

MINISTER'S LETTER



As Paul is away on a Sabbatical, a number of our Leadership Team have offered to write in Paul's place for the Newsletter. This month's contributor is Jane Smith.

I have been thinking about the importance of belonging to a group. It might be a family group, being part of a club or society, a sports team or even being accepted as a friend on Facebook.

Now, in understanding this, I could dazzle you with science and talk about Maslow's Hierarchy of needs and how he rated the need for belonging to be one of the basic needs along with food and shelter. I could carry on by looking at various theories of evolution identifying that had we not formed and lived in groups we might not have survived as a species. Then there are the hundreds of management theories on teams including Belbin's team roles, looking at the contribution of members in teams, but I won't bore you with that. What interests me is the psychological aspects of being in groups and how it makes us feel. Belonging to a group can boost your self esteem; it can give you feelings of being valued, wanted and being loved.

I am fortunate and blessed to belong to a number of groups, my beautiful family, my work colleagues, to name a few, but the group that I wanted to focus on is my house group and in turn my belonging to God which is something even greater.

As Methodists we are encouraged to help people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care through bible study and meeting for fellowship. John Wesley wrote 'A society is no other than a company of persons having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love that they may help each other to work out their salvation'.

As a relatively new Christian my housegroup provides me with a great deal of support, strength and comfort.

At the moment our group is undertaking You've Got Time. This is taken from the Bible Society Website and allows you to listen to the whole of the New Testament in 40 days. Our group opted for a more leisurely look at the new testament and have not done it in 40 days! The intention behind the series is to make the Bible available in a format that is truly accessible. The members of our group listen to the sessions on the way to work or at home and some have opted for a dual approach of listening and reading the bible at the same time.

Our group meets every other week and each session is lead and facilitated by one of the group who has spent time preparing some thought provoking questions and a little bit of context to the books and the writers. We then spend a brilliant evening together (often laughing) while helping and encouraging each other in our understanding. As a fellow housegroup member put it "it's a safe environment to talk about themes and issues that come up when we share the bible....it's always a lot of fun, rewarding and I always feel closer to Jesus when we have met together".

Now I know I said I wouldn't bore you with Belbin, but actually his ideas are quite key. His work looks at relationships and behaviours in teams and how they contribute to the success of the group. Hang on to that thought for just a second.

One of our housegroup sessions looked at the Book of Romans and how God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well and gave us seven ways where we as Christians can contribute to the body of the Church by: preaching, serving, teaching, stimulating or encouraging the faith of others, giving, leadership and sympathy.

While we all struggled in our group to identify our own gifts we were easily able to identify each others gifts. Have you thought recently about your gifts and how they can contribute to the body of the Church? Perhaps this would be more easily done in fellowship with others?

I put the success of our housegroup as being the valuable contribution, love, support and encouragement of its members and the shared goal of

developing a deeper faith which in turn strengthens my belonging to God.

The housegroups at Martin Way always welcome new members. No previous experience required and full training will be given. Apply within and you too might find that it could enrich your relationship with God and of course your sense of belonging!

Jane Smith

PS. If you are really interested in Belbin, let me know and you can borrow my very exciting Management Development books!

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A NOTE FOR YOUR DIARY

Our annual General Church Meeting will take place after the morning service on Sunday, 26th June at 12.30pm. You are encouraged to come and have your say in the running of your church. More details soon.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WALKERS

Well done to Abby and friends for completing the London MoonWalk and raising over £945. Also to Tony, Maralyn, Mike and Lesley for completing the Christian Aid sponsor walk and raising over £400.

If you sponsored any of them and still have to pass money on to them, please make sure you get all sponsorship money to them as soon as possible



THE PRAYER FOR LONDON COLLECTIVE



Our meetings go under the name of [the prayer for london collective] – and we pray for London. To really be serious about praying for London, we believe you've got to actually stand in the city. Read Ezekiel 22:23-31 (especially v.30) to see what we mean. To find what we stand for you can visit the [7p] section at the website www.tpflc.org.uk, which sets out what we're about in 7 handy points beginning with P for Prayer.

Our next meeting is on Wed 15 June, 7pm – 9pm at St Margaret Pattens Church, on Eastcheap in the City of London (just 5 mins walk from Monument). We will be praying for revival in the Cities of London and Westminster.

Also, we are doing some prayer events during Pentecost Festival. These are free evening events where we walk around historic parts of London, see the sights, learn the history of places, and then pray for the people or issues which are current to them.

Three walks that focus on the unique history and character of different locations within central London. Each walk takes in the famous sights of the area, explains the history from ancient origins to present day, and gives guided opportunities to pray into current strategic spiritual issues.

Pentecost 2011 – Tourist Walk Stream: The Prayers' Guide To London

Tuesday 7 June - City of London

Start: 7pm @ London Bridge (on the north east side of the bridge)

End: 9.30pm @ St Paul's Cathedral

A trip through the historic core of London. Travel back in time to Roman Londinium, Anglo-Saxon Lundenburgh, medieval and early modern London, right up to the modern, global financial centre that is the 21st century Square Mile. Sights include Tower Bridge, the Bank of England, Guildhall, the Stock Exchange and St Paul's Cathedral.

Wednesday 8 June - City of Westminster

Start: 7pm @ Westminster Abbey (outside the front west doors)

End: 9.30pm @ Buckingham Palace

A walk through the royal and holy city of Westminster, exploring the history of the English monarchy, the growth of the Westminster system of government, and an opportunity to pray for the current Prime Minister, Cabinet and batch of MPs. Sights include Westminster Abbey, Big Ben, Downing Street, St James' Park, Trafalgar Square and Buckingham Palace.

Thursday 9 June - Legal London

Start: 7pm @ Temple tube station

End: 9pm @ St Paul's Cathedral

An exploration of the often hidden world of legal London. Discover the barristers' and solicitors' quarters, and learn how the English judicial system grew to become a model for the rest of the world. Sights include Royal Courts of Justice, Middle Temple, St Bride's Church and St Paul's Cathedral.

Pentecost 2011 Festival Feel – Saturday 11 June: The Prayers' Guide to London

Royal & Political London

Time: 9.30am – 11.30am

Start venue: Methodist Central Hall

Take a trip through 1000 years of English history, through the current heart of British government, and discover the unique role the church has played in our nation's development. Sights include Big Ben, Houses of Parliament, Downing St, Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey and Trafalgar Square.

If you want any more information about The Prayer for London Collective or any of the walks please contact me on 020 8781 1730 or check out the website at www.tpflc.org.uk

Mark Williamson

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Heavenly Father, Help me to remember that the car driver who so annoyingly cut across me in last night's traffic may be a single mother who had worked nine hours that day and was rushing home to cook dinner, help her son with his homework, get the washing done and spend a few precious moments with her family.



Help me to remember that the unshaven young man with long hair and horrible tattoos, who bumped into me during the rush hour and didn't even bother to apologise, may be a student worried about his final exams and fearful that he may not achieve the grades he needs to get to college and therefore will not fulfil his ambitions.

Remind me, Lord, that the creepy looking 'down and out', begging for money in the same spot every day, whom I think ought to have a job, really is a slave to addictions that I can only imagine in my nightmares.

Help me to remember that the old couple walking so painfully slowly through the aisles of the shop and thereby blocking the progress of those of us who want to get the shopping finished are savouring this moment, knowing that, based on the biopsy report that the Wife received from the doctor yesterday, this may be one of the last times that they will go shopping together.

So. Heavenly Father, remind me each day that, of all the gifts you give us, the greatest of these is love. It is not enough to share that love only with those I hold dear. Help me to open my heart not just to those who are close to me, but to everybody. Let me be slow to judge and quick to forgive, to show patience and to share my love

*Joyce Lee
St. Just Methodist Circuit, Cornwall*

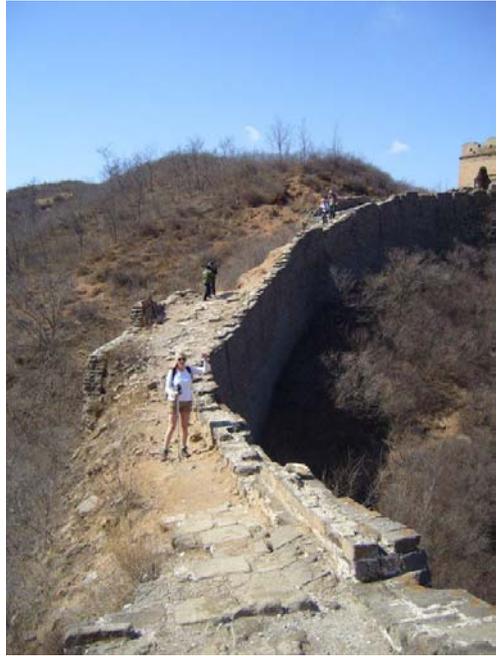
THE GREAT WALL DISCOVERY, CHINA

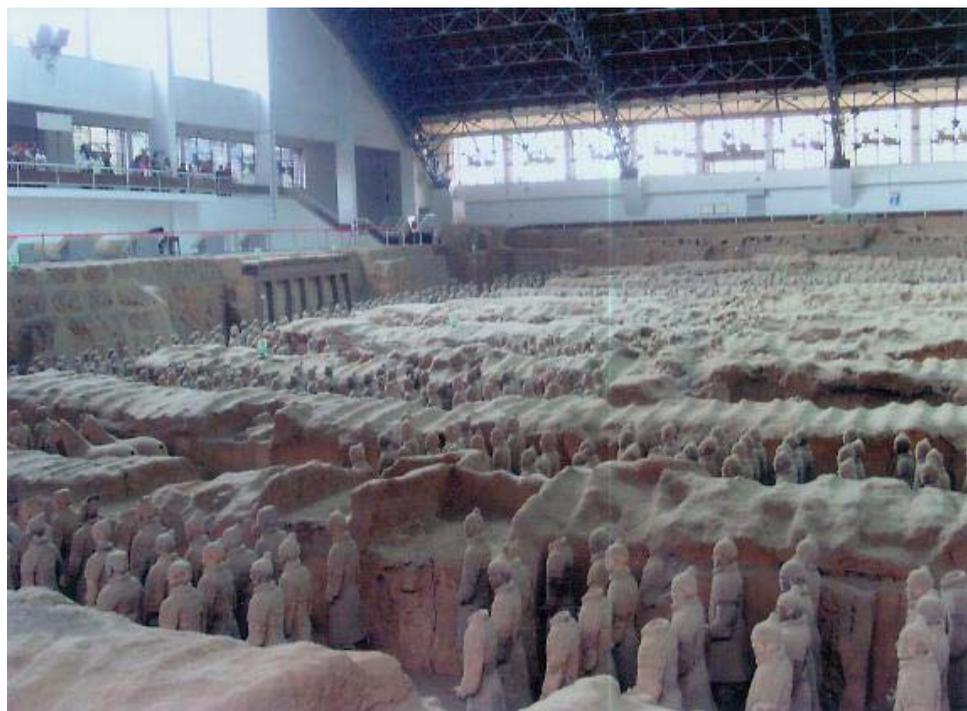


Two years ago after watching ‘Comic Relief’ when some celebrities climbed Kilimanjaro I and three friends decided we wanted to do something similar for a charity. After looking at various challenges we chose the ‘Great Wall Discovery, China’ We each had a charity to support and had to raise £3000 each. Our charities were ‘British Heart foundation,’ ‘Eve Appeal,’ ‘Alzheimer’s,’ and my charity ‘Shooting Star Children’s hospice.’ Last year 27th March 2010 myself, Cheryl, Jo and Liz flew out from Heathrow.

Andrew (our newsletter editor) has since then asked me to write something about my trip for the newsletter, (He has been waiting and waiting!) Derek Heaton asked me at the end of last year to talk to the ‘Men’s supper club’ in May (this year) about the trip. Because of that Andrew again asked for a shorter version together with photos of our experience. - So here we go!







The Great Wall was originally constructed to protect China from the invasion by the Mongols and other northern people. It consists of Beacon tower's, fortresses, castles, gates, fortified towns and barracks. It would take you over a year to travel its entire length.

We went out in the Spring season, some of the day's were cold, which you will see in the photo's.

Our trekking challenge started in Jinshanling with a vigorous trek that loops along the mountains either side of the Gubeikou Gateway. Each day we trekked approximately 12kms along the stony path, twisting and winding its way along the mountains, inter-spread with crumbling watchtowers.

The construction of the wall cost great human loss, the pressure of the work, resulted in untold number of deaths. The Great Wall has been called, 'The world's largest cemetery' There is a legend of a young wife of a forced labourer on the wall, who went to the wall to bring her husband winter clothes but arrived to find he had already died from the cold. Her tears caused the wall to open, revealing the bones of thousands of workers who had died there. She reburied them, and then killed herself.

Gubeikou was the site of incessant warfare and was heavily guarded by the armies of various dynasties from 7th-13th century. Nowadays, the main castle no longer exists and much of the wall has collapsed. This was very steep and narrow to climb in places. Our last day on the wall was on the reconstructed section of the 'Mutianya Great Wall' this is where visiting heads of state are usually brought. This is where we had a steep ascent up the 'Heavenly stairway' to a high viewing platform, probably too was the hardest ascent we had all week but very rewarding, you could look at the vast and beautiful mountain ranges. Your imagination would take you back several centuries to when the wall was the frontline defence of Imperial China. Over the five days we had trekked a total of about 63km.

On completion of our challenge we went back to Beijing to explore some of the many attractions of China's capital city: the Forbidden

City, the Temple of Heaven and the Lama Temple.

The four of us paid for ourselves for the optional 'Xian extension' Xian once the largest city in the world and capital for 11 dynasties is now a favourite destination for travellers to China, due to the 1974 discovery of 6000 life-sized terracotta soldiers, warriors, and horses which were created over 2200yrs ago to guard the tomb of the first emperor in China's history Qin Shihuang.

We stayed one night at Xian, taken back to Beijing to depart the following morning back home. The whole experience was just incredible and well worth it, and I had raised £3,823.32 for the hospice.

Anne Conquest

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NEED WASHING?

A little girl had been shopping with her Mum in a well know Superstore. She must have been 6 years old, this beautiful red haired, freckle faced image of innocence.



It was pouring outside. The kind of rain that gushes over the top of rain gutters, so much in a hurry to hit the earth it has no time to flow down the spout.. We all stood there, under the awning, just inside the door of the Superstore.

We waited, some patiently, others irritated because nature messed up their hurried day. I am always mesmerized by rainfall. I got lost in the sound and sight of the heavens washing away the dirt and dust of the world. Memories of running, splashing so carefree as a child came pouring in as a welcome reprieve from the worries of my day.

Her little voice was so sweet as it broke the hypnotic trance we were all caught in, 'Mum let's run through the rain,' she said.

'What?' Mum asked.

'Let's run through the rain!' She repeated.

'No, honey. We'll wait until it slows down a bit,' Mum replied.

This young child waited a minute and repeated: 'Mum, let's run through the rain..'

'We'll get soaked if we do,' Mum said.

'No, we won't, Mum. That's not what you said this morning,' the young girl said as she tugged at her Mum's arm.

'This morning? When did I say we could run through the rain and not get wet?'

'Don't you remember? When you were talking to Daddy about his cancer, you said, ' If God can get us through this, He can get us through anything! '

The entire crowd stopped dead silent.. I swear you couldn't hear anything but the rain.. We all stood silently. No one left. Mum paused and thought for a moment about what she would say. Now some would laugh it off and scold her for being silly. Some might even ignore what was said. But this was a moment of affirmation in a young child's life. A time when innocent trust can be nurtured so that it will bloom into faith.

'Honey, you are absolutely right. Let's run through the rain. If GOD let's us get wet, well maybe we just need washing,' Mum said. Then off they ran. We all stood watching, smiling and laughing as they darted past the cars and yes, through the puddles. They got soaked.

They were followed by a few who screamed and laughed like children all the way to their cars. And yes, I did. I ran. I got wet. I needed washing.

Circumstances or people can take away your material possessions, they can take away your money, and they can take away your health. But no one can ever take away your precious memories...So, don't forget to make time and take the opportunities to make memories everyday. To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven.

I HOPE YOU STILL TAKE THE TIME TO RUN THROUGH THE RAIN.

CHURCH DIARY



Fri	3	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	5	10.30 am	All Age Worship led by Rev Paul Timmis with the Baptism of of Elizabeth Rose, daughter of Yvonne & Simon Turnbull
Tue	7	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.00 pm	Circuit Meeting at Worcester Park
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	8	7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>Doris Bedborough</i> - Flowers
Sun	12	10.30 am	Morning Service led by David Eagle
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	14	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Leadership Meeting
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	17	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	19	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mark Williamson
Tue	21	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Summer BBQ</i> - with Midways
Weds	22	7.45 pm	Midways Group – <i>Fish & Chip Supper</i>
Sun	26	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
		12.30pm	Church General Meeting
Tue	28	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer

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 this month a very



Happy Birthday

and especially to:

Simon Ward on 3rd June

and

Alice Day on 27th June

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PUZZLE CORNER

Answers from last month

Answers to the ship shaped crossword puzzle in May that hopefully did not leave you marooned!



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SCAM E-mail warning

A scam email is being sent to many in the Methodist Church in Britain. The email claims to come from Bishop I Paul of the Pakistan Methodist Church and contains a link to a professional-looking website.

Steve Pearce, World Church partnership coordinator for Asia and the Pacific, has confirmed that it is a fake. The Methodist Church in Pakistan became part of the United Church of Pakistan in 1970. Whoever is sending this email is probably trying to make a claim on some of the assets of the United Church - a common scam.

Please do not respond to it and ensure that others are aware it is a scam.

Joyce Plant

GREEN CHURCHES IN MERTON

The Green Team at St Mary's, Wimbledon is hoping to make contact with any "green" contacts in local churches. We have set a date for an open meeting to share experience of raising awareness of green issues within churches, and so see whether there are possible avenues for co-operation or continuing contacts. This meeting will be at 7.30pm in Garden Hall on St Mary's Road on Monday 19th September 2011.

One of our members, Will Cutler, will give a short talk about his work at the Department of Energy and Climate Change, and we plan to have plenty of time for discussion of matters of mutual interest. And of course refreshments.

In 2012, building on our "Low Carbon Sundays" initiative, St Mary's is planning to be part of Ride and Stride. This event happens on the second Saturday of September every year. People from across the country take part riding or walking between churches to raise money for the restoration and maintenance of churches and chapels. They have a really memorable and enjoyable time visiting different places of worship, sharing fellowship and being treated to biscuits and refreshments along the way. We are hoping some churches within easy cycling or walking distance will also take part. Funds raised can be directed locally. This could be one likely topic. For more information about Ride and Stride visit the website at www.rideandstrideuk.org

If your church would like attend, or receive details of what transpires, please let me know.

Mary Ann Turnbull

St Mary's Wimbledon

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