

MINISTER'S LETTER



In the days after Easter, it was inevitable that Jesus' followers would spend a great deal of time looking backwards. Having encountered the risen Christ in a garden, along the road, behind well-locked doors, by the water's edge and on a mountain top, they subsequently found themselves looking back to the days before Jesus' death and resurrection with fresh eyes. No doubt burning with questions, they must have re-traced their steps mentally and played out scenes in their minds-eye over and over again. What they discovered was that experiences that had previously left them confused and words that had rendered them bewildered slowly began to make sense in the light of what they now knew to be true. From all of this they emerged with a burning desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others.

In these days after Easter, this is our task too: to pause, think and look back with fresh eyes over all that we've experienced to date. The scope of our reflection shouldn't be limited to the story that we've just read, listened to and entered into once again this Lent, Holy Week and Easter, as important as it is. Rather, it should encompass *all* our experiences to date. For if Christ has risen and truly lives amongst us - and within each and every one of us - then we too will have encountered him in many ways throughout our lives whether we have realised it at the time or not.

When someone has spoken our name with tenderness.

When someone's gentle touch has made us feel alive and given us a renewed sense of hope.

When someone has helped us to see something in a new light.

When the presence of someone has seen our worries and fears melt away.

When someone has lovingly prepared a much-needed meal for us.

When someone has left us gazing into the distance, questioning what just happened but full of wonder.

Who is to say that this was not, somehow, in some way, the risen Christ in our midst?

We're talking glimpses. But such glimpses can be life-changing.

With every blessing

Paul

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**CHRISTIAN
SOLIDARITY
WORLDWIDE**
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

April Press Releases

from CSW

Central African Republic

This Easter it was three years since a violent coup by the Seleka, a rebel coalition, led to the displacement of one million people and sparked ethnic and religious violence across the Republic. Thank God that the country has now elected a new president and is taking its first steps on the long road to peace – Christmas 2015 was the first time since the coup that Christians could celebrate without fear.

Kenya

Easter 2016 was also an anniversary in Kenya, where one year ago the terrorist group al Shabaab carried out a devastating attack on Garissa University on Maundy Thursday, killing 147 people.

Sudan

Please pray for Christian communities in Sudan who are facing high levels of persecution by the government. Please pray for four people in particular:

- Reverend Hassan Abduraheem and Christian activist Talahon Nigosi Kassa Ratta, who were arrested by the security services in December 2015. They are both still in detention, and have not been charged. Mr Ratta's family was allowed to meet with him at Kober Men's prison shortly after his arrest, but they have not been able to see him again. Reverend Abduraheem has not been allowed visitors since his arrest.

- Reverend Kwa Shamal who, after being arrested and released in December 2015, is now required to report daily to security services.
- Reverend Philemon Hassan, minister at the El Izba Baptist Church, who was arrested by the security services on 14 March and released subject to daily reporting conditions, as well as having some of his personal property (including his laptop and mobile) confiscated.
- Please pray for the congregations led by each of these leaders, that God will give them strength and courage as they continue without their pastors.

Pakistan

Please pray for the community of Youhanabad who have just commemorated the one-year anniversary of bomb attacks on two churches. Pray for continued healing, trust and unity among the community, and that the Pakistani government will take appropriate action to find and prosecute those responsible for the attacks.

Bangladesh

Pray for protection of faith leaders in Bangladesh, after a spate of threats to Christian pastors and the killing of a Hindu priest.

Ask God to give comfort and peace to the family of Hossain Ali, who converted to Christianity from Islam in 1999 and was recently killed. Pray that the government would take swift and decisive action to tackle threats by militant and extreme groups, and from Daesh (Islamic State) who have claimed responsibility for this attack.

Burma

Thank God for the success of a recent event on Burma at the UN Human Rights Council, which we organised in partnership with other non-governmental organisations. We're also thankful for the news that one of the new Vice-Presidents of Burma is a Christian – however, some Buddhist nationalists are already calling for protests against him. Please pray for wisdom and protection for Henry Van Thio as he takes up his new office, and that he would be able to work with the other Vice-President, who is a hardline military general.

North Korea

Please pray that North Korea would be held to account for its human rights violations, as recommended by the last report from the Special Rapporteur on human rights in North Korea.

China

Thank God for the wonderful news that Zhang Kai, the Christian lawyer, has been released and is at home with his family. They have not seen each other for almost seven months.

Please also pray for protection for churches in Zhejiang Province, whose crosses are being demolished by the government. Their pastors are in particular need of prayer: two of them in particular, Pastor Gu Yuese and Pastor Li Ghuanzhong, have been detained despite choosing to protest the government's actions peacefully.

Vietnam

Pray for the release of Nguyen Van Dai, a lawyer and human rights activist who was arrested at home on 16 December. In addition, pray for the development of the new draft law on freedom of religion or belief which, in its current form, may restrict religious freedom rather than defend it. Pray that religious groups would be consulted as the law is drafted further, so that it can truly protect all citizens of Vietnam.

Cuba

Please keep praying for Maranatha First Baptist Church. In December last year, we received the great news that the Cuban government had reversed its decision to demolish the church – in fact, they promised the church permits to construct a new, bigger church building.

But the government has yet to produce these permits, despite multiple requests from the pastor, Reverend Amado Ramírez Oliveros. He's worried that this means that the government is going to quietly go back on its promises.

Please pray that this doesn't happen and that Reverend Amado and his congregation receive the promised permits very soon.

The eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love.

Psalm 33:18

Thank you for praying with us so far in 2016. It's already been an eventful year and we've really appreciated knowing that when we gather to pray, you're praying with us.



Rock & Roll - Arthur's 2015 Fastnet Race

*Last year Simon Hardaker - the brother-in law of Keith Heaton (Derek and Mary Heaton's youngest son) took part in The Fastnet Race to raise money for Sail4Cancer. This is his story of the race that he, the team and **Arthur** took part in.*

Final Part

The Fastnet Rock appears out of the gloom, and in daylight, on Wednesday morning. It has to be the only benefit of a slow first 48 hours that we actually see the Rock in daylight. **Galahad Logic** are the first Sailing Logic boat around, followed by **Winston Logic**; we get a few photos of the iconic Rock and each other and then get back to the serious business of racing to catch up with our Sailing Logic competitors. We spend the day and night blasting along over the waves with our favourite Code Zero sail up; exhilarating stuff!



Thursday morning. Radio 2's breakfast show presenter Chris Evans' 9.8 million listeners tune in to hear Sally H join Chris's early morning club wishing **Arthur Logic** a fast sail back to Plymouth in the Fastnet Race, where she expects to welcome us back on shore. Was this the greatest media coverage that the whole race got in terms of audience numbers? On top of this, the Facebook comments and likes seemed to just keep coming as friends and family follow the pictures and video posted

from *Arthur* by **Sue** throughout the race. The Yellow Brick online tracker was a real hit ashore and addictive once people were following our progress online 24/7.

The last 12 hours is intense; we are trimming hard on every wave, every team member taking a turn; the spinnaker sheet is literally humming too and fro on the winch; out as we slow down to keep the power in, then grinding back in again as boat speed increases. The main sail sheet gets a mighty pump, on the front of every wave, to accelerate us down the face and pick up speed. With only hours to go, we are gradually winding *Winston* back in too. Additional rock and roll motivation is supplied, courtesy of Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones at full blast into the cockpit – we're all pumped up now to finish well. It works and we're faster still, creeping ever closer to *Winston* as the minutes tick by. Then as everything is going brilliantly, our spinnaker blows out, tearing right across the top. Thankfully, the tapes down either side of the sail remain intact and we pull the halyard down quickly. In only moments we have the second kite hoisted and are powering along again. We should get a prize for the speed of that change.

As we close the finish line in Plymouth, a 60ft 'Challenge' boat rolls alongside and almost completely blankets our wind! We slow right down until they head up and take their own spinnaker down. *Winston* crosses the finish line just ahead of us, but not far enough. The handicapping system works in our favour, and means that after 4 days, 5 hours, 38 minutes and 54 seconds of offshore racing, covering some 637 miles, there is only five minutes between us; we finish in 39th place in our class, just one place ahead of *Winston*.

Sails come down inside the breakwater at Plymouth, and we motor around to the yacht haven. It's already heaving with the earlier finishers; there are Fastnet flags flying out from every mast; it's really some sight. We tie up alongside *Winston* and *Galahad*, pop the champagne, crack open the tins of beer and begin the family reunions and general celebrations. It's great to be finished. As a team on *Arthur* we have given everything in the cause of boat speed, physically and mentally, particularly in the last 48 hours, but it's all been worth it.

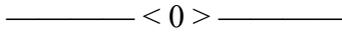


Someone told me when we started this campaign a few months ago, that I'd arrive at the finish line and say "Never again".... You must be joking, right?

Not only did *Arthur Logic* complete the race but I also managed to

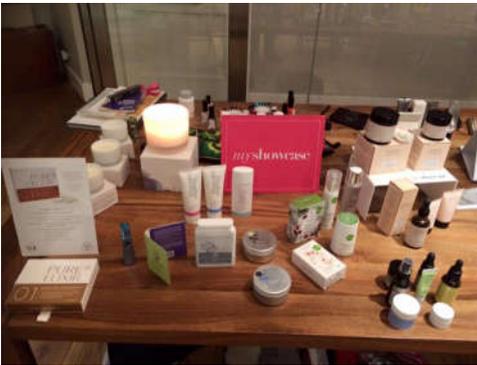
raised over £1,140 for Sail4Cancer. A big thank you to all that donated.

Simon Hardaker, Arthur Logic



Calling all ladies of Martin Way Methodist Church

You are warmly invited to come along to My Showcase Party being held on the 26th April at 7.45pm in the coffee lounge.

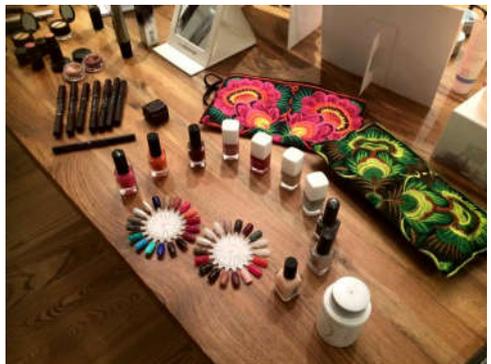
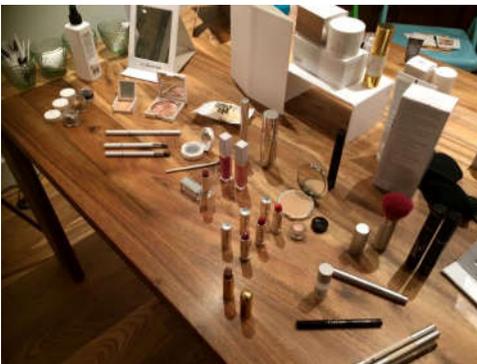


All sorts of make-up, body lotions, perfumes, candles, hair products, skin creams, etc. will be on sale.

All commission made will go to the Flush Fund.

Come along for a girly night of fun and chat.

Sylvia Baxter





Forever Living Products

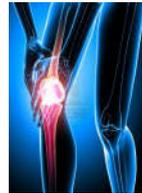
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Extreme obedience

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.

CHINA : A PASTOR AND HIS MOTHER

The pastor had been questioned and beaten often, but today the guard took him to a room to talk. He said, "I'm curious about your beliefs and ask you to tell me the Ten Commandments."

Shocked, the pastor began to share the Commandments. When he got to "Honour your father and mother," the officer interrupted him. "Stop there. You Christians believe that God chose 'Honour your father and mother' as a very important commandment. Please look in the corner." The pastor turned to see an elderly woman chained and bruised beneath a pile of rags. She was the pastor's own mother.

The guard inquired. "Look how much your mother has suffered. If you tell the secrets of the underground church, you and your mother can go free. If she dies from our torture, you will have failed to keep the commandment to honour her, and her blood shall be on your head."

The pastor turned to his mother who was starting to regain consciousness. "Dear Mother, what shall I do?"

Lovingly she replied, "Since you were a small boy, I have taught you to love Christ and his church. Do not betray God. I am ready to die for the holy name."

The pastor looked back at the guard and said with renewed courage. "You were very right, Captain. First of all, a man must obey his mother."

"Why is there so much suffering in the world?" sceptics often ask when they wish to discount Christianity. They cannot reconcile a loving God who permits innocent suffering. In fact, they may try to persuade Christians who undergo sufferings that their trials somehow prove God's plans have gone awry. Is suffering truly part of God's plan? In answer to that question, look at Jesus' life on earth. His suffering on the cross was the heartbeat of God's plan - resulting in our salvation and his glory. When you suffer according to God's plan, you are walking where Jesus walked: to the cross, to the grave, and ultimately - to the skies. Will you trust that God knows what he is doing even in your pain?

But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. (1 Peter 4:13)

CHURCH DIARY



Spring Harvest (28th March to 2nd April)

Sun	3	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Tony Loft and Mike Mortley
Tue	5	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	8	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	10	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Brenda Cannon
Tues	12	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	17	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	19	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.00 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Mike Mortley</i> - The Great American Songbook
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	22	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	24	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Brenda Cannon
Tue	26	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 April a very

Happy Birthday

and especially to:

Celia Johnson on **4th April**
Rosie Randall on **10th April**
Phoebe Pallister on **29th April**

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Some Special Anniversaries for April 2016

1000 years ago:- on 23rd April 1016 Aethelred II (Aethelred the Unready), King of England, died.

400 years ago:- on 23rd April 1616 William Shakespeare died at the age of 52.

125 years ago:- on 1st April 1891 the first London-Paris telephone line was opened to the public. It included an undersea section between Dover and Calais.

100 years ago:- 24th to 29th April 1916 The Easter Uprising, Dublin, took place.

90 years ago:- on 21st April 1926 Queen Elizabeth II was born.

70 years ago:- on 17th April 1946 Syria gained its independence from France.

55 years ago:- on 12th April 1961 aboard *Vostok 3KA-3*, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first man to enter outer space.

50 years ago:- on 3rd April 1966 the Soviet Union's *Luna 10* spacecraft became the first spacecraft to reach the Moon.

40 years ago:- on 1st April 1976 Apple Computer (now Apple, inc.) was founded in California.

30 years ago:- on 26th April 1986 the Chernobyl disaster took place in Ukraine.

5 years ago: - on 29th April 2011 Prince William, Duke of Cambridge married Kate Middleton.

