

# CONCORD ~ April

Prayer for the Month ...

Almighty God, who alone can bring order  
to the unruly wills and passions of sinful humanity;  
and who know that we are set in the middle of so many great  
threats and are by nature so frail that we cannot always stand in the  
face of them;  
grant us such strength and protection as may support us in all  
dangers and carry us through all trials,  
that among the many changes and chances of this world our  
hearts may be fixed securely where true joys are to be found;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.      *Amen.*

Based on two prayers in the Common Worship prayer book  
We have used these a couple of times of late, but they seem so relevant now.

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane. 0161 998 2615

Dear Friends,

A mixed bag this month: church organisation, Magpie on the loose, obituaries, food, books, and of course, Easter: Read on!

Some of you will have already heard of the death of my predecessor, Gordon Jones. He was Rector here for 16 years, and in addition to ministerial work got involved in amateur dramatics, taking part in plays and pantomimes, and, I gather, even writing a short play about the River Mersey. Many of you will have fond memories of him and his family.

During March we were made all too aware of the violence of nature, and the violence of men. It provokes a question "why?" to which there should be no slick answers. There are a number of places in the New Testament where Jesus was challenged about such suffering. He did not give a blanket answer, but dealt with each case as it came. 5000 people are hungry: "what have you got?" Some worshippers get massacred by the occupying forces: "if you don't change your attitudes you'll go the same way" ~ harsh, but in keeping with his rejection of violent nationalism. A man is born blind, Why? and Jesus talks about the future results not the past reasons: out of the situation God will be glorified. And he is in the middle of suffering himself: a Man hangs on a tree, and out of that comes fellow-feeling, forgiveness and reconciliation with God.

Yours faithfully,      **Greg Forster** (Rector)

# Northenden Methodist Church

Minister: The Revd. David Bown,  
5 Kenworthy Lane, Northenden, M 22  
0161 – 998-2158

## Sunday Services.

April 3<sup>rd</sup>. 11.00am **Mothering Sunday** Mrs. A. Clowes.  
6.30pm United Communion Service @ St. Wilfrid's  
10<sup>th</sup> 11.00am The Rev. David Bown  
17<sup>th</sup> 11.00am The Rev. Charles Nevin

**Maundy Thursday** 7.30pm Holy Communion ~ the Lord's Supper

**Good Friday** 10.30am Morning Worship ~ Joyce Burgess

24<sup>th</sup> **Easter Day \*\***  
11.00am Holy Communion. The Rev. M. Hall.

May 1<sup>st</sup> 11.00am The Rev. D. Bown & Preaching Team.  
6.30pm United Service @ St. Wilfrid's

8<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Holy Communion The Rev. D. Bown  
**General Church Meeting.**

**\*\* Bramhall Circuit Easter Sunrise Service at 6.15am at Styal**

Last month we included a brief note about the proposed merger of Wythenshawe with Bramhall circuit. We can now announce that Bramhall held a circuit meeting recently, and that they agreed to the union almost unanimously. This is reflected already in the preaching schedule above, which was prepared as a joint venture by the two circuits and in which we are beginning to see a number of new names.

## Community Lunch

**Weds. 13<sup>th</sup> April** 12 noon – 1.30pm

... and Wed. May 11<sup>th</sup> (to be confirmed)

## Fun Bingo

Last Saturday of the Month (30<sup>th</sup>), 12.00 noon - 2.00pm.  
(to be confirmed in weekly notices)

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## Lunch at Home?

Our attention has been drawn to a home delivery service which may be of use to those of us who find it difficult to get to the

shops or carry much when we do. Oakhouse Foods is a commercial service, unlike the council's meals on wheels, and is delivering meals once a week (Wednesdays, I think) which can be heated up when needed. Copies of their brochure are available in St. Wilfrid's, or from the Rectory. They also deliver other goods. I cannot speak about the quality, and I hesitate to up-stage our local shops, but some of you might find this useful. **Greg Forster.**

## **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 Roger Hensman, 980-5158.

The main hall and smaller rooms are available for hire;  
~ contact Peter Todhunter (Meeting House Warden) 834-5797,

### **Light Reading?**

**Greg Forster**

Last month I reviewed *The Shack*. This month can I mention one of the short stories which I have written ~ intended for children, though I suspect grown-ups will enjoy looking over their shoulders. (They are available in St. Wilfrid's Church, or from me direct) The one I want to highlight now is "The Gardener's Tale" ~ how might the real gardener in Joseph's garden, where Jesus was buried, have reacted to all that happened that first Easter day?

### **Lunch Club ~ Youth Club ~ G.S.F.**

Most readers will know that there is a pensioners' Lunch Club meeting in St. Wilfrid's Hall from about 11.30am on weekdays. My latest information is that this is not affected by Local Authority cuts in services ~ so roll up and enjoy good company and a hot meal at bargain prices ... so long as you are old enough to qualify!

This is not the case with the Youth Club, which in one form or another has been going with Local Authority support or management for perhaps 15 years. You will have seen that all youth clubs are being cut, and ours is no exception. Our staff, all part-timers, were offered a severance package and have taken it already, so we have not even been able to run the club down gently. The last session was in February. If you see this, thanks!

# St. Wilfrid's Church, Northenden.

Ford Lane, M22 4WE

Rector ~ the Revd. Greg Forster,  
Northenden Rectory, Ford La., M 22 4NQ  
Tel. 0161 998 - 2615

Email; gsf @ stwilfridsnorthenden . org . uk

## Services:

On Sundays there will be a communion service at 8.00am.

On Thursdays at 10am there will also be a communion service.

We run "Scramblers" ~ which I mustn't call a Sunday School ~ for children from 3½ to 7 ~ in the Church Hall, ...

... and "Sunday Club" ~ for children from 7 upwards ~ in the Rectory between 10.30 and 11.30am Sundays ...

... except April 3<sup>rd</sup> & May 1<sup>st</sup> when there is a Family Service in church.

April 3<sup>rd</sup>. 10.30am **Mothering Sunday** Family Service & Parade.  
6.30pm Holy Communion (United Service @ St.Wilfrid's)

10<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Morning Service  
6.30pm Evening Worship

17<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Palm Sunday ~ Morning Worship  
6.30pm Evening Worship

## **Maundy Thursday** ~ The Lord's Supper

7.30pm. Service at Northenden Methodist Church.

**Good Friday** 10.30am Lessons and hymns for the Passion.

7.30pm Experience Easter ~ a walk through Holy Week.

Easter Day 10.30am Family Communion

24<sup>th</sup> April 6.30pm Evening Worship.

May 1<sup>st</sup> 10.30am Family Communion

6.30pm United Service @ Northenden Methodists'

8<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Morning Worship  
6.30pm Evening Worship

## Drop in ...

**On Sundays from 2.00 till 5.00pm the church is open,  
for private prayer, for enquiries, or just to look around.**

*Continues ...*

**Our next full Open Week End, with displays and trips up the tower, is Sat./Sun. June 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>.**

*If you visit then, or some Sunday before, there is quite a lot to see once you have given time to prayer and thought. There is a mouse-hunt, of course ~ to find Mr. Thompson's wooden mice ~ and now there is the Riddle of the Sands ~ a challenge to look closely at a tapestry screen in the north aisle, and make out its story.*

Dates for your Diary ~ it's all happening!

**St. Wilfrid's Annual Meeting, 27 March, 2011.**

A last minute reminder, if you get this magazine early!  
The Church Annual meeting will be after the morning service on March 27<sup>th</sup>, With reports and elections.

**April**

Sat. 2<sup>nd</sup> Remember the Farmers' Market. Palatine Rd., 10am-4pm.

Mon. 4<sup>th</sup> Women's Group, Rectory, 7.45 for 8.00pm  
Sumitha Sundar ~ A trip back to India.

Wed. 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> Bible Studies; Rectory 8.00pm (Not 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>)

Sat. 30<sup>th</sup> Coffee Morning. Church Hall, 10.00 - 11.30am

**May**

Wed. 4<sup>th</sup> Bible Study. 8.00pm. Rectory (Not 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>; see below)

Sat. 7<sup>th</sup> **St. Wilfrid's School Fair.**

Don't miss the Farmers' Market in the village ~ and look out for the Green Northenden stall ~ for displays and ideas about how Northenden may respond and adapt to Climate Change.

Wed. 11<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Archdeacon's Visitation @ Stretford.

16<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> Christian Aid Week.

And Thurs. 19<sup>th</sup> in Church Folk Music Concert; 7.30pm.

**The Parish Registers**

**In Memoriam**

The Revd. Gordon Howlett Jones (85)

Prof. Henry Basil Marsden.(90) Adam Kawalek (10)

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Prof. H.B.Marsden was a long time resident of Northenden. His specialism was childhood cancers, and as a pathologist in the field his reputation was international. Our best wishes to his family.



Gordon Jones was Rector of Northenden from 1963 till 1979. He was born in 1926, and studied for the ministry at Westcott House in Cambridge. He left here to become Rector of Bremhill and two other parishes in Wiltshire, from which he retired to Devises. He died on March 10<sup>th</sup> after a short illness but many years of increasing frailty. Our prayers and best wishes go to his wife Marianne and their family. *The picture shows Gordon, early in his time here, at the Opening (I think) of the Church Hall on Ford Lane.*

You will have heard prayers for Adam Kawalek in St. Wilfrid's for almost 7 years now, on and off. He has faced illness, with remissions, most of his life. We commend him to God, and his family to God's comfort and support in their loss.

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### **Accounts, 2010**

The finances of St. Wilfrid's will have been discussed fully at the annual meeting, but briefly, we had a "routine" income of about £48.4K last year, but routine expenditure for 2010 of about £51.4K. You can all do the sums, and see that in the long run that will not work out well! On the plus side, money coming in from the "planned giving" scheme increased by about £3,000 last year, to £15.6K ~ thank you all!

### **Women's Group.**

In April ~ 4<sup>th</sup> ~ Sumitha Sundar will be talking about her recent trip round her homeland of India. 7.45 for an 8.00pm start.

The May meeting has yet to be decided (the first Monday is a bank holiday). Does anyone have a spare birthday going begging?

*S.D.F.*

*Canon B13 (and all that jazz!) G.S.F*

The Church of England has canons. I don't mean the ones with two Ns which go bang, or even the ones you might meet at the cathedral, but regulations and guidelines. We ~ or at least, to be honest, I ~ sit rather loosely to them at times, but they are there, and B13 is one of my favourites. Basically it says that if someone is baptised and permitted to take communion in their own church, then they are welcome to join us in sharing the bread and

wine at communion. So I am happy to see Romans and Reformed, Baptists and Brethren at the communion rail at St. Wilfrid's, and even Quakers sometimes, though there is no formal "sacrament" among Friends. The irony is that some churches would not reciprocate: you and I would not be welcome with them (if we let on as Anglicans), nor should their members (strictly) share with us.

Archdeacon's Visitation.  
Forster

Greg

One of the other regulations of the Church of England is that Churchwardens (especially) and other parish church officers should be sworn in each year. This takes place for us this year on May 11<sup>th</sup>, at St. Matthew's, Stretford at 7.30pm. More details next month. A visitation is a bit more posh than a plain visit, and consists of a lot of swearing and some singing, as well as a bit of a chat with the people you know. They can actually be quite fun.

But before the formal Visitation the Archdeacons send out a questionnaire to see how the churches in their various patches are doing. This year they refer to the Diocesan Vision, of Growing Churches, Increasing Giving, and Serving Communities. They ask how we are serving our community, and that set me thinking. How well do we serve our community? You'd be surprised. Here is part of the response that I have prepared for them:

**1.c Serving the Community:** We use our premises as a community resource as widely as possible. For instance the church building is currently in use as a film set by students from Manchester Met. Univ. ~ three such groups have drawn on our resources this term. Our Hall has been made available for Social Services lunch clubs, a British Legion weekly social gathering, a Youth Club run by Manchester Youth Service, a Mother and Toddler group, a couple of different drama groups, the local Archaeological society, City Council Neighbourhood consultations, children's parties, sales, meetings in connection with a possible Community Enterprise company, ... not to mention the church's own activities and subsidiary groups such as Scramblers, Brownies, and social events, worship, funerals and weddings.

In many of the above meetings it is not just that we make the premises available, but church members are involved as active participants, either representing the church, or individually as citizens and members of the Northenden Community.

In the run course of their daily activities church members are of course deeply involved in *servicing Christ in one another*, as the Communion Service reminds us. This can range from the immediate care of each other in the family, through work in business, education, and health services, community development work and air transport, the law, to involvement in the regulation of international financial systems. Some of us even get paid for doing it.

Members of the church are also deeply involved in community activities which do not take place on our premises ~ the local Park Friends group, the local Civic Society, TG, &c., and also as Governors of the local church school, and as Grandparents, supporting their families which (as the Marriage Service reminds us) are the foundation of Community life.

There is a regular Christian Aid Week house to house collection, and gifts of food at harvest and clothing around Christmas are directed to the Booth Centre, and also local street people.

I firmly believe that we should widen our mind-set, so that we see all our lives as part of our Christian work, worship, service and relationship with God. That line from the Communion Service about "servicing Christ in one another" is not thrown in because it has a nice ring to it; it is there because that is how we should see our lives, 24/7 as they say. (And the converse of this is of course that we can see those we work with as representing Christ to us.)

Magpie...

... is setting a quiz to start with: what have church-wardens got in common with the President of the United States?

... flew past the Riverside Park the other day, and oh! joy, they have a train, a proper puffer train there for the little ones. All aboard!

... and presiding over it all is the heron. Is it H-Hermione, or H-Horace, or H-Hector or H-Hermintrude, or H-what? A little bird told him that all will be revealed ~ or perhaps decided ~ in the near future.

... overheard Confucius say, "Those who say it cannot be done should not interrupt the person doing it."

... and overheard Winston Churchill say, "For myself, I am an optimist; it does not seem to be much use being anything else." And look where that got him.

... has heard that there is a wonderful new bus service running along Longley Lane these days. It is the 000, and runs

every couple of minutes. There is one draw-back, unfortunately. It is a non-stopping service going in to the new bus servicing depot further along the Lane as drivers finish their shift. The one question, perhaps, is whether its route should avoid the built up area? Wasn't that required in the planning consent for the depot?

... and it's official. The edifice on the corner of Church Rd is a storey too high, and Magpie has seen the surveyed plans to prove it. Whether our council will bless this sin remains to be seen.

... Oh, and that flag. Magpie gained an exclusive interview with the Rector and asked about the yellow and black flag. No-one had identified it, despite the clue given last month and the fact that it was flown on 1<sup>st</sup> March. (It was flown on March 17<sup>th</sup> too, but that was because no red saltire was available, and the Union Flag seems rather insensitive, given the history.) The nearest guess was Cornwall, but that is white and black.) The label on the packet, he said, was "St.David" ~ not Wales, but St.David. That seemed reasonable, he said, especially since it was bought a stone's throw from Wales (if you could throw hard enough, with a following wind). But the Rector has special agents, he said, who infiltrate the Principality from time to time, and are in on the secret, and they confide that they have never seen nor heard of such a flag west of Offa's Dyke. Nor, it seems, can such a flag be identified on the internet. Perhaps it should be flown on *April* 1<sup>st</sup> instead.

... and that quiz? Yes, you've got it (or have you?) Presidents are elected in November, but don't get sworn in until the next January. So the States are left with a lame duck for two months. Wardens too get elected up to a couple of months before they are sworn in and take office properly, at the Archdeacon's Visitation, usually in May.

### **Northenden Players ~**

If you get this magazine early you may just be in time to get a ticket for *Death of a Salesman* ~ on between Mar. 27<sup>th</sup> & Apr. 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The next performance after that is May 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>:

### ***Noises Off.***

Both sets of performances are at the Methodist Hall, Victoria Road.

### **Reading Matters**

For books, and music about the Christian Faith try the two bookshops near here which cater for this ~ almost opposite the John Rylands Library on Deansgate in Manchester there is Living

Oasis. And in Stockport the Christian Literature Crusade have a shop on Lower Hillgate.

Both stores offer a splendid opportunity to learn more about our faith, and about the human stories which illustrate how it works out. Biography ... bible study ... hymns and sacred music ... presents for your God-children ... . Have a look next time you're in Manchester or Stockport.

## Basic Christianity ~ Life beyond Life.

At the centre of Christian belief is the Easter story, and Jesus Christ's resurrection. Without it he would be just an interesting footnote to the history of Judaism. It is a story about him, and a story which has implications for us all too. I believe it is historical, but also historic. It happened, but it also changed history.

OK, let's take Jesus' crucifixion and burial as read. What happened next? The authorities were suspicious, and set a guard. A couple of days later something spooked the guard, and they came up with a tale of seeing Jesus' followers stealing the body while they were asleep. It takes something for soldiers to admit to sleeping on duty! In fact his followers were equally alarmed to find the grave opened and his body gone, but the shroud left. Then he began meeting them, talking, touching, even feeding them. They were convinced he was alive again, flesh and bone, more alive than ever and no mere ghost.

This confirmed their belief in "resurrection" ~ not a shadowy continuity of a soul, but something far more tangible. They saw him not only as alive himself, but as a pioneer, who was going through in advance what they would experience, all who trust in him would experience, in the future. We should not confuse "resurrection" with other ideas that are in the market; we remain ourselves, we are not mere wraiths but reflect the reality of God himself, we do not come round again in this earthly life, but continue in a transformed state. Though earthly relationships are still valued, our focus is on the glory and goodness of God. These are the pictures of the future we find in the New Testament.

Those pictures, however, do not go into great detail. They are pictures, not a precise blueprint. St. Paul looks forward to death, when he will be "with the Lord", but also looks beyond that to being re clothed with what he calls a spiritual body. He uses the image of a seed; it seems to die as it is planted in the ground, but grows again, the same but far more glorious as a living plant. Because of

Christ's pioneering experience we look to follow him, benefiting from his achievements and God's gift through him of eternal life.