

MINISTER'S LETTER

*If you have food in the fridge,
clothes on your back,
a roof overhead and a place to sleep,
you are richer than three out of four people in the
world.*



*If you have money in the bank,
in your wallet, and spare change in a dish somewhere,
you are amongst the top 8% of the world's wealthy.*

*If you woke up this morning, with more health than illness,
you are more blessed than the million who will not survive this week.*

*If you have never experienced the danger of battle,
the loneliness of imprisonment,
the agony of torture or the pangs of starvation –
you are ahead of 500 million people in the world.*

Given that these oft-quoted statistics have now been doing the rounds for over a decade, there is every chance that they are no longer accurate. That said, it would take an exceptionally brave (or even foolish) person to claim that the situation will have improved during this time. With the after-effects of the global financial crisis of 2008 and the Arab Spring of 2011 still being played out today, it would surely be a safer bet to assume that for the majority of the world's population, things will have deteriorated. The increasing numbers of people reliant upon food banks in this country, the recent tragic deaths of hundreds of refugees in the Mediterranean and the deeply concerning rise of Islamic State would, amongst other things, seem to support such an argument.

We do not need statistics to know that our world is clearly in desperate need of God's love and healing, however. The human stories that we encounter on a daily basis are all the evidence we require to know this to be true.

In the days after the first Easter, Jesus' friends would come to understand that they were to carry Jesus' message of love, repentance

and forgiveness into a world desperately in need of such things. During his ministry, Jesus had shown them that following him isn't simply a matter of giving one's assent to a series of beliefs and principles, rather it's a call to live out one's life in the Jesus way - loving one's neighbour and one's enemy alike, embodying his message so that words and actions are as one.

Looking at the world in which we live, who is to say that there is no longer a need for such people, such disciples?

In the face of all the problems we see in this world, it's easy to feel impotent. There are though things we can do. We can seek to be loving, generous people in our daily lives. There are charities we can support and campaign for - locally, nationally and internationally. And we can take seriously the vote that we have in the General Election on May 7th - voting for the party that we feel will best address the injustices so prevalent in our communities, our country and our world.

With every blessing

Paul

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Just a very quick thank you to each and everyone of you for your kind words, thoughts, support, encouragement and donations towards my Charity Challenge to China.



I completed the Trek along parts of the Great wall and returned home last Sunday (12th April) evening - it has taken me the last week to get over the jet lag and tiredness from all the trekking. The whole challenge was amazing, tough in places but I am pleased to achieve it with some amazing memories and new friends!

Thank you again on behalf of The Alexander James Mullins Charity - your support is very much appreciated!!

Abby Herring



**CHRISTIAN
SOLIDARITY
WORLDWIDE**
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

*April Press Releases
from CSW*

Juan and Casto in Mexico

Casto Hernández Hernández, aged 30, and his cousin Juan Placido Hernández Hernández, aged 25, both members of the United Pentecostal Church of Mexico, were imprisoned by village officials in Chichiltepec village, Tlanchinol Municipality, on 12 March. While imprisoned they were put under pressure to renounce their Protestant faith. When they refused to do so after 30 hours, they were released and told they had 18 hours to leave the community.

Since then, Juan Placido has been allowed to return to the village, but Casto has not and is living in the city of Huejutla los Reyes.

CSW, along with partners from the Mexican religious freedom organisation Impulso 18, met with the victims and their pastor on a recent visit to Hidalgo State. They told CSW that 15 other Protestants remain in the village but had been forced to sign documents renouncing their faith. Since the events in March, Pastor Gregorio Reyes Cruz has been prohibited from entering the village to visit them and any non-Catholic religious activities have been banned.

Ethiopian Christians killed by Daesh (Islamic State)

A video released on 19 April purports to show the killing of a group of Ethiopian Christians by Daesh in Libya. Their murders echo the deaths of 21 Egyptian Christians in Libya, on 15 February.

The exact numbers of victims in the latest incident cannot be confirmed. The video of the executions, entitled “Until there came to them clear evidence”, switches between a scene on a beach in eastern Libya, where an estimated 15 men in orange boiler suits are beheaded by masked militants in camouflage, and a scene in a desert area in southern Libya where similarly dressed Daesh members execute a similar number of men in black boiler suits by shooting them in the head. A subtitle refers to both groups of victims as “worshippers of the cross belonging to the hostile Ethiopian church”.

The Ethiopian government, which is still attempting to verify whether the victims were Ethiopian citizens, has nevertheless condemned “the atrocious act” and says that it will assist any of its citizens who wish to leave Libya.

CSW’s Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, “We mourn with the communities in Ethiopia who have lost loved ones in this senseless act and we pray for their families and loved ones. We also pray that the perpetrators of

these atrocities would recognise the sanctity of human life and the damage this and other acts of brutality cause to so many, including to their own humanity.”

Noman Masih in Pakistan

Noman Masih was in a market in Gulshan Ravi, Lahore on 10 April, when he got into a conversation with two men on a motorbike. They assaulted him and threw petrol and set him on fire when they found out that he was Christian. He sustained burns to 55 percent of his body and died on 15 April.

Mervyn Thomas said, “We extend our heartfelt condolences to Noman Masih’s family and reiterate our call for the perpetrators of this deplorable attack to be apprehended. A culture of impunity must end if religious minorities are to be guaranteed their rights as citizens in Pakistan.”

Nigeria

Our Africa Advocacy Officer Sarah Smith visited Nigeria last autumn, and we asked her to tell us about the people she met.

“I met Abraham last October, and what he told me was heartbreaking. But it also brought home to me how vital your prayers are for Christians under attack in Nigeria.

Abraham is the respected head of a large village on the border of Kaduna and Plateau states. He showed us around and told us about the good relationship he’d had with local members of the Fulani tribe, even employing Fulani youth and protecting them. This is unusual because villages like Abraham’s have regularly been targets for armed Fulani militia, who over the last few years have attacked non-Muslim villages. Abraham, however, was making an effort to build peace – even organising a peace conference with Fulanis.

One day he was informed they did not intend to participate in the conference, and a few days later the youth he employed left the village.

The attack began at 9pm a week later. The Fulanis were armed with AK-47s and shot the villagers as they tried to escape. They burned the church, the store-houses and people’s homes. Every family lost at least one member. Abraham was devastated when I met him, still in shock at the betrayal. The villagers are now scared to return to their farmlands, fearing further attack.”

Nigeria has suffered waves of appalling religious and ethnic violence over the years. Abraham’s story is just one of hundreds.

PLEASE KEEP PRAYING FOR NIGERIA – YOUR PRAYERS ARE EVEN MORE VITAL IN THIS POST-ELECTION PERIOD. YOUR PRAYERS ARE POWERFUL AND EFFECTIVE!



**23RD - 24TH
MAY 2015**



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Martin Way Methodist Church Variety Show 2015

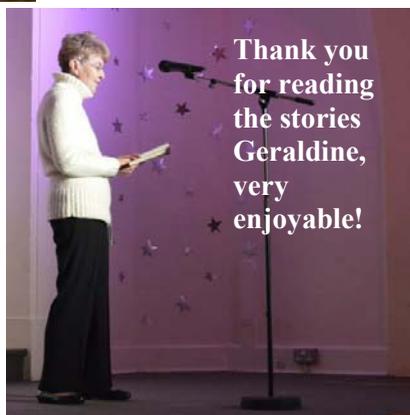


Jack and I can't thank everyone enough for all your support while we did this, we really enjoyed ourselves and we hope you did too!

So, Welcome to a few photos of the memorable Martin Way Methodist Church Variety Show 2015!



Lesley sang well, as she always does!



Thank you for reading the stories Geraldine, very enjoyable!



Andrew is only 15 and played amazingly well on the piano



The clowns made the night! Really put the variety in variety



Cinderella in 5mins , very funny



Rebecca had taught these four a dance routine, and they were amazing! Well done guys



The 'Yes No Game'

Wendy was so confident but failed on the second question!



And the eventual Winner.
Well done Geraldine!



Their debut performance and they all did well, with Rebecca on the piano, Rosie on the Guitar and Phoebe singing



Sheya had a beautiful voice, she sang 'On My Own' from *Les Misérables*

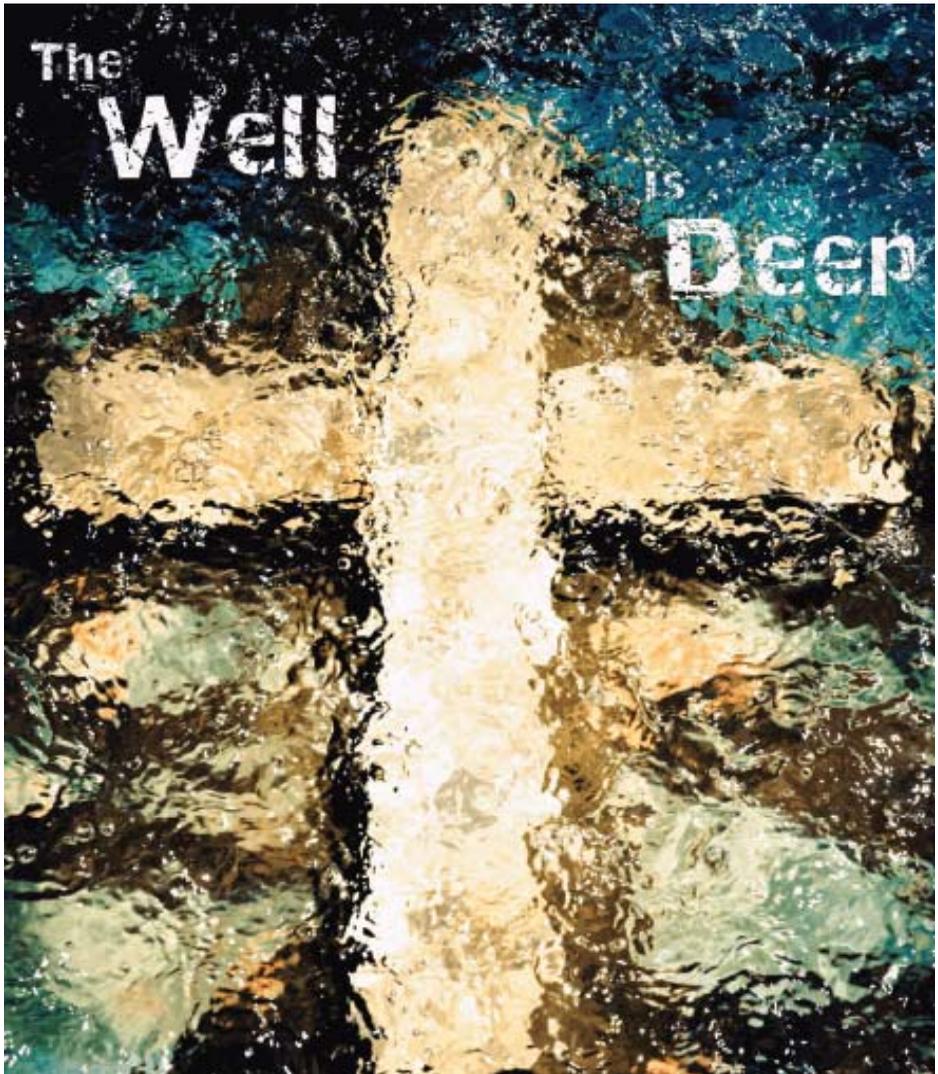


And we mustn't forget about our wonderful audience!!

They even joined in with a little sing song!

Thank you all.

Emily Bacon



Service for Christian Unity

Organised by Churches Together in Merton Park

St John Fisher Church

Preacher: Canon John O'Toole

Sunday 10th May at 4.00 pm

Extreme Beginnings

Taken from: Extreme devotion, the voice of the martyrs from the co-authors of Jesus freaks. Serious followers of Jesus pay a price, and extreme followers often pay the ultimate price. Each story is true.

UNITED STATES: RICHARD AND SABINA WURMBRAND

On a beautiful autumn day in 1967, the couple sat before their old typewriter on the tiny kitchen table in their new home --the United States. It wasn't that long ago that Pastor Richard Wurmbbrand had sat in a cold, dark Romanian prison cell for his work in the underground church. His wife, Sabina, had been sentenced to forced labour in a prison camp.

The couple now pondered the message that God had given them. They wanted to share the trials and triumphs facing persecuted Christians in Communist countries worldwide. The couple had been threatened by the Romanian secret police not to speak against Communism, but the intimidation could not stop them. They were compelled to raise the voice of Christ's suffering body -- a voice that had been overlooked and forgotten by many in the free world.

The words flowed easily onto the pages, and before long they had their first edition of *The Voice of the Martyrs* newsletter. They began with only one hundred dollars and a few hundred names and addresses from Christians who were interested in how they could help.

The vision that was birthed in a solitary prison cell has now grown into a worldwide organisation dedicated to serving the persecuted church. Millions of subsequent *the Voice of the Martyrs* newsletters have been distributed around the globe in more than a dozen languages.

Start somewhere. That's where good ideas in God's service always begin -- somewhere. Serving Christ means it doesn't matter where you start or when or how -- as long as you start. Many keep delaying their dreams instead of beginning somewhere. We tell ourselves we will serve Christ someday: when the kids are grown up and out of the house; when we finally get the bills paid off and are able to tithe. Each time we say that we will start serving Christ after we finish something else, we have missed the point of our calling. What is God calling you to do? Not when is he calling you to do it, what is it he wants done? What are you doing now to begin fulfilling his call?

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders, make the most of every opportunity. (Colossians 4:5)

CHURCH DIARY



Sun	3	10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	5	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	8	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	10		<i>Start of Christian Aid Week</i>
		10.30 am	Morning Service led by Valerie Ashcroft
		4.00 pm	Service for Christian Unity at St John Fisher
Tue	12	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	17	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Gwen Wildman's House Group
			<i>Christian Aid Sponsored Walk</i>
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	19	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.00 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Mike Fuwa</i> - Life and Commerce today
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	22	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	24	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Tony Loft
Tue	26	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	31	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Rev Paul Timmis
		6.30 pm	Healing Service led by Rev Paul Timmis

*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

Elizabeth Turnbull on 22nd May

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Christian Resources Exhibition
Tuesday 19th - Friday 22nd May

This year the CRE is being held in Halls S1-S4 at ExCel in London. This exhibition is ideal for Church leaders, youth and children's workers, in fact anyone involved in leadership who want to discover new and fresh ways to communicate God's unchanging message. No other event provides such a remarkable range of seminars, workshops, theatre and church resources - this event is truly an experience not to be missed.

The exhibition and programme will include:

- A unique exhibition of Christian resources with 300+ exhibitors.
- An extensive range of books, music and resources to buy.
- The latest multimedia equipment & expert advice.
- Over 100 practical and resourcing seminars.
- The best in Christian theatre and music.

To find out more or book tickets visit their website at
www.creonline.co.uk/

Afraid, alone, in pain

Be the answer to Loko's prayer this Christian Aid Week.

Loko's choice in life is simple: 'If I can't collect firewood, my children will die.'

Four times a week, in a remote corner of Ethiopia, Loko Jarso makes a back-breaking eight-hour trip to gather wood to sell. Loko is responsible for a family of eight and struggles to feed them all. Gathering and chopping firewood on her own, up a mountain, is a hard, dangerous job that she dreads, but it is her only source of income. She receives just £1 for her heavy load.



She prays to God as she walks. 'I ask him to change my life and lead us out of this,' she says.

Just £5 could give Loko a loan to start her own business buying and selling tea and coffee, freeing her from her desperate task and allowing her to spend more time caring for her family.

This May, churches the length and breadth of Britain and Ireland will come together to pray, campaign and raise money to improve the lives of people like Loko.

Will you be a part of it?

Pheobe Pallister, Tony Loft and possibly Mike Mortley hope to take part in a sponsored walk on 17th May to support Christian Aid, so please chat with them for more information.

Items for the **June Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox, (email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 24th May** at the latest