World Day of Prayer - Morning Service at St Winifred's Church, Wimbledon
		8.00 pm	Woman's World Day of Prayer - Evening Service at Martin Way Methodist Church
Sat	4	10.00 am	Alpha Course Away Day at St Giles, Ashtead
Sun	5	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Janet and Bob Hamblin
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Barrie Tabraham
Mon	6	2.45 pm	Fellowship - <i>Linda Rayner</i>
Tue	7	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	8	7.45 pm	Midways Group – Mrs Haynes – <i>Life of a Lady Bailiff</i>
Thurs	9	7.15 pm	Alpha Course
Fri	10	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	12	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	13	3.45 pm	Fellowship - <i>Derek and Mary Heaton</i>
Tue	14	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Thurs	16	7.15 pm	Alpha Course
Sun	19	10.30 am	Praise Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	20	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	21	10-12 noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club – Emily Kim - <i>Korea</i>
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	22	7.45 pm	Midways Group – Pauline Riley - <i>My 70th Birthday trip to the Galapagos Islands</i>

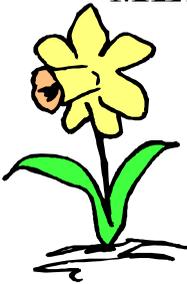
Thurs 23	7.15 pm	Alpha Course
Fri 24	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun 26	10.30 am	Mothering Sunday Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon 27	3.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue 28	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
	8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Thurs 30	7.15 pm	Alpha Course

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

DAFFODIL DAY

METHODIST CHURCH HALL

WESTMINSTER



MONDAY 6th MARCH 2006

1.45pm - 3.45pm

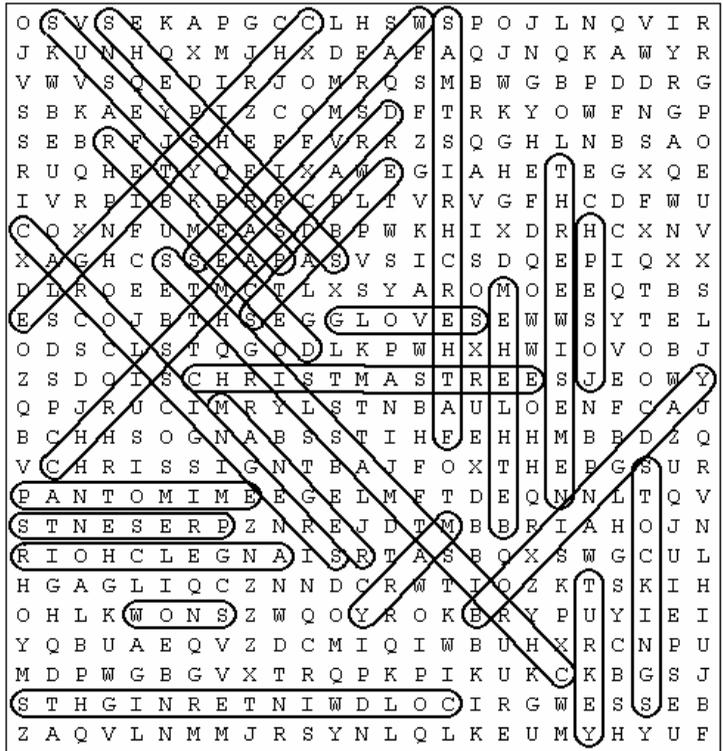


Come and join in a wonderful celebration of worship in the Great Hall comprising music, drama and speakers.

There is no charge or ticket but everyone is invited to buy a daffodil in aid of the Marie Curie charity.

The theme for this year is 'Hopes and Dreams'

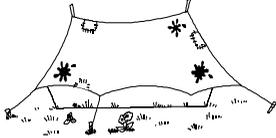
**Christmas
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Words
Solution**



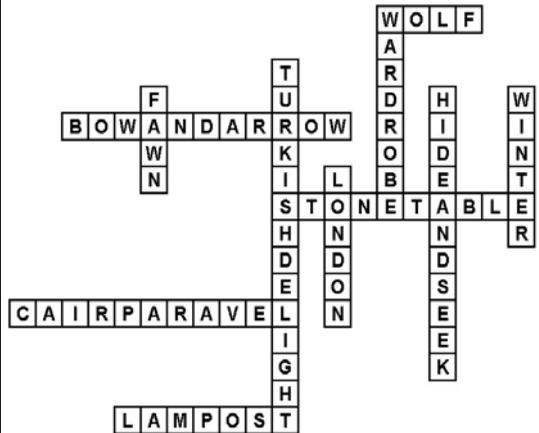
SWANAGE!

Once again our **CHURCH CAMP** at Swanage will be happening later on this year. Dates that have booked are from 22th to 29th July.

Anyone wishing to go please see Janet or Bob Hamblin for more details.



Narnia Crossword Solution



Items for the **April Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox, (email: roife@ aol.com) by **Sunday 18th March** at the latest