

# CONCORD ~ April 2015

Prayer for the Month,

Almighty Father,  
in your great generosity you made Christ's disciples glad  
with the sight of him, their risen Lord;  
give us such knowledge of his presence with us,  
that we may be strengthened and supported  
by his risen life,  
and may serve you continually in fairness,  
goodness and integrity.

Through him, Jesus Christ our risen Lord. *Amen.*

Based on the collect for the first Sunday after Easter.

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane.

0161 **998 2615**

Dear Friends,

Happy Easter, or to use a more Christian greeting for the season, "Christ is Risen!" which invites your response, "He is risen indeed. Hallelujah!" Both halves of the greeting should be said loudly and firmly, almost like Robin Williams's "*good morning Vietnam!*" It is certainly something to be enthusiastic, and to get excited about. Saying things loudly doesn't make them any more spiritual or even heartfelt, but the Easter message is worth saying with confidence.

You know the story (I hope!). All seemed at an end, lost, as his followers laid Jesus' body in the grave-chamber late on the Friday. The next day they bided their time, keeping the Passover Sabbath. When they began to come back to visit the grave on the Sunday they found it broken open ~ they thought initially it was ransacked ~ with no body to be found there; only the discarded shroud. Then he began to turn up and meet them ~ in the garden, on the road, in the room where they were meeting, and so on. To demonstrate his renewed reality he ate with them, and even cooked their breakfast in the lakeside dawn. As St. Luke writes, "For forty days after his death he appeared to them many times in ways that proved beyond doubt that he was alive." And this was a source of joy and hope, not just because *he* was alive, but because his life was a promise of ongoing,

eternal life for us all, if we come to love and trust him as they did. So happy Easter!

A more mundane item: St. Wilfrid's annual meeting is at the end of April, after the morning service on 26<sup>th</sup>. Please make a point of coming, if only to hear reports on our finances and activities, and be prepared to take on tasks in the church too, whether it is as a sidesman, or on the church council, or reading and sharing in other ways in our services.

And now read on.

**Greg Forster**

**Church Road Chippy**  
78 Church Rd., Northenden  
**Fish, chips, peas, sausages, pies, ...**  
**Best quality food      tel. 0161 998-4630**

*Magpie*

... has again been listening over the shoulder of some children as they wrote letters to God. Here they are, with original spelling and grammar;

Dear God,

I bet it is very hard for you  
to love all of everybody in the world;  
there are only 4 people in our family,  
and I can never do it.

N a n

Dear God,

Thank you for the baby brother,  
but what I prayed for was a puppy.

J o y c e

... listen out for the Rector on WFM radio (97.2) during holy week ~ some thoughts on the various days from Palm Sunday to Easter day and beyond.

... apparently in mid March the United Nations declared an International Day of Happiness, or something of the sort. How

kind of the UN to think of us all, and organise a day to be happy on. But what makes you happy?

The BBC Today programme thoughtfully asked for suggestions of happy music to jolly us along ~ most of it was dire, and dated, though admittedly popular in its day, and full of nostalgia now. But what makes for happiness? Is it nostalgia, as we remember being happy?

In fact, I suspect, we're probably happiest when we are just getting on with things with no time to worry about how happy we are. But if you want music, try this ~ from the American Quaker tradition, though sung by Eithne ni Bhrennan (Enya) a few years ago ~

*When tyrants tremble as they hear  
the bells of freedom ringing;  
when Friends rejoice both far and near  
how can I keep from singing?  
In prison cell or dungeon vile  
Our thoughts to them are winging;  
When Friends by shame are undefiled,  
How can I keep from singing?*

~ there's a happiness for the UN (and anyone else) to work towards, and a means of finding happiness as we put words and music to our hopes and sorrows.

... heard that one of the perks in the Budget was more money for Church Roofs. He may look into it (the money, as well as the roofs, at which he takes an expert view.). But the other day he heard of a Church which was saving up very hard for a rainy day. They were saving so hard, in fact, that they would not fork out to repair the roof where the rain was coming in.

... it's an old chestnut for anyone who grew up in Manchester, but Every St. has hit national news ~ or at least the national News Quiz on BBC R4; apparently GM Transport put out a tweet to say that every street in central Manchester was closed due to a police incident ~ only to follow it a few minutes later with the "correction" to say that Every St. was a particular street in the city. Thirty-five years ago someone introduced himself to me saying that he grew up in Every street in Manchester.

## **The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) South Manchester Meeting**

**There is a meeting for worship at 10.30am every Sunday.  
at the Friends' Meeting House, Wythenshawe Rd.,  
Children welcome.**

**\*\* Details from Lesley Thompson, 445 6778**

**The main hall and smaller room are available for hire;  
~ contact: area Meeting office 834-5797  
e-mail: office @ manchesterquakers . org . uk**

### **Why?**

*G.S.F.*

Children can ask the most penetrating, and awkward, questions, like "why?" It was after a service for the church school that one of the eight year olds asked me, "Why did Jesus die?" That is a big question at the best of times, but he was in line by the door ready to walk back to school, and I had thirty seconds before his teacher led them off. I couldn't delay him, and he was eight! But he was right to ask why someone, whom most people now see at least as a good man, should die so unfairly?

I forget what I said to him. There are many answers, at many different levels, from personal to political. Together they build up a picture of what, I believe, Jesus was doing on the cross on that first Good Friday.

The squaddies who executed him would simply say, "Orders is orders. The Governor says so." That is not as mundane as it sounds. Jesus fell foul of men "just doing their job" whether it hurt people or not. He wasn't the first, and won't be the last, but he's been there too.

Ask the Governor. He'd say it wasn't his fault, not personally; he'd washed his hands of it all. The Empire couldn't tolerate a potential rebel who talked about being some sort of a king, even if he said his kingdom was not of this world order. He had to go. Privately to his wife he would have made the excuse that the priestly leadership had him over a barrel, so he could not respond to her plea for clemency. Past misjudgements meant he

couldn't risk another riot. It was all high politics, and if you'd asked the high priest he'd say it was better for one man to die than the people to be invaded and crushed.

St. John, who reports that in his gospel, saw those remarks as more deeply true than the priest realised. Jesus was dying, not just as a political expedient to forestall a show-down with the Empire; he died for the people in this sense too, that his death made amends for where they had gone wrong in their lives. In his own words (from St. Mark's gospel) Jesus gave his life as a ransom for many. Somehow his death was to liberate his disciples, and all who come after them, from death and the consequences of wrongdoing ~ a kind of moral slavery ~ and rebuilt their relationship with God, free to get things right.

So that's Why ~ or the beginning of Why. John says he loved his friends so much he gave his life for them: another New Testament writer says he is able to have genuine sympathy with people facing trials and tribulations, because he's been there: but that's enough answers to be going on with.

### **Weight Control ...**

**D. Holden**

Gain control, not weight!

Weight Control is a participative self-help slimming club where members support one another through sharing their experiences of gaining and losing weight with weekly weighing.

We meet for about an hour every Saturday at 4.00pm at the church hall, adjacent to St. Wilfrid's Church, on Ford Lane, Northenden (M22 4WE).

For more information, phone Della on 0161 998-1378 or email dellayh @ yahoo . co . uk

CLASSES ARE FREE, so no excuses! Join us every Saturday! It's fun and empowering. This time lose weight permanently!

**X ... marks the spot ~ or your vote.**

... and is a reminder of the election on May 7<sup>th</sup>. I take no party stance, but would encourage people to vote, and to think about it in moral terms. I hope that would go without saying, so apologies if you already think that way. But in April the Neighbourhood Forum is arranging Hustings for both Local and National candidates; dates are still uncertain, but watch out for publicity, and take this opportunity to listen, and question.

# Northenden Methodist Church

Minister: The Revd. Tim Nicholls,  
5 Kenworthy Lane, Northenden, M 22  
0161 945-6600

## Sunday Services.

**Usually# 1st Sunday every month**

Family worship ~ Sunday breakfast club ~ MESSY CHURCH

All start off with activities with your child(ren) followed by a story, songs, and prayer based on the activities  
For details contact Amy Carline, 07816 888 704

*# If the first Sunday clashes with a school holiday, check with Amy to see if different arrangements have been made, as they have for April.*

**Messy Church for Easter ~ Mon. 30<sup>th</sup> March.  
3.30pm.**

**and then the next Messy Church will be on 10<sup>th</sup> May**

**Maundy Thursday** Combined evening service at St.Martin's

**Good Friday:** Combined Service, Lawton Moor, 9 – 11 am.

**Easter Day 7.30am Sunrise service in Wythenshawe Park**

**11.00am Holy Communion,** the Rev Tim Nicholls.

6.30pm Evening service at St.Wilfrid's

Apr. 12<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Mr. John Harrison.

Apr. 19<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Mr. Nick Harding

Apr. 26<sup>th</sup> 11.00am The Rev. Charles Nevin

May. 3<sup>rd</sup> 11.00am The Rev. Tim Nicholls, Holy Communion  
6.30pm United Service at Northenden Methodists

May 10<sup>th</sup> 9.00am Messy Church  
11.00am Mrs. Olivia Tu'ihalāmaka

## Community Lunches

Wed. 8<sup>th</sup> April 12.00 noon – 1.30pm

Next lunch; Wed. May 13<sup>th</sup> (To be confirmed)

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*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  
Website: www . stwilfridsnorthenden . org . uk

*And follow us ~ like us, befriend us even ~ on Facebook -  
www.facebook.com/pages/St-Wilfrids-Northenden/208920952481082*

*Services:*

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

On Thursdays also, at 10am, there is a communion service.

**Sunday Scramblers** ~ for 3½ to age 9 upwards ~ meet, for the moment, in the Church Hall unless there is a Family Service, between 10.30 and 11.30am on Sundays

**The Nigerian Anglican "Restoration" Congregation** meets weekly at **12.30pm** for about 1½ hours in St. Wilfrid's Church. The service includes traditional and modern music. There are also activities for children.

**Thurs. April 2<sup>nd</sup> Maundy Thursday. 7.30pm**

**A Celebration of the Lord's Supper.**

**Good Friday, Apr. 3<sup>rd</sup> 10.30am. Hymns and Readings  
The Passion Story according to St. Mark**

**Apr. 5<sup>th</sup> Easter Day**

**10.30am Family Service**

6.30pm United Evening Worship at St. Wilfrid's

Apr. 12<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Holy Communion  
6.30pm Evening Worship

Apr. 19<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Holy Communion  
6.30pm Evening Worship

Apr. 26<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Morning Prayer (shortened)  
... followed by the church's annual meeting.  
6.30pm Holy Communion.

May 3<sup>rd</sup> 10.30am Family Communion

6.30pm United Service at Methodist Church.  
May 10<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Holy Communion  
6.30pm Evening Worship

*Drop in on St. Wilfrid's ...*  
**On Sundays from 2.30 till 5pm the church is open  
for private prayer, for enquiries, or just to look around.**  
To visit at other times, please contact the Rector.

Dates for your Diary ~ it's all happening! 

Wed. 1<sup>st</sup> Apr. **No** Study Group.

Thurs. 2<sup>nd</sup>. School Easter Service, 9.15am in Church.

**Women's Group.** Note the irregular date and new time ~  
Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April Sandy Latham, on Lourdes.  
**7.30pm** in the Rectory.

Coffee Morning Sat. 25<sup>th</sup> Apr. 10.00 – 11.30am in the Hall.

Church Annual Meeting, Sun. 26<sup>th</sup> 11.30am in Church for c. ¾ hr.

May's Women's Group will also be a week later than normal, to  
avoid the Bank Holiday ~ Mon. 11<sup>th</sup>, at 7.30pm; Della Holden.

**Ascension Day**, Th. 14<sup>th</sup> May. 7.30pm Deanery Service. St. John's

**Christian Aid Week**, 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> May.

Registers ...



### In Memoriam.

Bernard O'Neill (Fallowfield) 81, Irene Woodhouse (Greenway) 91

Doris Owen (Newall Green), Alan Taylor (Roundwood Rd.) 79,

Charles Hiney (ex-Northenden) 88.

Keith Edwards (Homewood Rd.) 75, Susan Rose (Palatine Rd.) 67

*Baptised, on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March ...*

Charlie Aiden & Vincent Samuel Coppock

Left Behind at St. Wilfrid's ... **STILL !**

Next time you are in church check the lost property tables! We have four and a half pairs of gloves, some children's, some quite smart adults'; three bibles; several umbrellas; a vacuum flask; and the church-warden has several bracelets, rings and ear-rings. Are these yours? Unclaimed items will go into the Fair in the summer.

## Annual Meeting ~ your advance call.

In the diary you will have noticed the forthcoming annual meeting, at the end of April. Before this, the church's membership list is revised, so if you are not on it but want to be, contact Elizabeth Towler or the Rector. At that meeting we shall hear reports on the church's activities and finances over 2014, and maybe discuss plans for the future a little. Elections for the Church Council will take place, as well as for Churchwardens and sidesmen (sidespeople? ushers?). Please consider standing, or proposing someone, for these posts. The meeting will follow a shortened Morning Service on 26<sup>th</sup> Apr. and should last less than three quarters of an hour.

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### ***I believe ... 3. "... and in Jesus Christ ..."*** G.S.F.

*Sunday by Sunday in church we repeat the Creed as part of our worship, affirming our belief in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in forgiveness, the Christian community, and the hope of eternal life. It is worth looking at the creed and unpacking it, so that it is not just a mantra we recite, but something we understand (a bit, at any rate) and aim to live by. Given that this month it is Easter, I am going to skip to the parts of the Creed which refer to Christ's death and resurrection, and come back to that earlier section some other time.*

In fact let me pick up from where it says, "he was made man". The bible, with the creeds which echo it, is very clear that whatever else we say about Jesus, he was truly human, and that involved sharing life as we know it, including facing death. The writer to the Hebrews clearly sees that in facing and overcoming death he shared what we all face as human beings, and broke the power and fearsomeness of death for us.

Again, the bible is very clear that he was crucified, under the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate (and that it was for us).

We do not as  
Christians adopt the

false logic that he was a prophet and servant of God and therefore could not suffer.

**Crucified, dead  
and buried!**

Not only is this clear from Roman and Jewish sources as well as the letters and gospels of the New Testament ~ there are scurrilous graffiti from Pompeii which caricature it, dated before 79AD. His death was a historical event, and a very real experience; he did not sidestep it or play-act it. St. John, in his Gospel, describes the coup-de-grace as the Centurion lanced Jesus deeply in the side, releasing blood and water. There was no escaping this, brutal though it sounds to us.

He was 'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief', as Isaiah had foretold from Old Testament times. This was "for us". Again to quote Isaiah, 'surely he has borne our sorrows,' and 'made intercession for the transgressors.'

**God showed his love,  
and also achieved  
something, making  
amends for our  
broken faith.**

was not only demonstrating the lengths to which God would go to show off his love for sinful humanity; he was actually achieving something, transacting something which made amends for our wrongdoing, drawing to himself the consequences of our sin. 'The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.' (Isaiah again.) Or in the graphic imagery of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, the burden which we carry through life falls off our back as its straps are broken at the foot of the cross ~ the burden of the sin which would put a barrier between us and God ~ and rolls off into the grave. This is the effect of the Crucifixion.

There were people in the second or third centuries AD who suggested that Jesus did not really feel all this (just as there are today who think it did not really touch him, or that he was whisked away before it happened and someone else got strung up instead). So the bishops who put the creeds together repeat themselves ~ "he did suffer", "he was buried". The New Testament evidence is there, and it has not been tampered with. But why? Did God really need to go through with all this?

**The New Testament evidence  
has not been tampered with  
~ Jesus died.**

On one level I could simply answer, He thought it was important to do things this way. It was his way of maintaining

his justice and standards of right ~ sin is not a light, meaningless matter which can be shrugged off, and in this way he only could ... pay the price of sin. On another level ~ dare I suggest it? ~ he is saying that he made the world in a way which allowed for human cruelty and included undeserved suffering, and it was therefore only fair that he should be on the receiving end of such treatment.

The New Testament evidence is also there that on the third day he rose again. This certainly demands a greater leap of faith than to say that he died, but the evidence is there. And in addition to the record of events, the bishops of the creed assert that it was "according to the scriptures." In other words, this was something which was promised in the Old Testament, not just thought up on the spot in 30AD. Peter picked it up: in Acts 2 he quotes "you will not let your holy one see corruption," and in Hosea we find, spoken of God's son, the archetypal Israel, "on the third day he (God) will raise us up."

But what of the actual events? Unusually for an executed man, Jesus' body was buried in a known tomb on the Friday evening. On the Sunday (three days counted inclusively) friends came to the grave to pay their respects, only to find it broken and empty. They then began to meet him, by the grave, on the road, at their lodgings, and then further afield at a lakeside and on an open hillside. At first they did not believe it, and laughed at those who first claimed to have seen him ~ in other words this does not seem to be wishful thinking, however else you may try to understand it. In addition he ate and cooked with them. They did not consider this a ghost, but something more tangible even if it was more than material.

**this does not read like wishful thinking**

The fact that his followers experienced something fairly dramatic is supported by the change in their attitude and confidence. From being fearful and secretive, they go public in a big way, and are prepared to die for what they are saying, rather than unsay it. In corroboration of this, his opponents cannot produce a body, but put up notices denouncing body-snatching.

OK, this is remarkable, to say the least, but if it is true, what does it prove? Later on in the Creed is a clause which partly answers that question: we believe in the resurrection of the dead. This is a promise that death is not the end of life, but that

we can look forward to something beyond, something tangible, we can look forward

**“If I go, I will come again ...  
so that where I am, there  
you may be also ...”**

to something beyond, something tangible real and glorious, for ourselves if we identify ourselves with our redeemer. “Jesus said, ‘If this were not so, would I have told you I am going to prepare a place for you, and if I go, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am, you may be also.’” In the New Testament we find St.Paul talking about Jesus as the first fruits, a sort of down payment, to be followed in due time by those who belong to him. (I Corinthians 15 explores all this, as St.Paul answers the sceptics of his own day.)

But it is more than just that; it also demonstrates God’s approval of what was going on on the Cross. That action is accepted; ‘Christ died for our sins, and was raised for our justification’ ~ in other words to ratify the fact that we have been put in the right with God by what Jesus did in his death.

### **The Future of Northenden ... ?**

***Greg Forster***

If you live or work in Northenden you should have received a questionnaire from the Neighbourhood Forum about your hopes for its future. I am on the Forum committee, so I hope people will contribute, but let me now make some personal suggestions, not as a committee member but as a resident.

The Mersey Valley is green-belt. I should like to see that extended to include the green area alongside the Parkway as far as and including Wythenshawe Park. New planting should replace ageing trees. We have a Conservation Area. I should like to see a new area, to include Moor End and Kenworthy Lane.

The biggest secular issue of our time is climate change; I should like to see it made mandatory for all new buildings and extensions to include solar or geothermal heating, even in the conservation area, unless there are very pressing reasons not. Likewise, all paved areas in new developments should allow water to run through, to reduce flooding risks.

Poor parking is recognised as the biggest hindrance to the local economy. Work is already in hand, but improved public parking within our shopping centre is essential. Also on transport, the scheme to use the Cheshire Lines rail link for Metro type services should be pursued.

And keep the hydro-electric scheme on the agenda too.  
That'll do for starters!