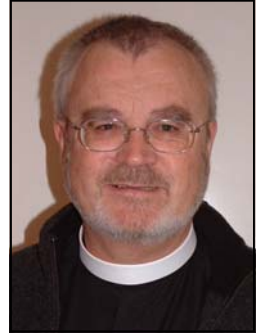


MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear friends,

For the next six months I will have the privilege of being your minister and – given my other responsibilities at Worcester Park, the superintendency of the Circuit, and preparing for retirement – I will do my utmost to give you the time and the care that you need, and deserve.



Change tends to make us a little anxious, and at Martin Way you have every right to feel the burden of uncertainty. I have written a little about this in my quarterly letter to the Circuit, and I won't bore you with a sermon! However, if I *was* going to preach one, my text would be from Isaiah 40, verse 31:

“They who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”

That passage speaks directly to our present condition. It's a word for all who lack confidence or who suffer from anxiety; all who are tired & find things a strain; all who hold office in the Church and who feel, sometimes, that they seem to have to do it all by themselves. At some stage every one of us needs what this verse promises.

But verses in hymns can be misunderstood. I remember as a lad in Sunday School, imagining, when I sang a particular hymn, that I might have to work in the newspaper or magazine business. Why, you ask? Because in Charles Wesley's great hymn *“Give me the faith”*, it says in the third verse:

*“My every sacred moment spend
In publishing the sinner's friend”*

I'd never seen it, but I assumed that the “The Sinner's Friend” must have been a magazine & a rather risqué publication at that!

But seriously, we know, of course, that *“waiting upon the Lord”* does

not mean being passive, or inactive. There's

- **running** - busy activity;
- **walking** - steady routine; and there's
- **waiting** - quiet contemplation.

And it is the waiting which releases the strength for doing the other two. If you first wait upon the Lord, says Isaiah, then your strength *will* be renewed so that you can then run, be busy, without being weary; and so that you can walk, get on with the routine, without feeling faint.

It's **the eagle's view**, if you like. Isaiah uses the image of the eagle, mounting up – a symbol of power, though never of brute strength. When the Bible wants to talk about brute force it uses the picture of the lion or the ox. The eagle's strength and greatness lies elsewhere – in its ability to rise above the trivia of life on earth and to soar heavenwards on its mighty wings. Then, from its height, it can look down on the world and see life from a new angle. It is what you might call the grace of perspective.

It's essential for us to be able to see things like that, to look at things objectively, critically, strategically – especially with regard to work for the Church. With the eagle's view we shall be able to see the future with God's eyes, and his promise is that when we *run* in life as well as in the routine walks, God supplies the gift of perseverance, the ability *not* to faint.

So the question ought to be, not what have we done in the last few years, nor even what *we* can do in the coming years. But rather:-

- What do you and I expect God's *Spirit* to do in the future at Martin Way?
- What is there that needs to be done in our church?
- What is God doing here?
- Where are the signs of God's kingdom, signs of new life and growth?
- And above all, are we a forward-looking, expectant people who look to the unfathomable resources of God's Spirit?

We don't know what lies ahead in the next few months and years, but I have every confidence that we shall look forward with hope and expectation. Waiting on the Lord, we shall renew our strength; we shall mount up with wings like eagles; we shall run and not be weary; we shall walk and not faint.

With love and best wishes,

Barrie

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CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

This May is the 50th anniversary of the church building (not the hall which was the original church that will next year celebrate 75years). To celebrate we will be holding a May Fair on Saturday 10th May, and on Sunday 11th May, Rev David Chapman will be leading us for our Sunday worship which is also Holy communion.

We would like people to start saving jam jars coffee jars etc and then fill them with something which we can put on a tombola stall. We need a variety of jars suitable for different ages.

Any questions about this please speak to either Anne Conquest, Sue Boyd, or Jane Bryant.

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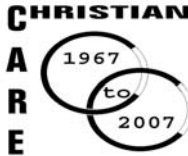
AN INVITATION

The members of the Men's Supper Club invite you to join them for their Thanks-giving Service at 7.30pm on Thursday of Holy Week (March 18th) with refreshments and a time of fellowship afterwards.

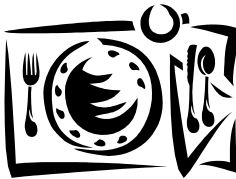
Any money raised that evening will go to St. Raphael's Hospice, our charity for this year. We have over a hundred pounds so far and some friends not in the Supper Club have said that they would like to make a contribution. I am grateful for that and will be pleased to accept any donations between now and November.

Bill Cox

Come to the
40th Anniversary Fundraising Luncheon



**Merton College, 'Restaurant in the Park'
London Road, Morden**



on Friday 4th April 2008 at 12 noon for 12.30 pm

**£15 per head
to include one glass wine/sparkling water**

Craft and homemade stall

**Tickets available from Christian CARE Office
Phone 020 3044 0093
Email: christiancaremerton@gmail.com**

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH - MARCH 2008

I've had another 21+ birthday since last month's Newsletter came out. Birthdays are like milestones along life's pathway, but we can't retrace our steps. Looking back, we find that our lives become more and more vague as we grow older. Can you remember yourself when you were twenty? Maybe you can if you are twenty-one but it's certainly not easy to do if you are eighty – or is it just me? The point is that all of us change as we go through life. The you and me of today are not the same as the you and me we were ten years ago. We have changed for the better or the worse. The saying says that we grow older and wiser but it is surely not always the case. But our past has become part of us and has helped to shape us into what we are today.



We are all at different stages in our lives. I'm at the stage of having to write notes to myself to remind me of the things I have to do; as for remembering names, the less said the better! My grandson is at the stage of going on a scuba-diving course. (There was no such thing when I was his age!)

As time goes by our past begins to become a blur. We can recall things that have happened but we find it difficult to pin-point WHEN they happened unless they have special significance for us. The future, of course, is not in our hands. None of us knows what the future has in store for us or how much future we have left. That is why each day is so precious. It's quite likely that I've offered you this thought before but I make no apology from doing so again.

*Yesterday's history; tomorrow's a mystery
But today is a gift from God,
That's why it's called THE PRESENT.*

May God help us to make the most of each day that we are given.

Bill Cox

NEWS FROM KENYA
February 2008
**Bible Study at the Jambo Sana Centre,
Magina, Kenya**



Dear friends,

Sunday the 27th January was a special day and a lively one for the young people of Magina. The ‘Upper Room’ at the Jambo Sana Centre at Magina was filled to its capacity with not only the usual participants but also were blessed with special visiting guests. The occasion was to present Bibles to those who have been enthusiastically faithful in attending the sessions over the past 4 months. These Bibles have been donated by Rafiki trust UK.

From small beginnings, but *“Who dares despise the day of small things” Zech 4:10* the Bible Study in Magina which is interdenominational, started on the 29th September 2007 and was initiated by the young people themselves. Being the only white person residing in that area, I was for the first few weeks the object of curiosity and intrigue. However I soon got to know these youngsters as they welcomed me into their homes, to discuss their schooling, share their challenges and they were more than happy to practise their English. I was also soon to discover how much they loved and revered the Word of God and it was a joy to be a part of this fellowship, but a concern to realise that most of them did not possess Bibles of their own.

It was a pleasure and a privilege that Pastor James Gichuki from Bible League was able to be present for the event despite a busy schedule and a tedious journey from Thika. Our Minister from Martin Way the Rev John Nyota welcomed all of us to the Centre, encouraged the ongoing work of the Bible Study and shared with us his vision and future plans for Jambo Sana. Moira Bailey, as Pastoral Coordinator from Martin Way, along with John presented the Bibles. The Bible Study group will continue to meet and will be co-ordinated by Monica

Wanjiru Thuku one of the key leaders in the community and who in addition also has a vision to evangelise the youth of the area.

Amongst the visiting guests and representing the neighbouring communities were some of the local Pastors and special friends from Kijabe who confirmed to me the vision for Bible Study. All these people have been a great support to me during my time in Kenya and I thank the Lord for them. Some have expressed a desire to start study groups in their respective areas. With this support “...since the seven eyes of the Lord that range throughout the earth will rejoice when they see the chosen capstone in the hands of Zerubbabel” Zech 4:10., who are we to question what God can do with small beginnings. We are asked to be faithful in the small opportunities and not necessary think that big is more beautiful. To Him be the glory, great things He has done.

Powerful in making us wise to salvation,
Witness to faith in Christ Jesus the Word,
Breathed out to all by the life-giving Father—
These are the Scriptures, and thus speaks the Lord.

Gwen Wildman

Pictured L-R

Richard Njoroge,
Pastor Gichuki,
Rev John Nyota and
Moira Bailey



DICK WHITTINGTON



This years pantomime was Dick Whittington with Yvonne Baxter as Dick and Emily Bacon as the cat. It was a great success again, enjoyed by both cast & audience.

There were times at first we did not think we would pull it off in such a short time as we only stated practising from January - but we did it! The best part about doing these pantomimes is that there is a wide range of age groups of the church working together, getting to know each other better & having a lot of fun.

Not just the actors made the panto a success, it is all the other people that help off stage too. The amount raised is not confirmed yet, but it is going toward Carshalton Children's Hospital & also the church funds.

Thanks to everyone who helped in anyway and you who supported us.

Anne Conquest





MCW Rafiki Trust

81 Gladstone Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 1QR

Container for Kenya Update

As some of you may know we are trying to organise a container to send to the Jambo Sana project centred on the village of Magina in Kenya, this is John Nyota's home village.

The story so far

Now that John no longer has commitments to the Wimbledon Circuit he has agreed to act as receiving agent in Kenya.

I have contacted 3 container firms for quotes but only one has replied so far.

I have spoken to the Kenyan High Commission about what we wish to do. They have given us guidance as to their requirements. Which involves making a proposal to Jambo Sana and then they have to contact the Culture and Social Service Ministry in Kenya for clearance so that we do not have to pay Import duties.

May I take this opportunity to thank all of those people who have been storing things for us. The situation in Kenya is not stable enough at the moment to send a container and at least one of the firms is not sending containers at the moment anyway. If you are unable to continue using the storage space then we will understand if you need to dispose of the goods elsewhere.

We are hoping to produce a list of things that people have specifically asked for.

Clothing – The Kenyan High Commission has said that any clothing we send will have to be fumigated by a firm of their choosing who will then make out a certificate that will travel with the container. I asked for an estimate of cost but was told this was not possible. John and I suspect that the cost will be prohibitive being more than the value of the clothes.

We would like to suggest therefore that any clothing be disposed of elsewhere. If you have the time and the energy you could have a jumble

sale and give the money to the Rafiki trust to buy clothes in Kenya – (this is only a suggestion!)

Every blessing

Valerie Ashcroft

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DAILY THOUGHTS

Last year I wrote a thought for each day. Mike Mortley has used his expertise to produce the thoughts in the form of a booklet. It is now available from Mike at only £2.50 and all proceeds will go to our church funds.

Bill Cox

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WOMAN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

“God’s Wisdom Provides New Understanding”



Just a final reminder about his year’s services, both being held on Friday 7th March. Reverend Mary Bide will be giving the address in the morning at Trinity United Reform Church at 10.30am.

Reverend Wilma Roest will be giving the evening address at Wimbledon Methodist Church at 8pm.

Everyone is cordially invited to attend.

Mary Heaton

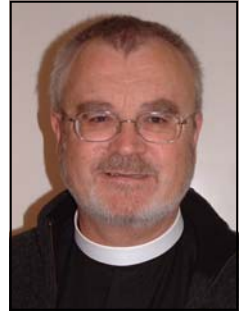
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Mrs Doris Klass

It is with regret we have to announce the death of one of our older members, Mrs Doris Klass, who passed away peacefully in Epsom Hospital on 10th February. Her funeral was at North East Surrey Crematorium on Friday 22 February at 1.00 pm.

Our sympathy and prayers go to her daughters, Hermione and Hazel, and to her grand-children Martin, Nichola and Laura.

**A LETTER FROM
BARRIE TABRAHAM
WIMBLEDON CIRCUIT SUPERINTENDENT**



Dear Friends,

Managing Change

With the major changes that have occurred (or which will come about in the near future) in the circuit since I last wrote my quarterly letter to you all, I was reminded of two things that were said to me over twenty years ago when I was in Merseyside.

The first was by an elderly lady who opposed all of the changes which were being considered for one of my churches. She said, *“I want to recognise the church as it’s always been, when they bring me down the aisle in my coffin.”* She really did say that to me, and I think I was able to keep a straight face at the time.

The second was by a church steward at an open evening at the manse, shortly after we had arrived in the circuit. He asked, *“I hope you don’t think you’ve come to change us.”* I can’t remember my reply, only the comment he made nearly six years later, just before we left Merseyside: *“You were right: we’ve all changed, haven’t we!”*

To imagine that it is possible to avoid change is naïve. Change is inescapable. As individuals we grow spiritually long after we’ve ceased to grow physically (length-wise, at any rate!), and we pray that God will give us increased wisdom and grace with advancing years. But it is *how* we manage change that determines whether we decline or grow. And here in the Wimbledon Circuit – even if it is not always possible to grow *numerically* – there are many other areas of ministry and mission to explore. The test for us all is to be so attuned to what God’s Spirit is saying to us that we are alive to all the opportunities that will present themselves.

Stationing Matters

Yes, of course it does! At present a body known as the ‘Stationing review Group’ is looking into the whole question of how ministers are deployed throughout the Connexion. A consultation paper has been

produced and we have been asked give feedback. If you'd like to read the report (and also my own response), just ask me for a copy. Our own Circuit has a special interest in the whole process, of course!

To summarise the changes that have taken place and are likely to happen:

- **Rev John Nyota** will continue to reside in the Circuit but will be in the category of 'Minister Without Appointment', and we pray God's blessing upon his future ministry, however that will be exercised.
- I shall have pastoral responsibility for **Martin Way** for the next 6 months, though inevitably it will be 'ministry at arm's length'. I regret this, but will do my best to ensure that no church, group or individual ever feels neglected. The **Circuit Invitations Committee** (and particularly the Circuit Stewards) will be working closely with the District Chairs, with the expectation that a full-time replacement for John Nyota and myself will be appointed to this Circuit from September 2008.
- In the (unlikely?) event of a replacement *not* being found, we will put a range of 'coping strategies' into place that will enable us to continue, albeit under very difficult circumstances, until September 2009. I do hope and pray that the Wimbledon Circuit is not put in this situation, and we will do everything in our power to avoid having an 'interregnum' of this magnitude.

Other Items of News

- Concerning the ongoing struggle with the exemptions policy of the **Local Preachers' Department**, I have written further letters – both to the LP Secretary, Dr Joy Barrow, and also to Rev Dr Martyn Atkins, the President of Conference. I am awaiting a reply from the former, but Martyn has responded very positively.
- Please note that **Momentum** will no longer be a printed resource, and that in future, copies will be available electronically – the source to contact is: www.methodist.org.uk/momentum.
- On a **personal note**, can I thank everyone for your concerns and prayers for me while I've been hospitalised again recently. Thankfully, I'm back at work now, but still having to take great care

as to how I sit down!

People in the news

- Our prayers continue to be with **Jacqui Frost**, Andy, Chris and Ronald. The recent services celebrating the life and ministry of **Rev Rob Frost**, who died last November, were a fitting tribute to an extraordinary individual who made such an impact upon the Church in so many ways.
- Congratulations to our friends at **Martin Way**, who will be celebrating their 50th anniversary on 11th May, when the morning service will be conducted by **Rev David Chapman**, one of Martin Way's former ministers.
- We're pleased to welcome **Brian Sherrell** into the Circuit this quarter;
- also my son **Paul Tabraham**, who will be conducting services at Martin Way and Stoneleigh.

Some important dates for your diaries:

- ✠ Wednesday 6th March 10.00 am – Ministerial Session of **Synod** at Walworth.
- ✠ Saturday 5th April 10.00 am – **Spring Synod** at Westminster Central Hall.
- ✠ Saturday 10th May 4.00 pm – Rededication of Christ Church with St Philip, **Worcester Park**.
- ✠ Saturday 17th May – **Circuit Quiet Day**.
- ✠ Thursday 22nd May 8.00 pm– **Preachers' Meeting** at Stoneleigh.
- ✠ Saturday 7th June – **Circuit Training Day** for Church Stewards (and Wardens!)
- ✠ Wednesday 18th June 7.00 for 7.30 pm **Circuit Meeting** at Martin Way.

Peace be with you all,

Barrie

CHURCH DIARY



Sun	2	10.30am	Mothering Sunday with Sunday Club Anniversary and Parade Service led by Mr David Eagle
		6.30 pm	Holy Communion led by Rev Barrie Tabraham and Diana Pinchin
Tue	4	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	5	7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>Pauline Riley</i> - Madagascar
Sun	9	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Barrie Tabraham
Tue	11	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	14	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	16	10.30 am	Palm Sunday Praise Service led by Tony Loft
Mon	17	8.00 pm	Easter Evening Meditation
Tue	18	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club - Anniversary Service (Holy Week) followed by fellowship. Proceeds to St.Raphael's Hospice
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	19	7.45 pm	Midways Group - joining Evening Meditation
		8.00 pm	Easter Evening Meditation
Thurs	20	8.00 pm	Maundy Thursday Joint Service at Martin Way led by Rev Faith Nyota
Fri	21	10.00 am	Good Friday Service at Martin Way with local Baptist Churches
		11.15 am	Open-air Service of Witness outside Morden Civic Centre

Sun	23	6.00 am	Sunrise Communion on Cannon Hill Common followed by Breakfast at Martin Way at 7.15am
Sun	23	10.30 am	Easter Day Service led by Rev Stan Brown
Tue	25	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	28	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	30	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Mr Paul Tabraham
Mon	31		Spring Harvest

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

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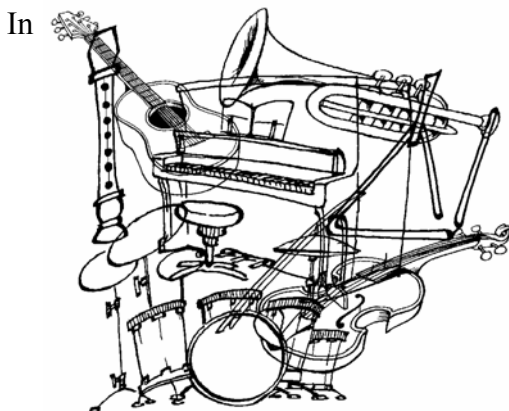
We wish all of those who celebrate a birthday in March a very

Happy Birthday



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Puzzle Corner Answers for last month



the picture were 7 musical instruments, they were

Recorder
Piano
Drums
Violin
Triangle
Trumpet
Guitar

THE 'ALPHA' COURSE

Wimbledon Methodist Church are planning to run the 'ALPHA' course again this year. Last year those who led, helped and who did the course, enjoyed the exercise and found it worth recommending to others: Mostly those who did it, found it a stimulating evening, but all enjoyed it very much. The facilities and ambience of the new building at Wimbledon, we felt, was ideal for running 'ALPHA', to welcome and offer hospitality to guests and this was certainly the case.



The course will run from 3rd April to 5th June with a Saturday 'Away Day' to take place on 31st May. 'ALPHA' is designed for new-comers to the Christian faith, therefore do encourage people around you, people who come to your church activities and/or experience it for yourself - it is a good way to find out about one effective way of communicating Christianity today. The course presented is the original 'ALPHA' and every week's topic is open to question. Some lively discussions took place last time.

The church will open from 7.00pm for the meal and the sessions will start at 8.00pm. There will be a short introduction and a worship song, the talks will be presented each week on DVD (the shorter version) and discussion groups will follow. The evenings will end at 9.45pm.

Letters of invitation with reply-slips, are available for you to take or give to others. It would be very helpful if the reply-slips are used for catering and administration purposes.

Any offers of help to facilitate the evenings would be very welcome for cooking or serving one of the 'ALPHA' meals (on site or at home with pans etc. provided) or setting out or clearing away. Most of all please pray that people will come to faith or strengthen their faith through the 'ALPHA' experience.

For more details please contact the course co-ordinator, Valerie Smith whose contact details are in the Circuit Directory and on the invitation letter.

Items for the **April Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox, (email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 23rd March** at the latest