

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear friends,

As we turn the corner from spring to summer, Easter seems all too quickly to fade into the past and disappear from view. All sorts of things change. Days get longer and nights get shorter. Whilst the gardens may have already begun to spring into life, our minds begin to wander over the prospective summer days and to all the time we will be able to spend relaxing in them. Holiday plans begin to emerge and we become strangely hopeful that the weather will be wonderful for us this year. Life has an altogether different feel to it.



The long, slow build up to Easter is in many senses comparable to the wait we experience for Christmas, only at this time the suffering of Good Friday has to be endured before the joy of Easter Sunday. The change from one set of emotions to another is swift and quite unreal. Few of us find that life affords us such a quick exchange from sadness to joy. Our human desire to be rid of pain means that we are all too willing to accept the blessings of the Easter gift of resurrection and banish the Good Friday experience to the past. This is, of course, the essence of God's promise to us and we rightly grasp it with both relief and delight. Hope is ours.

For many, however, the realities that God declared himself involved in on Good Friday live on and the disciples, I am sure, would not have found themselves so swiftly able to afford the about turn of emotion that we celebrate and experience.

Worry not, I wouldn't wish to suggest that we should immerse ourselves in gloom and suffering. Rather, that as we step out into the brighter days of our calendar year, we remember as we go that hope was given to us in order that we might live life to the full and offer the same gift to others. Our hope was born out of a God who declared himself involved in our world. We are called in the name of Christ to witness to that same presence today.

Every blessing to you all as the first joys of summer emerge: blessings for yourselves and for those who are touched by your lives.

Paul

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EASTER CELEBRATIONS

A big thank you is due to Brenda and Tony for leading us on three nights of Holy Week Reflective Meditations, which, small though we were in number, were greatly appreciated, being really beautiful and moving.

Thanks also go to Paul for the Maundy Service which encompassed a Passover Meal, lovingly prepared and cooked by him with the beautiful aroma of eth Paschal roast Lamb in the church, followed by an intimate Holy Communion for the couple of dozen folk who attended.

Good Friday Morning also saw a couple of dozen folk from Martin Way attend the United Service at Merton Park Baptist Church - another wonderful time of sharing with several local churches.

Holy Saturday saw Derek and I in Guildford High Street for the Wintershall presentation of 'The Passion of Christ', narrated by the Bishop of Guildford at 2.30pm. The first showing of the progressive drama through the streets had been well supported and passers-by related how movingly it had been enacted. We experienced the same feelings and were grateful, especially for everyone in full costume, that the weather remained kind although, as the three figures were hoisted aloft on the wooden crosses, it looked very cold for them being naked except for loin-cloths. Bishop Christopher Hill closed the presentation inviting the 40 odd crowd to bow their heads at the close and recite the Lord's Prayer with him in whatever tongue they spoke and for those of no faith to simply reflect on the moving events they had just

participated in. This turned out to be a wonderful open-air public witness for all present.

Easter Sunday Morning saw us yet again on Cannon Hill Common for the annual short Sunrise Service at 6.30am. Once again, few though we were, it was a real blessing to greet our risen Lord among the cormorants, ducks and early dog walkers. Fern and Jack put on the usual 7.15am breakfast back at church, for which we thank them and then David Eagle led a Cafe style Service at 10.30 in the Hall.

The Easter Celebrations closed at 6.30pm with Paul leading a few of us in the final Communion of Easter and our thanks go to him yet again.

Mary and Derek Heaton

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GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR BURMA

Having just returned from a trip to Myanmar two and a half weeks before, and with many prayer requests fresh in my mind, it was inevitable that I should go to the Global Day of Prayer for Burma which was held on Saturday the 13th March at the Emmanuel Centre, Marsham Street. I have always found that praying and empathising with those who are suffering very difficult because I do not know how I would react in similar circumstances, but this time I could identify, if not with the people but geographically to places shown to us in Yangon and Mandalay that I recently visited.

Ben Rogers was the first speaker and is the East Asia Team Leader at Christian Solidarity Worldwide. He has made over thirty visits to Burma and its borderlands since 2000, and regularly briefs parliamentarians and governments on Burma. He makes regular appearances on radio and television and is the author of three books on Burma. He related his experiences of meeting with political prisoners who showed remarkable courage, faith, dignity and hope despite being separated from their families.

Sarah Armitage is the UK National Director for Partners Relief & Development. She returned to England last year after spending two years on the Thai-Burma border overseeing the care of 1,300 refugee and migrant children. Since January of this year, many villages, schools and churches have been destroyed and landmines planted to stop the people returning. Her presentation showed graphic illustrations of conditions in the refugee camps, many of them with amputated limbs as a result of the landmines.

Htoo Ku Hser Say from the Karen Refugee Committee in Sheffield was the afternoon speaker. When Htoo Ku was only eleven years old, the Burma Army attacked her village in Karen State, killing her father and forcing the rest of the family to flee into the jungle. They lived as refugees in Thailand for the next twenty years. In 2007 she and her family moved to England, where she is now a prominent member of the KRC. She introduced eleven young people, all of them had lived in refugee camps for most of their lives, each with their own harrowing stories of torture. One 25 yr old young man was forced by the military to kill his cousin. These young people now live in Sheffield and although enjoying freedom for the first time in their lives, remain scarred and in need of healing of memories.

Following each presentation by the speakers, we were given specific prayer points to consider when gathering into groups, or to pray alone. As there were over 130 people praying at the same time, and, at times with loud cries and tears, it was very powerful. I also felt by the end of the day oppressed and so tired. I think that I understand a bit more when I hear the term ‘spiritual warfare’ as I sensed that this was the time to ‘put on the full armour of God’ (Eph 6:11) to withstand the battle.

To conclude the day the Karen Singers entertained those present with Burmese praise and worship songs and no one could fail to be moved. Even though it was very tiring and I felt spent by the end of the day, it was a privilege to join hearts, minds and spirit together to support our brothers and sisters from Burma.

Gwen Wildman

Dear friends,

Thank you for all the help and prayers. Here is a story written by a friend who is a Burma expert who recently accompanied us on a relief mission. It was encouraging to us and we hope it is encouraging to you as well.

Thank you and God bless you,
a Relief Team Leader,
Free Burma Rangers

"When I first came to Southeast Asia, in 1991, I was not a Christian. In fact, part of my reason for visiting Thailand was to study Buddhism. I still have great respect for the Buddhist faith, which many of my friends follow. However, God does move in mysterious and wonderful ways - when I returned to the UK six years later, it was as a Christian!

Working with Karen refugees in Thailand, I was profoundly impressed by their great faith. I remember meeting groups of Christians, huddling beneath trees along the border, having been driven from their homes and lost all possessions beyond those which they could carry on their backs. Nevertheless, their first thought was to give thanks and praise to God. Not only were they asking for His assistance, but they were praising him for the glories of life eternal, despite the many sufferings experienced in this world. I was very moved by this example of faith in practice.

As a result of the inspiring example of my Karen Christian brothers, and particularly due to the influence of my fiancée (now wife!), I became a Christian in 1996. At the time, I didn't fully appreciate what I was getting into. Although I was baptized 'in good faith', I now realize that this was just the beginning of a long journey, which I am still upon. In the years since I was baptized, my faith has become increasingly central to the way I feel and think about my life. Indeed, how could love of God not be the most important thing in one's life? I'm so grateful to my Karen and other Christian brothers for leading me onto this path. When my wife and I were married, it seems that I received two wonderful gifts: my beautiful wife, and the gift of faith, and knowledge of God's love.

I visited Karen State again last November and December (2008). Although I had travelled in Kaw Thoo Lei many times in the past, this was my first trip for many years. The land is incredibly beautiful, with stunning (and steep!) hills and mountains, and clear streams and rivers. There are ample resources to support the population - or would be, if not for the terrible ongoing armed conflict.

I was repeatedly struck by how much people have suffered as a result of the war. However, it was also truly inspiring to see the resilience of these Karen communities - Christian and animist alike. Those who have not already fled are determined to resist the pressures to displace them from their homeland. Their resistance and determination is truly inspiring - as is the spirit of solidarity. Despite the difficulties they face, the different villages we visited were gracious and generous hosts. I was struck by the great love which binds these communities together, and extends to those outsiders who have come to help.

In particular, the Free Burma Rangers were a great inspiration to me on this trip. The selflessness with which the FBR teams expressed their Christian love for fellow man and woman is something I had never experienced before. To me, this is a wonderful example of faith in action. I am accustomed to the humanitarian world, where aid agencies distribute assistance according to careful budgets. Of course, this way of working is often very appropriate. However, the Rangers take the spirit of charity further - giving as is needed, including from their personal supplies, and also giving of their own love. As well as the spirit of charity, the Rangers are shining examples of faith and hope, reminding the suffering people of these remote parts of Burma that they have not been forgotten.

The generosity of spirit and bravery of the Rangers will be with me forever as an example of Christian love. I thank God for the opportunity to have spent time with them, and with my Karen brothers and sisters.

Thank you,
a friend from England

Ruxley and friends have Talent!

Ruxley Church
Ruxley Lane, Ewell

Sat 8th May 2010

5 – 8 pm

Doors open 4.30 pm

Come and enjoy a variety of performances, including music, drama and dance; and enjoy a simple Ploughman's style supper, with delicious puddings to follow.

Ticket sales will be in aid of our **Building Project** and the raffle will boost the funds raised for **Christian Aid Week**.

Tickets: £6.50 each or Family (2 adults, 2 children] for £20, bought in advance from Jenny and Chris Meineck tel: 020 8394 2102. Or Please fill in this slip and pass to Jenny or Chris:

Ruxley and friends haveTalent!

Name:

Number of individual tickets at £6.50

Number of Family tickets (2 adults, 2 children) at £20

For supper, please put how many of your party would like these options:

Cheese Ham Vegetarian option

If not at Ruxley Church, where can we deliver tickets?

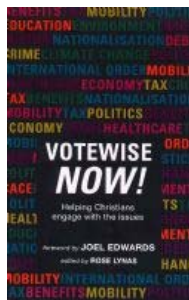
BOOK REVIEWS from RE:FRESH BOOKS

Votewise Now! - Helping Christians engage with the issues

by Rose Lynus (editor)

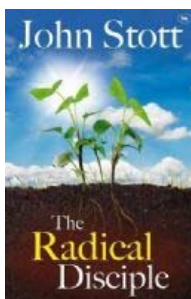
128 pages, paperback, £8.99

A completely new book produced by the Jubilee Centre addressing major issues in the forthcoming General Election. Specialists in different disciplines look at the economy, criminal justice, healthcare, education, the environment, immigration, taxation, housing and employment from a Biblical perspective.



The Radical Disciple by John Stott.

160 pages paperback, £8.99

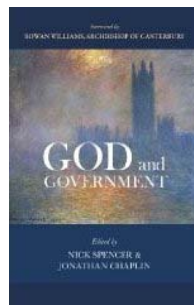


The Radical Disciple is billed as John Stott's final book. Once listed by *Time* Magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the World, John Stott is now 88 and resident in a care home for retired clergymen but his latest book demonstrates that his thinking is as incisive as ever and his concern is for God's people to live fully-committed lives. In *The Radical Disciple*, he lists eight often-neglected characteristics of Christian Discipleship.

God and Government by Nick Spencer and Jonathan Chaplin.

256 pages paperback, £9.99

'God and Government offers invaluable resources for what is now a sharply urgent task thinking through the ethical and spiritual foundations of our democracy.' from the foreword by Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury. What, according to Christian thought, is the proper function of government? That is the key question this lively volume aims to address. It does not tell readers what to do, still less who to vote for. Rather, it seeks to equip us to think through what we in our roles as political Christians should be attempting to achieve.



All of these books are available from re:fresh books & christian resources, 23 The Broadway, Tolworth, Surbiton KT6 7DJ

The Gathering

Sunday 16th May 2010

50 Years on - Dr W.E.Sangster

(Minister at Central Hall during the war years)

'The Man and his Message' - hosted by Tony Miles

Speakers include

Revd Dr Ron Frost

Sangster the man

Revd Martin Turner

Sangster's message for today



Directors of Music: Gerard Brooks and Craig Edwards
Music and singing led by a gathered choir
and the Great Hall Orchestra

**Methodist Central Hall
Storey's Gate, Westminster
London, SW1H 9NH**

Community Singing from 6.10pm
Formal start : 6.30pm

Free admission with an offering

Light refreshments available

For more information contact (020) 7654 3809

CHURCH DIARY



Sun	2	10.30 am	All Age Worship led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	4	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	7	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	9	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev Margaret Adams
		6.30 pm	Healing Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
			<i>Start of Christian Aid Week</i>
Tue	11	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	12	7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>Dr Peter Brandham</i>
Sat	15	3pm-5pm	Midway's Afternoon Tea - <i>proceeds to</i>
			<i>Church Funds</i>
Sun	16	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
			<i>Christian Aid Walk</i>
Tue	18	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Rev Paul Timmis</i>
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	21	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sat	22	9.30am	Circuit Stewards Day at Stoneleigh
Sun	23	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Tony Loft
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	25	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	26	7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>Annual General Meeting</i>
Sun	30	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Rev Stuart Thomas

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

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

Happy Birthday

and especially to:



Seleso Sepanya on 3rd May

Lesedi Sepanya on 17th May

James Smith on 18th May

Alex Pallister on 19th May

Sherie Nyota on 24th May

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THE IMPORTANCE OF SPELLING ?

Cduuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulaclyt y uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg.

The Phaonmneal pweor of the hmuam mnid. Aoccrdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabridge Uinervtisy, it dseno't mtaetr in waht oerdr the lltteres in a wrod are, the only iproamtnt tihng is taht the frsrit and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae.

The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it whotuit a pboerlm.

Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Azanmig huh? Yaeh and I awlyas tghuhot spleling was ipomorantt!

Andrew Fox (Editor)

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CHRISTIAN AID

Once again this year we will be doing a Sponsored Walk for Christian Aid. 'Circle the City' is a 8km walk around London, visiting interesting churches along the way. The walk will take place on Sunday 16th May and all are welcome. For more details please speak to Tony Loft.

DRAKE HOUSE CLUB

Run by the Wimbledon Guild

A special May Programme being held at Drake House, which is open to everyone.

6th May - **Janet Broadbent** - Bowel Screening Programme

Men and women between the ages of 60 and 69 are invited to take part in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme.

13th May - **Alan Hancock** - Wimbledon at War 1939-1945

Alan describes the history of the bombings in Wimbledon during the Second World War.

20th May - **I-Chen Tsai** - Taiwan

Taiwan is the largest island of the Republic of China in East Asia whose rapid economic growth has become known as one of the 'Four Asian Tigers'

27th May - **Derek Little** - Songs and humour

The Little Troubadour returns - an afternoon of songs and humour with Derek Little.

Every Thursday in Drake House,
44 St George's Road, Wimbledon.

2.00 - 3.30pm

£2.50 entrance fee includes refreshments and a raffle.

For more information contact Helen Marti on 020 8946 0735

Items for the **June Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox,
(email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 22nd May** at the latest