

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear friends,

This time last year I was sitting on a train, somewhere between Denver and Washington DC, my head full of dreams, having journeyed through the latter stages of Lent and into Holy Week and Easter in Denver, Colorado with the *House for All Sinners and Saints* and its Lutheran pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber.



In its own words, and as some of you may remember, *House for All Sinners and Saints* is "a group of folks figuring out how to be a liturgical, Christo-centric, social justice oriented, queer inclusive, incarnational, contemplative, irreverent, ancient-future church with a progressive but deeply rooted theological imagination."

Some of you may well have heard me talk about the story behind the emergence of this wonderful community but, put simply, it (in part) began with Nadia and a handful or so of her friends, gathering regularly around a table for food, conversation and prayer. Having brainstormed the 'traits' of people like themselves they then began to ask what the church would look like if these traits were taken into account.

Of course they hoped that others would join them along the way - they weren't wanting to create an exclusive club or a secret society - but, and importantly, neither were they seeking to target a population (people "out there" that they needed to reach) by asking, "What is it *they* want"? In a sense, they were asking, "What is it that *we* want?" "What do we yearn for the church to be and do?"

What emerged was a deeply creative, liturgical, outward-looking and authentic worshipping community, most definitely rooted in the traditions of the church and yet at the same time fresh enough, different enough, inclusive enough to draw others to it. Beyond that, it is a community open to change - recognising, as it does (and to quote Nadia) that 'with each new person who joins us, "we" are changed.'

One of the problems that the Church has today is, I believe, a lack of imagination. Another is a lack of confidence. Given these problems

it's perhaps unsurprising then that when something is seen to be successful in one place, we rush to "bottle" it, that it can be taken and used elsewhere. But what "works" in one context isn't necessarily going to be what another context demands or needs.

Not for one moment do I believe that we need to replicate what *House for All Sinners and Saints* is or does, but as we approach our General Church Meeting, it would surely do us no harm to be open to change and to engage with such questions as "What is it that *we* want?" and "What do *we* yearn for the church to be and do?" that we might then emerge with a head full of dreams that God can both transform and use.

With every blessing

Paul

————— < 0 > —————

Christmas Shoebox Appeal



We know this is early but those of you who knit and have some free time between now and early November Operation Christmas Child needs your help!

If there are any keen knitters out there please have a look at the website at www.operationchristmaschild.org.uk/knitting-patterns, where patterns can be downloaded. These include a Purse, a Bag, Hats, Wrist Warmers, Finger Puppets and other items as well. For those who do not have access to the internet we will be featuring a knitting pattern in the Newsletter each month.

The clowns were so popular last winter and playing with a glove puppet has been found to be very therapeutic for a child suffering from trauma or isolation – the puppet becomes a little friend to talk to. So our first pattern are the clowns, please have a go.

Thank you Platform 10 ³/₄

Operation Christmas Child

Knitted Clown Hand Puppets

Pattern

You will need: Oddments of double knitting wool, including white and colour suitable for hair and 1 pair size 8 (4mm) needles.

Cast on 44 stitches work 6 rows in rib.

Change colour and work 24 rows in stocking stitch in various striped wool.

Next row: Change colour wool and cast on 10 stitches. Knit back 32 altogether, turn leaving remaining 22 stitches on a spare needle, cast on 10 sts. K.4 P34 K4

Continue for a further 6 rows remembering to knit the first and last 4 stitches on purl rows.

Cast off 12 sts. Knit to end of row.

Cast off 12sts. Purl to end of row.

Slip these stitches onto spare needle, and break off wool.

Rejoin wool to 22 sts on first spare needle, and work to match.

On last row purl across the stitches left on the second needle giving total of 36

Join on white wool for the face and K 18 sts. Join on colour for hair and K further 18 sts.

(Taking care to twist two yarns together at join.)

Work 10 more rows in stocking stitch twisting yarns each time to avoid a hole.

Join on first colour for hat

Work 2rows garter stitch

Next Row S.1.K.1. p.s.s.o. K14 K2 tog. S.1.K.1.p.s.s.o. K14 K2 tog. Knit to end

Next Row Purl.

Repeat these last two rows until 2 sts remain. (The middle number of K's will decrease each time.)

Cast off.

Embroider facial details on white piece of knitting.

Sew up.

(Your imagination could come up with many variations – e.g. Father Christmas)



Monsieur de Coubertin's Magnificent Opymlie Feat!



I was reminded the other day that there were only 127 days to the start of the London 2012 Olympics. Only 127 and even less by the time you read this! I am already feeling a bit of Olympic overload, so was Riding Lights' Monsieur de Coubertin's Opymlie Feat, a new comedy about the founding of the modern Olympics, going to tip me over the edge?

With a cast of three playing more parts and European accents than I actually managed to count, Riding Lights must take Gold for packing non-stop humour and fast-paced historic and cultural detail into a first-class

performance at Christchurch with St Philip, Worcester Park on Saturday 21st April.

The comedy charts the founding of the modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896 thanks to the vision of Baron Pierre de Coubertin. He wants to re-invigorate the world with the values the ancient games symbolised: peace and civilisation, arts, religion and philosophy.

Journeying through M. de Coubertin's life from his birth in Paris France, via Rugby School and Thomas Hughes's novel Tom Brown's School Days, to Athens in Greece, this comedy draws its endless humour in a most intelligent way. The media influence of sport; the cultural and political differences of European countries; the economic crisis faced by many countries, especially Greece; and the ridiculous bureaucracy of the Olympic Committee all become the subject of many subtle and not-so-subtle jokes. The audience clearly enjoyed it all and so did I.

This comedy does, however, manage to keep its feet on serious ground

as it recalls some of the more difficult times Monsieur de Coubertin encountered. Not everyone supported his vision or shared his values but through the determination and persistence he, like many of the characters woven into the performance, triumphed over adversity. The stage set is contemporary and in keeping with the comedy's desire to strip the story of the modern Olympics (or should that be Opymlics?) back to its origins.

Packed full of really interesting facts and figures and amazing stories of human achievement, Riding Lights' Monsieur de Coubertin's Opymlic Feat renewed my faith in the real aims of the modern Olympics. I am actually looking forward to London 2012 now.

Paul Timmis

————— < 0 > —————

According to legend, the ancient Olympic Games were founded by Heracles (the Roman Hercules), a son of Zeus. The first Olympics were held in 776 BC and continued to be played every four years for nearly 1200 years. In 393AD, the Roman emperor Theodosius I, a Christian, abolished the Games because of their pagan influences. Approximately 1500 years later, the young Frenchmen, Pierre de Coubertin began their revival and the first modern day Olympics were held in Athens in 1896.

————— < 0 > —————

On 18th April, 100 days before the opening of London 2012, Lord Coe planted an oak tree at Kew Gardens, one of 40 celebrating the UK's role in the birth of the modern Olympics. If this were not reason enough to engage with the story of this sporting event, the trees were grown from acorns collected from a tree in Much Wenlock, planted there in honour of one Baron Pierre de Coubertin, considered the founder of the modern games.

As luck would have it, or rather as the result of a lot of hard work and commitment, Riding Lights Theatre Company were in the neighbourhood to do just that! Packing non-stop humour and fast-paced

historic and cultural detail into a first-class performance, *Monsieur de Coubertin's Magnificent Opymlie Feat!* was a comedy charting the founding of the modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896 and it was being performed on 21st April 'on our doorstep'. It's not often that quality, professional theatre comes to Worcester Park and here we had it ten-fold.

Frequently characterised by quirky satire, *Riding Lights'* new comedy remained true to form, packing in interesting facts and figures along with amazing stories of human achievement and endless humour.



Using magical projection, clever tricks, a panoply of accents, hats and moustaches, physical exertion and industrial strength zips, the audience was given a taster of Olympic events past and future, from fencing and weight lifting to synchronised swimming, shooting and tennis, with humour and pathos in equal measure, and culminating, oh so topically, with the marathon and the moving tale of the first woman known to have run the distance, Stamata Revithi, a name lost in the dust of history, whose struggle to get women officially recognised as race participants was finally honoured, unbelievably, in 1984.

Monsieur de Coubertin was bursting to share his gleaming vision for the new Games: he wanted everyone to join in, he wanted peace and friendship to rule the day, he wanted to re-invigorate all in body, mind and spirit. Not everyone supported his vision or shared his values but through determination and persistence he, like many of the characters woven into the performance, triumphed over adversity. *Monsieur de Coubertin's Magnificent Opymlie Feat!*, aside from being glorious

fun and games, exists to renew our faith in the real aims of the modern Olympics. If you were unsuccessful obtaining tickets in the first round, please do try again. You won't be disappointed.

Tour dates in and around London during May:

Fri 11	ESHER, SURREY
Sat 12	UPMINSTER
Mon 14	MARLOW
Tue 15	ONGAR, ESSEX
Wed 16	BLACKHEATH, LONDON
Sat 19	CLAPHAM
Mon 21	HIGHBURY, LONDON
Tue 22	WATFORD

Tickets are available from the Box Office at 01904 655317 or their website at www.ridinglights.org, where they also have a video showing how the idea came about.

Rebecca Timmis

————— < 0 > —————



The Olympic Rings at Kew.

Staff took five days to plant up to 20,000 pansies, violas and apple mint which make up the rings spanning 50m (164ft).



I would like to thank everyone who has been involved with any of our Messy Church afternoons. So far we have enjoyed the Theme of 'One Big Family', 'One Big Family at Christmas' and 'New Life for one Big Family'. We have also enjoyed a 'Breakfast with Friends' one Sunday morning. All these events have been great fun with craft, art, food and games involved. These events would

not work if we didn't have the backing of our Church and the army of volunteers at each event. None of it could have happened without each and every one of you and we thank you.

If you haven't been able to join us yet at any of these events - do not despair as I am sure there will be more to come. I also wanted to say that these events are not just for our Children and Young at heart – they are about our Church coming together whatever age and sharing our creativeness, friendliness and time with our community. They are about reaching out to all and sharing the love of God with everyone around us.

Have a look at some great things we created at 'New Life with one Big Family' and see it's not just the Children enjoying the arts and Crafts!

Donkey Headdress



Sand Play



Colouring & Puzzles



Making Purses



Easter Gardens



The next Messy Church is yet to be organised but please keep an eye out for an advertisement and think about either offering a helping hand, joining in for the afternoon and maybe even inviting a friend or neighbour to come along with you and bring our community together.

Our next big event will be our May Fair on Saturday 19th May from 11am till 3pm which is going to be a great event to celebrate The Queen's Jubilee. Hope to see you there.



Abby Herring



About eleven of us were up early on Easter Sunday morning this year to meet at 6.30am on Cannon Hill Common for the Easter Day Sunrise Service. Unfortunately due to rain we were forced to move indoors and met in Martin Way Methodist Church. After greeting each other with 'Happy Ester, Christ has Risen!!', we sat around a small table set for Communion in the area used for the band and young children and parents in the church during a service.

This year we were given an order of service sheet, beautifully designed and arranged by Keith Mitchell, Minister of Merton Park Baptist Church, who led the Service this year.

The Bible readings were taken from Mark ch16, vs1-6 (NIV) and Philippians ch3, vs7-10 (NIV). Between the hymns and songs of Worship, Praise, Joy and Thanks there was prayer, with time for others to share in this way.

A photograph of a sunset over a beach. The sky is filled with vibrant colors of orange, red, and yellow, with long, thin clouds catching the light. The beach is visible in the foreground, and the ocean is in the distance.

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.
He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;
and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.
Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26

Keith then spoke on 'The Power of Christ's Resurrection', where he referred to the cross, for without the cross and Jesus' death there could be no resurrection and he highlighted how the words of the chorus of 'Oh, to see the Dawn' explain this truth so well.

*This, the pow'r of the cross:
Christ became sin for us;
Took the blame, bore the wrath -
We stand forgiven at the cross.*

He then continued speaking of the power of the resurrection, of the forgiveness of sin and of eternal life, our hope for all who trust in Jesus as Saviour and Lord. We then had the opportunity to share what the resurrection meant to each of us; one said 'the risen Jesus is with me in the ups and downs of life' and another mentioned that it was 'a time for a new start, new beginning' for them.

The message concluded with sharing the Communion and serving one another, followed by two inspirational hymns - 'Oh, to see the Dawn' and 'Thine be the Glory, Risen, conquering Son'. Unexpectedly, Keith then prayed for those in the gathering who were suffering ill-health and laid on hands and prayed, a lovely and powerful moment for us all to share in.

The service finished with the Grace, before we all moved into the Coffee Lounge for breakfast that was beautifully prepared and served by Anne, Fern and Jack.

A big thank you to them for a wonderful breakfast and especially to Keith for such a truly blessed Service and time of fellowship. It was a wonderful way to start such a day!!

Moira Bailey

We hold these wonderful Easter Sunrise Services every year, so why not join us next time and share in the experience first hand?

The Jubilee May Fair and May Fair Queen



On 19th May from 11am to 3pm, we are having a May Fair at Martin Way Methodist Church. During the Fair we will be crowning a May Queen.

We will draw the name of the Queen on 6th May and we will contact the winner then. The other girls who entered will be her attendants on the day. We would like all the girls to wear pretty dresses and to have a flower hair clip or hair band. All of the girls will be provided with posies to hold for the procession and the Queen will

be crowned at about 12.30pm.

Good luck girls and please all of you come along to support them and enjoy the fair.

————— < 0 > —————

An advertisement for Christian Aid Week. The background is a dark, patterned wallpaper. On the right side, there is a close-up photograph of a young girl with braided hair, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. On the left side, there is a red arrow-shaped graphic pointing to the right. Inside the arrow, the text "christian aid week" is written in white, with "christian" in a smaller font, "aid" in a large, bold font, and "week" in a smaller font below it. Below the arrow, the text "13 - 19 May 2012" and "LET'S GIVE THE TOOLS" is written in white. At the bottom, the text "Visit www.caweek.org to find out more and give a donation" is written in white.

**christian
aid
week**

13 - 19 May 2012
LET'S GIVE THE TOOLS

Visit www.caweek.org
to find out more and give a donation



PUZZLE CORNER

Bible Trees

There are a great number of different trees mentioned in the Bible, how many can you name?

Answers next month.

1. What kind of tree did Zacchaeus climb to see Jesus?
2. What trees gave the name to the hill overlooking Jerusalem?
3. Absalom was caught by the hair in this tree.
4. Under what tree did Elijah sit?
5. The ark was made of this wood.
6. Christ caused this tree to wither away.
7. The exiled Jews hung their harps on these trees.
8. Branches of this tree were carried in a triumphal procession.
9. What tree was in the midst of the Garden of Eden?
10. What is referred to as “Calvary’s tree”?

————— < 0 > —————

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Dear Lord.

So far today I have not gossiped or lost my temper.

I have not been greedy or grumpy, nasty or self-indulgent.

I have not whined, bitched, cursed or eaten any chocolate.

I have not charged anything to my credit card.

However, I am going to get out of bed in a few minutes
and I will need a lot of help after that.

Amen.

CHURCH DIARY



Sun	6	10.30 am	All Age Worship led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	8	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
			<i>Start of Christian Resources Exhibition</i>
Weds	9	7.45 pm	Midways Group - <i>Fish and Chip Supper</i>
Fri	11	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	13	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
		12.30 pm	Church General Meeting
			<i>Start of Christian Aid Week</i>
Tue	15	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Dermot Sweeny - Row Zambezi</i>
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sat	19	3pm-5pm	May Fair
Sun	20	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Tony Loft
			<i>Christian Aid Sponsored Walk - all welcome to join Tony, Maralyn and others</i>
		6.30 pm	Healing Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	22	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	25	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sat	26	9.30am	Circuit Stewards Day at Raynes Park
Sun	27	10.30 am	Café Worship led by Tony Loft
			with Platform 10¾
		3.00 pm	Pentecost Service at John Innes Park
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	29	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
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

————— < 0 > —————

The Church General Meeting

After the service on Sunday 13th May there will be a General Church Meeting. The meeting will start at 12.30pm and the main topic will be “ The flexible worship space”. If you consider Martin Way to be "your church”, then please come along and have your say.

————— < 0 > —————

Donations - A Big Thank You to all

We are pleased to announce that the Good Friday collection for CSW (Christian Solidarity Worldwide) raised over £410.

Also thank you everyone who contributed to food donations for Christian Care in April. It has helped many destitute families in their time of need.

————— < 0 > —————

Midways Group

It is with great sadness we have to announce that this month will be the final meeting of Midways. Thank you to everyone who have supported us or have been our guests and speakers over all these years.



Fix n Chips Day

On Saturday 23rd June we are having a maintenance day, starting at 9am.

The aim of the day is to fix up, paint and generally clean the key areas of the church premises. We are looking for anyone who is willing to volunteer their precious time that day and wield a paintbrush, scraper, screwdriver or even a duster! Not only is there a promise of sandwiches during the day, but there is a Sausage & Chip supper to round off the day - as we all know that this will be hungry work!

If you think you can help, please let me know by either phoning 07847 004668 or send me an email at mwcomms@hotmail.co.uk.

Alternatively there will be a form appearing in the welcome area for you to put your name and details of any particular help you could offer.

Colin Smith

————— < 0 > —————

Ecumenical Service for Pentecost

On Sunday 27th May at 3pm the five churches that belong to the Merton Park Churches Together group plan to hold an open air ecumenical service at the bandstand in John Innes park.

Groups of people will probably walk from their own churches to meet together in a service of Praise and Worship which included songs, prayers, readings and an address.

Keep an eye out for the posters giving more information.



Items for the **June Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox, (email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 20th May** at the latest