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Prayer for the Month.

Eternal God and Father,
you create us by your power and redeem us by your love.
Guide and strengthen us by your Spirit,
so that we may give ourselves in love and service
to one another and to you,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen

A morning collect from the ASB

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane.
0161 998 – 2615

Dear Friends,

We are very much in the Easter season still, so let's look at what the message of Easter is for us.

Two texts will highlight that message: "... Christ was raised for our Justification, ..." and "... a sure and certain hope of resurrection to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." One comes from St. Paul and the other, from the burial service, echoes his teaching ~ from Romans and in Philipians respectively. Let me unpack them.

Paul starts by explaining what Jesus' death was for; somehow it lifts from us the consequences of our sin ~ the wrongdoing and selfishness which breaks our relationships with God and with other people; it enables our forgiveness, and frees us from the power of wrong over us. Another one-liner from Paul is "Sin shall no more have dominion over you." Take that two

Christ was raised to show that we have been put right with God.

ways; it is a promise that we are no longer bound to get it wrong, to commit sins; but it is also a re-assurance, that the wrongs

other people do to us need no longer cloud our life. They can be off-loaded onto Christ's broad shoulders. We can be forgiven ourselves, and we can have the will and power to forgive other people. So, "Christ died for our sins, ... and was raised for our justification." Raised to new life by God his Father to demon-

strate that what he was doing was accepted and ratified. Raised to show that we had been put right with God, forgiven and accepted.

And so, in the burial service we commit a person "in sure and certain hope of resurrection through Christ, who shall change our humble bodies to be like his glorious body ..." The second phrase is what comes from Paul's letter. Because of what Christ has been through, we can look forward not to emptiness but to glory beyond this world and this life. His return to life, himself but transformed and freed from physical limitations, is a pointer to what we can look forward to. There is a certain amount of agnosticism in the bible about how and where, but St. John simply says "it is not yet clear what we shall be like, but we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." We shall reflect his glory and reality; we shall enjoy his presence and a purpose which is rich and good and wholesome, in a state where there is no more sorrow and wrong.

St. John also quotes Jesus' explanation of how we latch on to this. It is not imposed, nor earned by some impossibly good behaviour, but comes from our trust in Jesus. As he stood by his friend Lazarus' grave with tears in his eyes, Jesus promised, "I am the resurrection and the life; the person who believes in me shall live in spite of death." So it is by our faith in Christ that we will come to receive all this. (Briefly, such belief which pairs our life with Christ's, should change our attitude to life and to the way we behave, so that we begin even now to be dead to wrongdoing and alive to God.)

OK, that's what Christ's resurrection means, but how can we know it happened? And was it real and tangible, or only "spiritual"? There are several lines of evidence for the resurrection ~ briefly, his followers were clear that they had not found his body in his grave, and were prepared to stake their lives on that; they encountered him in daylight in unexpected places, alive and more than well; their lives (and the lives of countless others in the church down the ages) were transformed by such encounters. But there is a further argument, which I want to develop. It is a kind of back handed argument: "I believe because it is unbelievable!". That was a lawyer's argument in the 2nd century. He wasn't one of those naïve people who believe half a dozen impossible things before breakfast. His point was that no-one would dream up

such a story. The 1st. cent, Christian world was not peopled by naïve simpletons; after all, who is the patron saint of doubting Thomases? They knew all about myths, and were clear that what they were talking about was no myth, invented to make a philosophical or moral point. They were persuaded that this incredible message was totally credible, true and transforming. It offered ~ offers ~ hope in a dying world, forgiveness in a conscience-stricken world, and friendship with God in a lonely age.

Yours faithfully, Greg Forster



Vocal Ensemble ***“Lyra”***

**Professional musicians from
St. Petersburg, Russia
present a concert of
Russian Orthodox sacred music
and folk songs:**

St. Wilfrid’s Church,

Monday 5th May, 2008

at 7.30 p.m.

**Adults: £7 Concessions: £4
(Refreshments included)
for details Tel: 0161 945 9864**

Northenden Methodist Church.

Palatine Road.

Minister: the Revd. David Bown,
5 Kenworthy Lane, Northenden, M 22 4 JF
0161 998 – 2158

Sunday Services.

Apr. 6th 11.00am Morning Worship
 6.30pm United Evening Worship @ St.Wilfrid's

13th 11.00am Morning Service

20th 11.00am Morning Service

27th 11.00am Morning Service

Preachers' information for April is not available as we go to press~ sorry.

May 4th 11.00am Morning Worship
 6.30pm United Evening Worship.

COMMUNITY LUNCHES ...

2nd and 4th Wednesdays in April ~
9th & 23rd

12 noon to 1.30pm

Fun Bingo: Sat. 26th , noon to 2.00pm.

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The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) South Manchester Meeting

There is a meeting for worship

at the Friends' Meeting House, Wythenshawe Rd.,
at 10.30am every Sunday.

Children welcome. *Details from Lesley Thomson (491-1323)

The main hall and smaller rooms are available for hire;

~ contact Peter Todhunter (Meeting House Warden) 834-5797,

St. Wilfrid's Church,

Ford Lane. (Off Church Rd.)

Rector: Greg Forster (998-2615)

Organist: Arthur Mellor (928-0472)

www . stwilfridsnorthenden . org . uk

Services:



Communion on Sundays at 8.00am,
and on Thursdays at 10.00am

There is a "Sunday Club" for 7 – 11+ year olds meeting in the Rectory at 10.30am, for about an hour, and ...

... "Scramblers", for children from 3½ to 6+, meets in the Church Hall from 10.30 till about 11.30am., except when there is a Family Service (for parents and children together) in Church.

Apr. 6th 10.30am Family Communion & Parade Service
 6.30pm United Evening Worship.

Apr. 13th 10.30am Holy Communion
 6.30pm Evening Worship

20th 10.30am Holy Communion
 6.30pm Evening Worship

27th 10.30am Holy Communion (shortened)**
 6.30pm Holy Communion (1662)

Thursday 1st May. Ascension Day. Communion at 10am(ish!)

May 4th 10.30am Family Communion
 6.30pm United Service @ Northenden Methodists.

Drop in ... 2 – 5pm.

St. Wilfrid's church is open each Sunday

from 2.00 – 5.00pm,

for prayer, visiting and just looking round, enquiries about baptisms, weddings, ancestor hunting, ... &c.

IT'S ALL HAPPENING ... for your diaries

Mon. Apr. 7th Women's Group, 7.45 for 8.00pm

Weds. 9th, 16th, 23rd & 30th. Bible Studies, 7.45 for 8pm, Rectory.

** Church Annual Meeting. Sun. 27th in church @ about 11.30am

Note also the School's Ascensiontide Service will be on Thursday 1st May at about 9.15am. Parents, and other friends of the school, are welcome to join the children for this.

Mon. 5th May (the bank holiday); a Concert, given by members of Lyra, the Russian group whose last visit was so successful.

The church's planned giving scheme envelopes were available from 16th March. If you have not collected yours it should be delivered soon. If you want to take part in this scheme, contact the Rector, or Mrs Moores on 998-5390

From the Registers ~ In Memoriam ...

Mary Finlow (Greenpark Rd.) 72, Keith Denny (Greenway) 49.

Baptised, on Sunday 16th March

Abigail Louise M^cCarthy

Annual Meeting ...

St. Wilfrid's Annual Parochial Meetings take place on Sunday 27th April at about 11.30am., in church following the morning service. Firstly we have the "Vestry", at which churchwardens are elected for the coming year. Nominations are invited. The electorate is all members of the church electoral roll, plus any resident of Northenden Parish.

That will be followed immediately by the Church AGM. At that we hear reports on church business, the state of church and hall fabric, and the church finances. We are also due to elect up to four members to the Deanery Synod, and at least seven members to our own.

Nominations are invited!

PCC. Again, nominations are invited. For this the electorate is members of the church electoral roll.

Please make a point of coming to this. The morning service will be curtailed to allow us to start at 11.30am or as soon after that as possible. My sermon at that will be, in effect, a chairman's report on the church's business over the past year. I hope we can be finished before 12.30pm.

In January the PCC set a number of targets, which may prove challenging. One was to break even financially this year.

Last year we spent considerably more than came in. We aim to increase the number of worshippers: so far weather and illness have reduced numbers. One "Emmaus" course has taken place, so we can put a tick in the yes box there, and I hope another will be arranged later in the year (several people were unable to make it this time round). We have also achieved one aim to do with buildings ~ the hall main roof has been repaired, but more work is intended in that building and on the church side aisle roofs. We plan to increase and develop lay participation in worship leadership (is anyone interested in joining the team?) and will be looking at ways of promoting links between St. Wilfrid's school and our Sunday worship. But come along to hear more and have your say.

Our Targets may prove challenging!

Greg Forster

"Don't dump it, donate it !!! "

This is the interesting slogan on a poster from the Tree of Life Centre, St. Mark's URC church, Oatlands Rd., down in Wythenshawe. At their community shop they are prepared to accept unwanted furniture, household items and white goods. Contact: 0161 437-0835. "Help us to help others," they say.

M a g p i e ...

They're at it again! Talking to MPs and Professors and the like! Yes, the children of St. Wilfrid's School made another guest appearance in March, this time in the Whitworth Hall of the University of Manchester at an event to celebrate the success of the Dig Manchester programme as it comes to an end. A team from year 6, with Mrs. Edwards, Miss Micklewright and Mrs Ford described the work of the previous year 6 at Northenden Mill, and their own exploits in the pouring rain at Wythenshawe Hall last October. Well done again!

And what of the future? There is a Dig Greater Manchester in the offing with the possibility of local explorations later this year or next. The out-buildings of Peel Hall look promising for public and school digging. Failing that, there is always the school field!

In case you haven't heard, not only has the Farmers' Market been confirmed as a regular event on the first Saturday of each month, but we now have a second six month trial period, to see if it is worth while having the Market a second time in the

month ~ it will be on the third Saturday. So book it in your diary ~ not just April 5th but also the 19th.

Last month Magpie threw out a poser. How much water goes over Northenden Weir, along with the odd canoeist? Well, the Environment Agency, who look after the water for us, have come up with an answer. It does not come from the meter just upstream of our weir: that just deals in the water depth. It comes from Ashton weir, some miles downstream, but it give some idea of our flow. In 2007 the lowest rate was about 4 cu. metres per second; the highest rate, in full flood, was over 340cu.m/sec., and the mean was about 20 cu.m/sec. A cubic metre is a tonne. A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since that was calculated!

... has noticed how the Riverside Park is taking shape, with seating, rubbish bins, and new display boards to highlight features of the park and the river all taking shape. Some new boards will describe the old mill, too. Well done, everyone who is involved! More strength to your elbows, knees, &c.! And for the rest of us, what a nice place to go for a walk. And with luck and a fair wind the Tatton Arms will be in good shape for the late spring and summer too.

St. Wilfrid's Church ~ Diary Dates 2008.

Here are some corrections and additions to the list of dates for your diaries going on to the end of the year.

April. Church Annual Meeting. Sun 27th 11.30am.

June Sat. 21st, 2 – 4pm Summer Fair.

August Sat. 9th 2pm ... Cream Tea.

Nov. Sat. 29th 11am – 2 pm. Fair.

Coffee Mornings will remain on the last Saturday of the month now that we know that the Farmers' Market is retained.

Bright and Beautiful ... G.S.F.

Last month I threw out the idea of putting together a list of birds seen in Northenden. A couple of people have taken me up on this, and strangely, though they live in different parts of the village, they both mention the same birds ~ woodpeckers. Both have seen the striking black and white Great Spotted Woodpecker, with its flashes of red at head and rump.

The Bible and What It Is.

Margaret Young.

The Bible means different things to different people. To some people it means absolutely nothing, to others it is a history book that contains many morals standards and a rule book by which to lead a life, but to Christians it seen as the word of God. We are told about God's son Jesus

Christ and it is through Jesus that we can learn more and experience God himself.

... to Christians it is the word of God.

The Bible is a collection of religious writings that have been put together and the church has accepted this group of writings as authoritative over it and are called canonical (canon = rule in Greek). The Old Testament (O.T.), sometimes known as the Hebrew Bible, is the roots of not only Christianity but of Judaism and Islam too, Christian writings make up the New Testament (N.T.) Some Bibles have a third section call the Apocrypha but these writings are not accepted as canonical by the Protestant churches but still give us an insight into the people of that time. The N.T. was accepted in 323 AD in Nicea after the texts were agreed to have come from the Apostles. The O.T. was originally written in Hebrew and the N.T in Greek but now it has been translated into many languages so it is accessible across the globe.

The Old Testament has been described as "not a dull book".

The O.T. has been described as "not a dull book" and contains a treasury of stories about the ancient people of

Israel with wars, murders and adultery being common themes. It begins with the story of creation; and of people of Israel and their faith such as Abraham, Moses and David, they were ordinary people who put their trust in God and God used them and the many prophets to encourage the world how to behave, giving us rules and standards to live by such as the ten commandments in Exodus chapter 20. The message was not always listened to and pagan gods continued to be worshipped which displeased God and their land was taken over by the Babylonians and others leaving the people of Israel in exile. It also contains the history books such as Samuel, poetry with the Psalms and finally the Prophets who throughout all of this kept telling Israel that

someone would come and free them from this oppression, for Christians this person is Jesus Christ, God's own son.

The N.T. is the second part of the Protestant Bible and tells us about Jesus' life and what happened afterwards. It contains 27 books; the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, letters and Revelation. The Gospels; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are specifically about Jesus' life. The Acts of the Apostles, was written by Luke and tells us what happened immediately after Jesus' death including the arrival of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the conversion of Paul, a Jew who had originally persecuted Jesus. The letters were mainly written by Paul and give encouragement to the early church for the promotion of the Gospel. The final book is Revelation, this is an apocalyptic story telling us about the end of time. In the N.T., there is an emphasis on "new" and

"rebirth" through Jesus, hence the greatest commandments Mark ch12 vs 30-31 "Love the Lord God with all your heart and with all your soul and

In the New Testament there is an emphasis on "new" and "rebirth"

with all your mind and with all your strength" and "Love your neighbour as yourself" were given.

The O.T. was written from 12th century BC to the times of Christianity by the Hebrew-Jewish community; the first known texts to be written in the Bible were the first 5 books known as the book of Law and contain the 10 commandments. It was originally thought that they were the words of Moses but in 19th century onwards, the Bible was beginning to be treated like any other literary text and began to be analysed. On closer inspection it has been found that there could be many sources for these works, this becomes apparent when reading Genesis without stopping, the creation story is told twice, it can make reading it feel very disjointed and repetitious. This can be accounted for by the history of Hebrew story telling; stories were not written down but remembered, repetition was often the key, giving a second insight into the events. When they were eventually written down nothing was omitted as it was seen as God inspired. This can be seen in the N.T. with the final chapter in Mark ch 16 where some Bibles have the story stop at verse 8 whereas others continue through to verse 20. It is thought that Mark's Gospel was written first and was used as a source for Matthew and Luke along with

another source "Q", which has never been located. If the text of Mark is looked at carefully it can be seen as many stories strung together, "a string of pearls". If the text is looked at more closely again it can be seen that Mark's editing has the text in two halves, first half consist of the question "who is he?" with a turning point of Peter's confession (Mk ch 8 vs 27-33) followed by Jesus being revealed in the second half.

The Bible shows that that God respects us all, and realizes that we are not perfect. He used David who instigated murder and had committed adultery but God recognised his skills

The Bible shows us that God respects us and ... realises that we are not perfect .

and saw that he was able to lead a nation. In the N.T. Jesus spent a lot of time with tax collectors and people who were often treated as outcasts, Jesus saw in them the real person who was often humble.

The message form the N.T. is that Jesus is our Saviour, the one who died on the cross to save us from our sins and has bought us eternal salvation through his death and resurrection, careful reading informs us that Jesus is not only the Son of God but he is God himself hence all we learn about Jesus we are learning about and experiencing God, the goal of the Bible.

The importance of the Bible and its message is used throughout the church from the fabric of the building with the pictures on the stained glass windows through to readings from O.T. and N.T. being used at the services. It is the basis of the Christian faith and its importance within the church is emphasized as it is used for teaching, in sermons and classes such as confirmation classes to help us lead better lives and be touched by the Holy Spirit and experience God as He works within us.

M a g p i e ... part two,

... has a quirky view on statistics. They often reflect the way a question is put, rather than any deeper reality, but here is an interesting one, from a survey published just before Easter. Apparently 14% of atheists believe that Jesus died for the sins of the world. Either they weren't thinking when they ticked that box, or they are reporting, fairly, what Christians or Jesus himself understood was going on when he died on the

cross. Probably the latter, and 14% of atheists can't be wrong, can they?

... has never flown to Mallorca, but then, Magpies don't migrate. But next time you do, just look around you. Here is a place where only 10% of waste ends up in landfill sites (but I suppose they are not on your normal tourist circuit). In Manchester I'm not sure of the percentage, but we are struggling, I think, to recycle more than 20%. So what do you do with your rubbish? Is it waste, or is it a resource for yourself or someone near you?

... you heard it first in Concord! Or maybe you didn't, but certainly it was many years ago that Concord was suggesting that farming and food production was not something to leave to market forces, buying in from anywhere at the cheapest rate, and to blazes with local production, and a secure home based supply. Now even the Government (or at least their new chief scientist) has noticed that the world does not owe us a living, and that if we do not grow it ourselves we may not be able to buy it in. Food production is a strategic industry. We wouldn't think of buying in Royal Naval services at knock down prices, just in time, from the Swiss, say, or Kenya ~ would we? ~ or delegating the purchase to a super-market buyer.

... listened in to some of the discussion in early March about schools' admissions. It was the day when it would become clear that 20% of children did not get their first choice school, so perhaps someone needed to bury bad news. So, it was revealed that a minority of schools, ~ a few faith or foundation schools, to be precise ~ were, allegedly, asking improper questions or seeking financial support in the course of deciding whom to admit. Now, to be fair, the Government has set so many requirements about what schools may not do that it would be quite easy for busy people to overlook one or other of these prohibitions. It took Governors of St. Wilfrid's School many hours to check the requirements of fairness and the admissions' code. On the other hand, the Government has required all admissions to be handled centrally by Local Authorities, so the suggestion that bankers' order forms were included with admissions packs (which in Manchester at least were compiled and circulated by the Local Authority in the first place) seems unlikely. Magpies are wary, suspicious birds, as you know, but is this Magpie right to smell a rat here? Does someone have a hidden agenda?