

AUGUST 2006

Prayers for the Month,

Lord God, our hope and our redeemer,
in a troubled world, bring peace;
in a divided world, bring conciliation;
in an angry world, bring forgiveness;
in a fearful world, bring reassurance;
in a hungry world, bring sharing;
in an untrusting world, bring respect;
in a world of ecological change, bring self-restraint;
and in a Godless world, bring your presence,
through Jesus Christ our prince of peace. Amen.

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane, 0161 998 – 2615

Dear Friends,

I think I have told once before the story of the police who were called to a rowdy group on a street corner, and after a careful, unobtrusive approach discovered two lads and an older man chatting, admittedly noisily (they were having a good laugh about something), at a bus stop. Well, I gather that we are likely to get “dispersal orders” enacted for Northenden, Baguley, and one of the other wards in this area. This means, roughly, that the police can prevent groups of more than three people ~ or is it just teenagers, or “hoodies”, or ... ~ congregating on the streets.

On the face of it, this will make our streets safer for law abiding citizens. But hang on, what if those law abiding citizens are teenagers, attending a law abiding event (say waiting for a church service, or a liaison meeting with the police, or just waiting for the bus)? Such things do happen!

Our attitude to the young is somewhat warped, and based on a false caricature. I even suspect sometimes that there are people out there (some with political clout, or an eye for the quick vote) who think all teenagers should be put down at birth!

Another anecdote: A good number of years ago now I was standing outside the churchyard talking to a Very Respectable Person (sorry about yet another caricature) when a

lad walked past, and peered into the swish sports car parked there (and a Very Swish Car it was too!). “Now he’s looking how to get into that,” said the VRP, “I’ll be bound.” ~ or words to that effect. I don’t think I reacted, but my respect for that VRP’s judgment (already tarnished) took a nosedive at that moment. In fact it was my son who had gone past, and since his ambition at the time was to go into car design I am sure he was admiring a really VSC, and thinking how to design an even swisher one.

And my point in writing all this? Not to deny that some young people can be unpleasant; they can be, but so can some pensioners, and those of us in between! Some, in fact are real gems; great fun to be with and very caring in their attitudes to each other and the rest of their neighbours. They ~ we all ~ are individuals, not some damnable lump of unwelcome humanity.

So we elders need to reshape our attitudes to the younger members of our community, neighbourhood, family; treat them with interest, respect and concern, and perhaps we shall see interest and respect in return. The phrase “hug a hoodie” is a cheap jibe, and gets a cheap laugh (and if you try it literally you will probably fall foul of the child protection industry). Actually it is not as easy as that and lasts a lifetime, not a soundbite, but is vital for our communities’ life.

Money will be available, I gather, over the summer so that alternatives to hanging around on the streets can be offered to our young people. That is good, and I trust it will be well spent, but it is not *just* a matter of entertainment over the summer, but of ongoing respect and interest.

On a different tack ~ or maybe it is just a different angle on the same one ~ you may remember that over the last couple of years there has been a “back to church Sunday” event at the end of September. It will be taking place again this year, and there will be publicity to help us invite our friends and relatives “back to church” then. It occurs to me, of course, that many people would not consider that they need to come “back” to church, since they have never consciously left it; they just don’t turn up very often on a Sunday. Fair comment, though I cannot immediately think of a better catch phrase to go with the invitation. What I would say, though, is that being part of the worshipping Christian community

and joining in is as important a part of being a Christian as what you think in your heart of hearts.

So, if you can't get to Sunday worship very often, do make a note in your diary for the last Sunday in September, and if you are about most weeks, think who might like to join you for that special day, or the Harvest Festival a week later, and in due course give them a personal invitation.

Yours faithfully, **Greg Forster**

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem ... GSF.

I am writing this on July 18th. In the Middle East a very nasty situation is brewing between the state of Israel, its weaker neighbours and paramilitary groups within them. God only knows how it will develop. Since some people on all sides would claim that God was on *their* side perhaps we can echo the thoughts of Bob Dylan, and sing, *If God is on our side, he'll stop the next war.*

What can you say about it all? How can you explain it? There are issues of justice here, as well as history and fear. You can look at it all as one wide ranging pattern, from the 1900s or earlier, or as a series of isolated snapshots, in which all that counts is yesterday's atrocity and today's response to it. Both views are needed. This just touches on all that could be said!

As for the latest atrocity (and it might come from any source) the only legitimate civilised response ~ if military response is meant ~ is targeted, and proportionate. To take vengeance on a whole population for the actions of one group or individual was treated as a war crime at Nurnberg, and still is in the Geneva Conventions. A proportionate response would be to take out the immediate source of the atrocity, and the command structure behind it. For Israel to target the power source for the whole of Gaza does not fall within that limit: for them to target the HQ of the group responsible is.

But the more demanding question is to ask whether my response will be taken as the first atrocity of a new cycle. Maybe, to go back on what I said earlier, the only civilised response is to say, *OK, you have a grievance; we too have a grievance, so let's actually talk about it somehow.* (And yes, I know, the operative word is *somehow*, since both sides assert that the other does not have a right to exist, so cannot be spoken to.)

Pie in the sky? Perhaps. My first “civilised” response was drawn from the ideas of the Christian “Just War” theory, which also lies behind the Geneva Conventions. My second draws from Jesus himself: turning the other cheek was a political as well as a personal programme, in a Palestine for which he wept and which was at odds with itself and its occupying power.

So what of the broader picture. Some Jews and some Christians, especially in the USA, would see the land of Israel as the “promised land”, for Jews, even now. I am not sure of that, since the New Testament treats the *Church* as the New Israel of God, with a different kind of homeland ~ and also in the bible there is a condition in that promise; that it should be *a place of social justice for all*, the resident foreigner as well as the Israelite. Be that as it may as theology, it is a significant *political* factor now.

In the late 19th Cent., faced with persecution in parts of Europe, some Jews developed the idea of returning to “Zion”, and establishing a homeland in Palestine ~ Zionism. They began doing this, and bought up land on the open market. In the collapse of the Turkish empire during the 1st world war conflicting promises were given to Jews and Arabs in Palestine, so that we British, who held a mandate to govern there faced terrorism from both sides in the late 1930s & '40s as both jockeyed for position. When we left in 1947 the Jews, with Hitler’s holocaust very much in their minds, faced a battle to retain what they had bought.

They succeeded, and in the process acquired the land of Arabs displaced in the conflict. Further Arab land was occupied in 1967, and this and the treatment ~ sometimes displacement ~ of the people living on it are at the heart of present disputes, of Israeli fears and Arab resentment.

Magpie ...

... had a message from John Hill-Wilson passed on to him the other day. It was about the sign once seen in the village outside a shop:

Dew to flooding we are temporarily closed.

Freudian slip, poor spelling, or clever pun? You decide.

... Last month’s Concord cover was a shot of the mill as it was, and part of the area earmarked for our “linear park”. John Hill-Wilson has told the Rector that it was actually one of his, in

which case apologies that he did not get the proper credits ~ but in the Archaeologists' research that particular picture is credited to the City Library collection, and dated to about 1920. A similar one of John's is to be found in *Looking Back at Northenden*.

... Some more work has been done on the Traffic Lights, with sensor cables now laid, but it's still not clear whether they are working properly.

... The Linear Park work, around Camperlands' car park, should be started in October, with some of the improvements being made this financial year, and some later. Meanwhile, the archaeologists are due off site by the end of July, and are busily drawing pictures of brick walls. Seriously, such meticulously measured drawings have an artistic as well as a scientific merit of their own, and isn't Hockney's draftsmanlike picture of a soup can one of *the* icons of the 20th century?

Tommy was outraged! Wouldn't you be to find that your house had been broken in to? The cheek of it! In through the window! But as he looked around he could see nothing stolen ~ it was just that there had been a *bath*: the intruder had simply come in to have a bath, and gone out again leaving a damp towel and a sloppy floor. What a nerve!

St. Wilfrid's School

Greg Forster

Early in July most of the year 6 (i.e. top year) children were away on a residential activity week in Denbigh, N. Wales. I went with them to give an adequate staffing level, and to be the token male (or perhaps more than token) with a group in which there were slightly more lads than girls.

Activities included exploring rock pools on Llandudno beach, climbing the castle just behind the grounds, and various games and challenges around the site – a boarding school out of term. They made some films, squeezed round an artificial cave system, climbed and abseiled, got muddy, ... and they supported each other wonderfully when something was wrong ~ a joy to see.

There were also evening entertainments, with some cracking singing, acrobatics and dancing from the kids, and the inevitable attempts to stay awake all night ~ unsuccessful, of course, given the amount of energy expended each day.

And there were some wry moments, such as the time when, suffering from TV withdrawal symptoms, half the group sat watching a programme on L. S. Lowry and contemporary Welsh artists ~ in Welsh! As is to be expected there were some moments of disappointment ~ ... no third go on the zip wire, or whatever ~ but by and large a good time was had by all.

DIG NORTHENDEN MILL ~ YET AGAIN!

This seems to have been a successful event, though as last year most of what was revealed was the Georgian/ Regency building, with a few tantalising hints of the earlier use of the site.

Two broken millstones were found, buried (deliberately) under a threshold ~ mmm, interesting! A JCB exposed the deep culvert bringing water to the electric generating turbine. This was so far down that further work was impossible, but elsewhere trowels and hand-brushes revealed sandstone foundations set in clay ~ mediaeval work, or just the local style over the centuries?

Hundreds of children (including groups from St. Wilfrid's and Northenden Community Schools) got a taste of history as they worked on the mill office and sales counter, as did a steady stream of adults in the mill itself, and its furnace room.

Well over a thousand people visited the site on its open days in July (despite a football match somewhere in Germany!) to hear what had been found, get a feel for its past, and indulge in art with an archaeological theme (artaeology?)

I am sure a report meeting will be held in the new year.

NEW DAWN COUNSELLING.

Free, professional counselling

at the New Dawn Community Centre,

Button Lane, Northen Moor. Tel. 0161 – 962-8100.

Counselling in a Christian context, under the auspices of the

Brit. Assoc. of Counselling and Psychotherapy,

The service is free, though donations towards the costs are welcome.

Northenden Methodist Church.

Palatine Road.

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

Sunday Services.

13 th	11.00am	Mrs. Margaret Hunt
20 th	11.00am	Miss Joyce Burgess
27 th	11.00am	Holy Communion ~ The Rev. D. Bown
Sept. 3 rd	11.00am	Morning Service
	6.30pm	United Service @ St. Wilfrid's

COMMUNITY LUNCH ... on Wed... 9th Aug.

12.00 noon to 1.30pm at the "Eatery". Victoria Rd.

and on Wed. 23rd Aug., a **cold buffet lunch** too.

St. Wilfrid's Church,

Ford Lane. (Off Church Rd.)

Rector: Greg Forster (998-2615)

Organist: Arthur Mellor (928-0472)

[www . stwilfridsnorthenden . org . uk](http://www.stwilfridsnorthenden.org.uk)

Services:

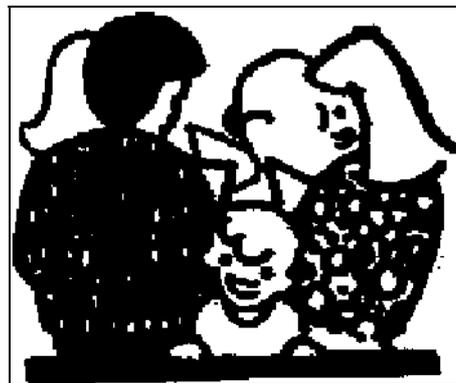
On Sundays at 8.00am, and on Thursdays at 10.00am there is a Communion service (using the old Prayer Book).

There is a "Sunday Club" for 7 – 11+ year olds in the Rectory at 10.30am, for about an hour, except when there is a Family Service (for parents and children together) in Church.

A Sunday School, 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.

BUT ... these are closed during August. Sunday School reopens on 10th Sept., and Sunday Club on 17th.

13 th	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Evening Worship



20th 10.30am Holy Communion & Baptism
 6.30pm Evening Worship

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

3rd Sept. 10.30am Family Communion
 6.30pm United Evening Service @ St.Wilfrid's

Please note too that the church is open each Sunday afternoon from 1.45 – approx. 5.15pm, for prayer, visiting, enquiries, &c.

For your Diaries

Sat. 5th Aug. Coffee Morning, 10am ... Church Hall.
 and 2.00 – 4.00pm, **Cream Tea**, 4 Netherwood Rd.
 Mon, 7th. Women's Group, Rectory, 8.00pm.
 P.C.C. ... next meeting not till September

WOMEN'S GROUP ... MON. 7TH AUGUST 8.00PM
 There will be a women's group in August ~ details still to be fixed. But please note, there will **not** be one in September.
Sue Forster

From the Registers ...

In Memoriam ...

Beatrice Hodgert (Lovett Walk) 82,
 Albert Cheetham (Heald Green) 67
 Alice Worthington (Wilmslow) 85,
 Joan Webster (Heald Green) 67.

Confirmation on Sun. 25th June ...

Gail Sharp, Alison Young, Sally-Ann Falshaw*,
 Gavin Snelson*, Danielle Snelson*, Carla Snelson*.

** Also baptised in the same service.*

Baptised on Sun. 25th June ...

Luke Alexander Smith and Matthew Cadman Smith

... and baptised on Sun. 25th June ...
Olivia Esther Quinn and Amelia Louise Quinn,
Maisy Amy Campbell, Christy Martin Walsh.

Toilets update ~ church and hall: *Greg Forster*

Once again, this is still “ongoing”! We have returned the certificate of public notice to the Diocese and expect their clearance for the work in the near future.

Cards ~ some with prayers for the sick or bereaved, some with pictures of the church, and some (by Roni Armstrong) with elaborate designs for very special events, are available on sale in St. Wilfrid's church. Can you use them, for your own prayers or for a friend, or for special times?

Did you miss the “Open Days” at St. Wilfrid's Church in June? The next full church opening is part of the national “Heritage Open Day” scheme on 9th (working round a wedding) & 10th September, though the building is open every Sunday afternoon.

wwwWebsite: St. Wilfrid's has a website up and running at **www . stwilfridsnorthenden . org . uk** . Look us up, and let us know what you think. I am told that there is also an item about us on the English Heritage website now, since they have funded some of our recent maintenance work and we are “listed”.

Confirmation notes. *Greg Forster*

How much do you know about the basics of our faith? I gave the people who were confirmed at the end of June some notes: here is a shortened version of one set.

In Confirmation ...

- You confirm the promises made on your behalf when you were **baptised** some years before. (Or, if you have not been baptised at all, that can be part of the service.)

- The **Church** confirms that you are a full, adult member, and it is the bishop, who leads that confirmation, representing the worldwide church.
- God promises to confirm, or strengthen us in our lives and in our trust of him through the gift of his **Holy Spirit**.

In the church of England ...

- It gives a chance to learn about the key things Christians believe and do, and ...
- It is the usual way in which people are prepared to take **Holy Communion**, and are formally welcomed to share it.

In preparing for confirmation we usually look at ...

- What happens in the Confirmation service, and some practical arrangements for *your* confirmation.
- What happens in a communion service, and what it means.
- The **Creed**, and what Christians believe
- The **Lord's prayer**, and prayer and using **the bible** in general.
- The **Ten Commandments**, and how Christians try to live.
- Something about the **Church** (local, worldwide, historical), how the church of England organises itself, and why churches are like they are.
- Anything else you want to bring up!

Confirmation ~ The Bible.

... **“The word of God”** ~ a written record of what God has done and said with his people over perhaps 4,000 years. It is a story of God's actions as well as a record of what he has revealed or how he instructs us to live.

... Not something that was “dictated” but a whole range of books by different people, some reflective and poetic, some tragic, some legal, some historical, some myths (that is, “big” stories, told in homely ways, about what people are like and how God relates to the world ~ true because that is what things are like: for instance in Genesis 1 the important point is that **God alone** created the world ~ not how long he took ~ and by the way, the stars are *his* creation, not powers themselves!).

The Old Testament

... is the Jewish bible. Some of it dates from perhaps 1300 BC, but most from between 800 and 350 BC. or a bit later. (“Testament” here means “agreement”, “covenant” ~ the old way of relating to God)

... was written mostly in a language called Hebrew.

... a lot of rules about how to live your life; a good lifestyle.

... histories of how God helped – and corrected – his people, rescuing them from Egypt, and giving them a land to live in, and power under king David, ... and lots more.

... prophecies ~ promises and warnings about what God and the hopes of people for a world even better than David’s kingdom;

... poems and hymns of praise to God, and prayers when things went wrong ~ the “Psalms”.

... wisdom for living, and thoughts on life ~ Proverbs, &c.

The New Testament ...

... the fulfilment of Old Testament hopes, as God got involved in human life in person, through Jesus. It was written in Greek, originally.

... In the Gospels we read the story of Jesus, and what he did for us, and what he taught. Mark probably wrote his first, and it was used by Luke and Matthew as the basis of theirs. John’s looks more like a ‘supplement’ to Mark’s, adding details especially about Jesus early work and bringing out more of its spiritual meaning.

... Jesus told his followers to spread the good news of what he had done for them. The book of Acts is a history of some of the ways they did this between about 30 and 62 AD all round the Mediterranean sea.

... They kept in touch, encouraged each other, and sorted out difficulties by writing letters, some of which survived to help us!

Over to you ...

All this was inspired by God and we can read it to learn about him, what he has done for us and expects from us. Read long bits as a story, or a small piece (perhaps every day ~ there are some notes to help this on the church bookstall, or I can

suggest a pattern of reading.) to think it over and pray about, and so to meet God.

The next Confirmation in this area is in the autumn ~ October 29th, I think. Let me know if you are interested, or if you know of someone who might be. GSF.