

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

SATURDAY 21st JULY 2018

Our mammoth Fund Raising Day
for our Coffee Lounge Floor

Please speak to Sylvia Lesley Sue
or Anne for more details



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Merton Citizens UK

Following the visit from Pete Brierley last month, Sylvia, Pete and myself attended the meeting of Merton Citizens UK on Thursday 1st March which was a very cold and snowy evening!

The four main areas of concern highlighted across the borough are mental health, housing, street cleaning & rubbish collection and refugee welcome. All areas will be addressed but mental health is to be their first priority.

The next meeting; 'The Founding Assembly of Merton Citizens UK' will take place on **Thursday 19th April** at 7.00 at St. Mark's Academy, Mitcham. As a group we pledged to double our numbers and raise Martin Way's support group to six. Please put the date in your diary and join us.

Speak to any one of us for further information.

Sue Boyd, Sylvia Baxter, Pete Boyd.

MINISTER'S LETTER

As Paul is away on a Sabbatical, a number of others have offered to write in Paul's place for the Newsletter.

Our first contributor is Valerie Ashcroft.



The usual greeting on Easter Sunday is "The Lord is risen" "He is risen indeed. Hallelujah" "Happy Easter" "How many eggs did the Easter Bunny bring you?" Why a bunny would bring eggs is another question! But this year you are just as likely to hear, "April Fool!"

Did you know that the New Year began on the 1st of April till the 16th century? NO? Neither did a whole lot of others. And the ones who did, didn't know the first day of the New Year fell on the 1st of January!"

Confused? So were the ones who missed the new calendar issued by Pope Gregory in 1562! They continued to celebrate New Year's Day with parties and late night dances on the 1st of April. More fool they! The ones in the know laughed their heads off, poured ridicule and scorn, played tricks on them and called them 'April Fool's Days'. And the first of April became All Fools Day.

1st April 1957: BBC fools the nation

The hoax Panorama programme, narrated by distinguished broadcaster Richard Dimbleby, featured a family from Ticino in Switzerland carrying out their annual spaghetti harvest. It showed women carefully plucking strands of spaghetti from a tree and laying them in the sun to dry.

Fools Alert! It's the day to play pranks and tricks on the unwary - so watch your step, one wrong move and you could be the April Fool. Or be a sport and provide a laugh or two. "The first of April is the day we remember what we are the other 364 days of the year." - Mark Twain

Paul writes to the Corinthians "We are fools for the sake of Christ," (1 Corinthians 4:10)

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

This is the motto of a group of Holy Fools which I belong to. We take services in churches and interpret the gospel through clowning. We make people laugh but more than that we allow them to see the gospel from a different perspective.

Many think we are fools to believe in the Resurrection of Jesus and the redeeming work of the cross. There are times when we may be the subject of ridicule and derision. Easter proclaims that Christ is Risen, that we worship a living saviour. This permeates the Christian life for ours is a living faith that reaches out to those around us and we carry Him wherever we go. We should be living a life of victory for we know that Jesus is alive, He has beaten the curse of death.

So how will you be spending Easter? If the shops are to be believed we will all be eating chocolate eggs or bunnies. Many will have eggs for breakfast. Easter is strongly linked with Spring, new life, celebration and short breaks. Missed by many is the true significance of Easter.

Let us follow Jesus, tread in His footsteps, live the gospel and spread it wherever we go. Let us make disciples and grow in confidence as we live in the light of Resurrection for we are not fools, that is just the world views us.

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18)

A happy and blessed Easter to you all.

Valerie

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**Easter says you can put truth in a grave,
but it won't stay there.**

Clarence W Hull

**The stone at the tomb of Jesus was but a pebble
to the Rock of Ages inside.**

Frederick Beck



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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EASTER

Very few people remember that Easter Sunday is the culmination of a season of religious celebration with its origin in the Old Testament. In the western world, Easter has become a celebration with bunnies, chocolate, Easter baskets, coloured eggs and special foods such as lamb, ham and hot cross buns.

The religious observance begins with a 40-day period known as Lent. Characterized by many as a time to give up something, this period represents for them Jesus' time of spending forty days in the wilderness, resisting the temptations of Satan. The Day before Lent is celebrated in some cultures as Fat Tuesday, or Mardi Gras, a time of overindulgence before "fasting" – denying oneself a pleasurable food, activity, or item – is started. The week of Lent immediately preceding Easter is characterized by Maundy Thursday, remembering Christ's Last Supper with His disciples; Good Friday, honouring the day of His crucifixion; and Holy Saturday, the remembrance of the time between the crucifixion and resurrection. Then some Christians observe Eastertide, the fifty days following Easter, including a celebration of Jesus' ascension into heaven.

A lamb is associated with Easter for Biblical reasons. In Scripture, Jesus Christ is referred to as the "lamb of God" (John 1:29). In the Old Testament, a lamb was used as a sacrificial animal, foreshadowing the coming of the sacrifice of Jesus for the sins of the world.

CHURCH DIARY



Spring Harvest (3rd to 8th April)

Sun	1	10.30 am	Easter Sunday Service led by Brenda Cannon
Tue	3	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	8	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by David Eagle
Tues	10	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	13	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	15	10.30 am	Café Worship led by Brenda Cannon and Tony Loft
Tue	17	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.00 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Allan Woolsey</i> - My Time in Show Business
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	22	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Richard Graham
		6.30pm	Communion Service led by Rev Margaret Adams
Tue	24	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	27	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	29	10.30am	Communion Service led by Rev Chris Morley

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

EASTER COLOURING TIME



March Update from CSW

The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.
(Psalm 103:6)

Vietnam

Please join us in urgent prayer for Pastor Nguyen Trung Ton, a human rights defender and church leader who is in pre-trial detention in Vietnam. Because of the conditions in the prison, Pastor Ton is losing the sight in one of his eyes and is in constant pain from beatings he received from the authorities before his arrest.

Pastor Ton was arrested in July 2017 and stands accused of ‘conducting activities aimed at overthrowing the state’ under Article 79 of the penal code, a charge commonly used against activists in Vietnam. If convicted, he faces a prison sentence of up to 20 years, life imprisonment or capital punishment

When we pray for the unjustly imprisoned, we’re carrying on a Christian tradition that dates back to the early church. I’m always encouraged by this fact: that we have stories of Christians praying for Paul and Silas in prison (Acts 16:16-40), or Peter when he was imprisoned by Herod (Acts 5:12). Those early Christians prayed for the apostles in full confidence that God would hear and answer them: just as we do today.

Please pray:

- For Pastor Ton’s immediate and unconditional release
- That the charges against him would be dropped
- For the prison authorities to allow him access to the medical care he so urgently needs
- That the God of comfort would ease Pastor Ton’s pain and suffering, and he’d have a very real sense of God’s presence with him.

Iran

Last year we told you about a group of Christians in Iran who were given excessively harsh sentences just for doing activities that Christians all over the world do every day: attending a friend’s wedding, having a

with some of the church family and getting to know everyone a little better in such lovely surroundings.

Lee Abbey is a most beautiful place to stay; my room was excellent, very bright and comfortable.

We had a varied programme each day and on the Saturday afternoon we had a walk down to the local cove where we were entertained watching Martin, Ruth and family trying to get their kites airborne on the very windy beach. After getting plenty of fresh air it was time to start our walk back up the hill and with a little help I just about made it!

On Sunday morning we all took Holy Communion in the Octagonal Lounge with its very peaceful atmosphere and after a very delicious Roast Lamb lunch it was time say goodbye to Lee Abbey and all the people we met.

I am very grateful to Abby for taking and bringing me home and being such an excellent driver.



Mary Davis



Quite often we are a bit apprehensive when going somewhere we haven't been before I was feeling like that going to Lee Abby however it was unfounded. The weekend was superb in every way including a wonderful journey both ways thanks to Abby.

What a lovely place in beautiful surroundings and my room perfect with very nice en-suite. The staff mostly younger were very friendly. The programme was full but no pressure to adhere to, a very relaxed atmosphere. Finally, having time to chat to new folks as well as the Martin Way family especially at meal times was a bonus. So glad I went!

Moira

Many thanks to all who contributed to this article.

Part two with everyone else's thoughts will appear in the next Newsletter.

the retreat or community.

Being in such beautiful surroundings and countryside - it was easy to relax, reflect and spend time with God. As well as being able to spending time with our friends from Martin Way, Lantern Church & the community at Lee Abbey. This is a place that is very worthwhile going to if you get a chance! I certainly would go back again.

Abby



Lee Abbey is a retreat centre in North Devon, a place for churches to go on retreat, to spend time together, to learn and worship together. It is set in a remote area by the coast and is a great place to spend time with God and other people. The centre was once a gothic house and had a beautiful octagonal room, which was a great place for bible study and worship. Our rooms were very comfortable and modern, the centre having been extended several times.

I hadn't realised that it is run by a community of people, from the UK and abroad, who live there, taking time out of their everyday lives to serve us, by waiting on us at mealtimes, leading worship and activities. We were looked after very well, well cared for and well fed! It was good to meet people from other churches, and also to spend time with people from our church.

It was a relaxing time, time to sit and chat as well as join in with activities. I particularly liked 'Christ in the quiet', a time of meditation in the chapel. Although the weather was quite wet, some of us walked along the cliffs to Lynton and also down to the sea nearby.



I would recommend this time away and hope to go again one day. I came back benefiting from some time away, to reflect and learn and feel closer to God in such beautiful natural surroundings.

Karen

The short break at Lee Abbey Church Retreat in Devon came just at the right time for me, being

church picnic, or taking communion. This is emblematic of the kind of intense harassment Christians face: please lift them to God in your prayers this week.

At the end of last year, we received news that children from the Church of Iran denomination in two major cities have been told that they must study Shi'a Islam or leave school. Sources in the denomination have told CSW, "The message is clear: convert or leave." Join us in praying that these children would be allowed to learn about their own faith and not be forced to convert.

At least 12 Christians in Iran are facing ten or more years in prison for vaguely-defined 'national security-related crimes'. In reality these 'crimes' - celebrating Christmas, having a picnic, meeting together - are things Christians around the world do all the time. Please pray that they would be released, and the charges against them dropped.

Four of the men, Yousef Nadarkhani, Mohammadreza Omidi, Yasser Mossayebzadeh, and Saheb Fadaie, are appealing their charges and, at the time of writing, are still awaiting a hearing after their October hearing date was delayed without an explanation. Please pray that they'd get a date soon, and that the charges against them would be dropped.

March 17th is Nowruz, or Persian New Year, when Iran celebrates the beginning of another year: it's also traditionally a time for prisoner releases. Please join us in praying that this new year brings peace and freedom to all Iranians so that they can practise their faith without fear.

He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free. Psalm 146:7. Pray this verse over all imprisoned Christians in Iran.

Many of the men arrested and facing harsh sentences belong to the Church of Iran denomination: lift this group of Christians to God in prayer, both those in prison and those awaiting release, asking him to strengthen them and fill them with courage and hope.

Lord, we lift to you again those Christians in Iran who are facing the very real possibility of harsh prison sentences. May your presence comfort and strengthen them, and give them hope. Amen

CSW is a Christian organisation working for religious freedom through advocacy and human rights, in the pursuit of justice.

Extreme Smile

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.

ROMANIA: MILAN HAIMOVICI

The cold, dark prison was crowded with Romanian Christians who were determined to bring the light of Jesus into the darkness. One of these prisoners was a Jewish believer named Milan Haimovici.

One day, Milan began a discussion with another cell mate who was a great scientist but a godless man. Milan was not of the same intellectual and cultural level as this professor, but he told him about Jesus. The professor scorned him, "You are such a liar. Jesus lived two thousand years ago. How can you say that you walk and talk with him?"

Milan replied, "It is true that he died two thousand years ago, but he is also resurrected and is living even now."

Then the professor challenged Milan, "Well, you say that he talks with you. What is the expression on his face?"

Milan answered, "Sometimes he smiles at me."

"Such a lie," the professor laughed. "Show me how he smiles." Milan graciously conceded. He was shorn and only skin and bone, with dark circles around his eyes. He was missing teeth and was wearing a prisoner's uniform, but such a beautiful smile appeared on his lips. His dirty face shone. There was so much peace, so much contentment, and so much joy on his face.

The godless professor bowed his head and admitted, "Sir, you have seen Jesus."

A smile is a natural human expression of confidence, peace, and contentment. A smile during pain and suffering and even agony can give super-natural evidence of God. If Jesus Christ, God's Son, is really living in our hearts, then, some of us need to inform our faces of the good news! In church, we sometimes sing hymns like funeral dirges - our thoughts a thousand miles away from our words. What does your face reveal about your relationship with Jesus? Are you a witness to others who pass you by on the street? Do you attest to Christ's contentment in your heart? Or is your brow furrowed with worry and your lips constantly pursed? Ask God to help you be aware of your silent message and to fill you with his joy.

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. (Romans 12:12)

Saturday 27th Jan

- 7.00am – Early Morning Tea
- 8.00am – Morning Worship
- 8.15am – 9am – Breakfast
- 10.15am-11.15am -Session one 'The Shape of the Gospel' Philippians 2 & 3 in The Octagonal Room
- 11.15am – Coffee
- 11.45am – 12.45pm – Session Two 'Unity & Trust' Philippians 1 in The Octagonal Room
- 1pm – Lunch
- 2pm – Prayer with the Community
- 2.30pm – Walk or other Activities on offer inside and outside (weather permitting)
- 4.30pm – Afternoon Tea
- 6.30pm – Dinner
- 8pm – Evening Entertainment in The Octagonal Room. Followed by Hot Chocolate
- 9.30pm Christ in Quiet in the Chapel

Sunday 28th Jan

- 7.30am – Early Morning Tea
- 8.15am – 9am – Breakfast
- 10.15am – Holy Communion Service 'Joy' Philippians 4. Followed by Prayer Ministry
- 1pm – Lunch
- 3.15pm – Afternoon Tea

A weekend at Lee Abbey in North Devon – such a restful and spiritual retreat. Although the journey was very long when we arrived at Lee Abbey, that all went away and the whole weekend was worth the drive! We were welcomed by the community that live and work Lee Abbey (there are 75 plus living and working here) and they served us throughout the retreat, which was a very humbling experience.

Over the weekend retreat called 'Renew, Refresh & Resource', we spent time together reflecting on Philippians. There was a time for worship, teaching, reflection as well as time to rest and chat to friends or others on

Lee Abbey Renew, Refresh and Resource retreat

Friday 26th Jan until Sunday 28th Jan 2018



A group from Martin Way and Lantern Methodist Church went to North Devon to a Christian retreat centre 'Lee Abbey'. There are 75 plus community who live and work at the Abbey and throughout the weekend they were at hand to support, guide and serve those who attended the event. This article will give some thoughts from those who attended.

Here is the program for the weekend - (you will see we were never a couple of hours from a hot drink and food! Very well feed Spiritually as well as physically!)

Friday 26th Jan

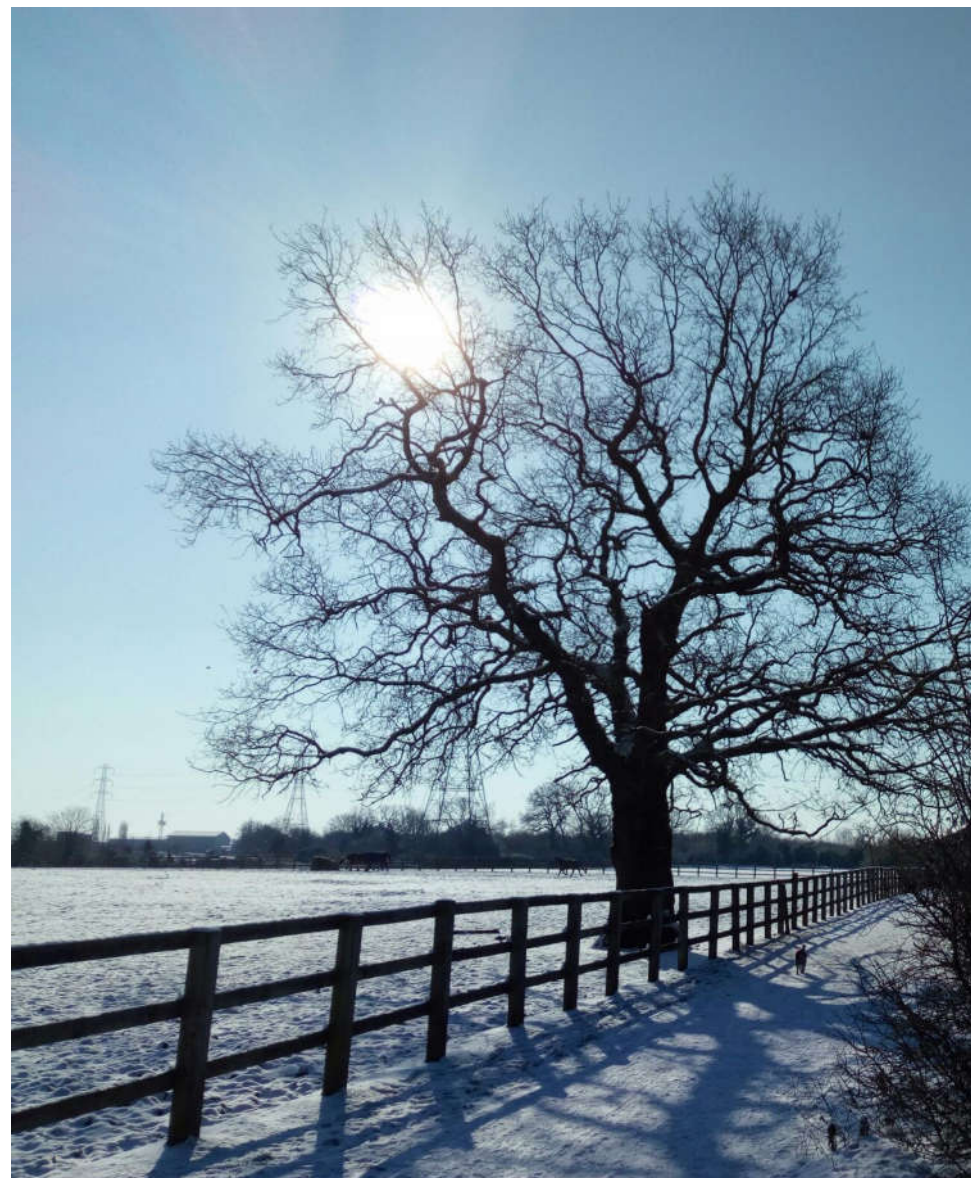
- 4pm – Afternoon Tea
- 7.00pm - Dinner
- 8.00pm - Welcome and Worship in The Octagonal Room. Followed by Hot chocolate in the Gallery
- 9.30pm - Christ in Quiet in The Chapel



EYES WIDE OPEN

Sharing moments all around us in pictures.

A Spring Day in England 2018



Please submit your images, digital photographs or scanned artwork to Andrew (Newsletter Editor) at roife@hotmail.co.uk. Every picture tells a story (or so they say) but if you want to add just a few words to accompany your image, please do.



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An Easter Poem by Muriel Warren who died early in March this year.

At the foot of the Cross

The women who stood at the foot of the Cross
Felt broken, bewildered, quite stunned by their loss.
The false trials, the harsh sentence - it couldn't be true.
Such unutterable cruelty to the best man they knew.

The woman who bore him remembered her joy
When, at the inn, she'd first cradled her boy.
"Though art blessed among women" the angle had said.
Yet, despised and rejected, her son now hung - dead.

The woman beside her had memories as well.
But of pain and self-loathing, too shameful to tell.
And then she'd been pardoned and accepted with love
By one whose great mercy surely came from above.

In their grief they knew nothing of God's plan
That redemption would come through the death of this man.
Who suffered for us on that hill, dark and grey.
To be raised by his father on that first Easter day.

At the foot of the cross it is now we kneel,
Our hearts full of praise at the joy that we feel.
Our sins are forgiven; we are washed in your blood.
Lord, help us to love you the way that we should.

May our lives always please you as we seek to proclaim
To people around us your wonderful name.
May your spirit inspire us to spread your word
That the world may be filled with the joy of the Lord.

Muriel Warren