

CONCORD ~ August 2012

Prayer for the Month

Grant to us, Almighty Father,
the faith, hope and love to lay aside every weight of sin,
and the wrongs which hamper and cramp our lives,
and to run the race of life which is set before us,
looking to Jesus and taking our lead from him,
for he is the trailblazer and anchor-man of our faith.

Amen.

Based on Hebrews ch. 12 vv1,2.

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane.
0161 998 2615

Dear Friends,

Last month I made a brief note about the economic crisis and hinted at the problems of climate change and over-exploitation of the Earth's limited resources. In the prompt-sheet that I wrote then for this issue I put the one name "Rio", referring to the climate change conference that was about to take place there. I would not back off anything I said last month, but the conference does not inspire me to write very much more, either. It was a bit of a damp squib ~ though at least they agreed to go on talking. These issues will not go away; while we may discover new sources for minerals and the like they remain finite, and the energy we expend in using them will continue to affect our planet and its balances. Without restraint, and a rethink of priorities, I fear for our future. At the very least, we can probably look forward to more odd weather!

"Sin shall not have dominion over you." It is a lovely promise, which we find in Paul's letter to the church at Rome. I used to think of it simply as a promise that the things which I have done wrong would not count against me in God's sight, but, thanks to Christ's death on the cross they were forgiven and no longer had any force. I still believe that, and I pass it on and commend it to you all. But it is not all that Paul was promising in God's name.

He is also saying that the wrong habits and patterns of behaviour which we develop can be broken, and will no longer distort our relationships, as we let the fruit of the Spirit grow in our lives ~ love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, control.

But it recently struck me that there is even more to that promise. Paul is not just writing about the sins which we commit ourselves. He was writing about both the atmosphere of sin which can surround us, and also the ways in which we have been sinned against. By 'atmosphere of sin' I mean the whole body of accepted attitudes and practices in the community we live in. (Perhaps even the idea that we can 'grow' ourselves out of the problems caused by greed. Many of these are attitudes twisted (some, of course, are not) and so can twist our actions; Christians set their sights on Jesus, and take their bearings from him, and so can set a different course and create a different atmosphere around them. To change the metaphor, a sailing boat is not bound to be blown down-wind; by setting the sail and balancing the rudder it can even work against the wind. So (to use what is, I suspect, a corporal-Jonesism) don't let them get you down. Reset your own sails with the compass bearing on Jesus.

But that is not all, and it is perhaps not even the most important point to remember and nurture in our hearts and minds. No, we are also victims of other people's sins. The key, further point is that their power in our lives is broken through Christ, not just the effects of what we have done ourselves. For some people these things loom large, while for others they just run off their backs like duck's water. We are each different, and we each bring different personal stories with us. But part of the Christian promise is that such hurts and scars can be healed and their burden lifted from us. It may not be easy, and it may need to be revisited from time to time, perhaps as hurtful memories are brought back to the surface by some new event or experience, but this is part of what Jesus was doing in his healing ministry and on the cross.

My basis for saying this lies partly in the repeated encouragement we find in the New Testament letters to 'welcome one-another, forgiving one another *as God in Christ forgave you.*' As we realise how much God has written off which he might resent or hold against us, then we have the example and motivation to let go of those things which hurt us, and we can draw on his emotional energy, his loving Spirit, to make it possible. Thus we find in the Lord's prayer, and in Jesus comments about it in Matthew 6;14, or in the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18 v21ff, encouragement for us to let go, for us to forgive if we hope to experience the full benefits of God's forgiveness of us.

That does not necessarily mean that it is easy. Such things can be part of our story, and it is not simple to consign them to a footnote when they have seemed like headlines. I am not suggesting that we deny that the hurt has happened. It is a footnote, not a torn out page, but the headline becomes God's love for us, in Christ; the footnote no longer has dominion over us. We can look back and say, 'That hurt, but I have put it into God's hands and let it go. It did matter, but I am not going to let it scar my life any more or twist my attitudes or my experience of life now.'

For that to happen it may simply mean a time ~ or a few times ~ of thought and contemplation and prayer by yourself. Or it may mean talking the story through with a trusted friend, not for gossip but for healing. It may mean conscious prayer for the healing of our memories, and for freedom from their scars.

In July the Church of England expended a great deal of emotional energy in debating the matter of **Women Bishops**, and it was clear that for many people on both sides of the debate this was a matter of strong feeling and perhaps hurt. The church is in danger of being damned if it does and damned if it doesn't (by one side or the other inside the debate) and probably damned (by outsiders) for doing what it has in fact done, namely deferring a decision which to many in secular society seems glaringly obvious.

As I suggested a page or two ago, secular society is not necessarily our arbiter for our conduct, and it is apt to show a great deal of intolerance towards those whom it denounces as intolerant. One of the strengths of the Church's debate is that it has tried to find a way through its impasse which does show a great deal of tolerance and accommodation of conscientiously held minority views. I believe that is not just woolly liberalism gone mad, but a valid attempt to follow the biblical pattern of dispute resolution ~ in Romans ch. 14 St. Paul attempts to chart a passage through the narrows between Jewish food laws (observed by many Christians of his time) and Gentile Christian freedoms. He argued for respect from both sides for the conscientiously held views of the others ~ views which were not just fads but matters which lay deep in the personal identity and experience of both sides. Neither should be triumphalist, neither should do anything that would make a stumbling block to the faith-in-practice of people for whom Christ died. Whether his solution worked out in the long term is a matter of uncertain history: some Jewish practice did survive in some of

the churches around the eastern Mediterranean, but the church became overwhelmingly Gentile in membership, perhaps as Jewish Christians felt squeezed out.

So what about bishops? When my clerical colleagues discuss “the bishop” ~ whichever one it is ~ it is rarely a discussion about his pedigree. They do not seem to ask who ordained him and then which other bishops consecrated him. Perhaps now it does go without saying that he will have been ordained by a man, though some purists may be wondering whether he is tainted by having ordained women.

No, the questions and comments centre round his effectiveness, both as a pastor, and as an administrator and planner (But perhaps in this part of Manchester I come across few who would oppose women bishops ~ so many of my colleagues are women themselves around here!) Especially if there is some difficulty over the parish’s future the questions are about how well he has handled it (probably not to the liking of the parish so not well!) and how well he has communicated his intentions and decisions. In other words, the issue is about how well he functions as a leader, rather than whether he has the right kind of credentials.

I think I have written before that the questions I want to ask about a bishop, (given that we need some kind of leadership within the church above parish level, and those people will be called something) are about effectiveness as pastor, teacher, and manager or director. That will apply whether the bishop is a woman or a man ~ though I suspect that the first women bishops will find they are assessed more critically on all these counts, if and when they come.

So, despite the bad press, I believe that the delay is right. It does give space to look again at how all sides should show respect for each other. But also I think it should prompt a serious rethink about our perspective. We should start from the generosity, the grace of God, not from the competence or validity of people. God’s goodness, expressed and experienced in prayer and worship and the sacraments of bread and wine or baptism, is not diminished or tainted by our inadequacies. If we think that, what sort of a God do we believe in? Yes, we should respect the scruples of those uneasy with women’s ministry, but not in a way that belittles God.

That’s all important, but you want to know about other things too, so now read on. *Greg Forster*

Northenden Methodist Church

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

Sunday Services.

1st Sunday every month

Family worship ~ Sunday breakfast club ~ MESSY CHURCH
All start off with breakfast** together at 9.00am, then do activities with your child(ren) followed by a story, songs, and prayer based on the activities ~ finishes about 10.30am.

**Currently £1 per person.

For details contact Amy Carline, 07816 888 704

Aug. 5 th	9.00am Messy Church
	11.00am The Rev. J. Tresise
	6.30pm United Service @ St. Wilfrid's
12 th	11.00am Miss J. Burgess
19 th	11.00am Holy Communion. The Rev. David Bown
26 th	11.00am Mr. Ron Caseley
Sept. 2 nd	9.00am Messy Church
	11.00am to be announced
#	6.30pm United Service at St. Wilfrid's #
9 th	11.00am to be announced

We are into to Drama season again, and Northenden Players will have a performance on this Sunday in the hall, so arrangements for joint services are being juggled to avoid a clash with them.

Community Lunch

Wed. Aug. 8th, 12 noon - 1.30pm ~
Next lunch ~ Sept. 12th. (**to be confirmed**)

Northenden Players Theatre Club
at the Methodist Hall, Victoria Rd.

Sept. 2nd – 8th (not Mon. 3rd)
7.00 / 7.30pm

Iron *by Rona Munro*

Tickets: contact Barbara Leary, 0161 445-6868

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, both between 10.30 and 11.30am Sundays ...

... except when there is a Family Service in church (Sept. 2nd., &c.) ~ and not during the main school holidays in August.

Aug. 5 th	10.30am	Family Communion	
	3.00pm	<i>Nigerian Congregation</i>	
	6.30pm	United Service at St. Wilfrid's	
12 th	10.30am	Holy Communion	
	6.30pm	Evening Worship.	
19 th	10.30am	Holy Communion	
	6.30pm	Evening Worship	
26 th	10.30am	Morning Prayer	
	6.30pm	Holy Communion	
Sept. 2 nd	10.30am	Family Communion	
	§ 3.00pm	Nigerian Congregation	§
	6.30pm	United Service at St. Wilfrid's	#
9 th , 15 th	10.30am	Holy Communion	
	6.30pm	Evening Worship	

And advance notice that the **Harvest Festival** family service and shared lunch this year will be on **30th Sept.**, to simplify arrangements on the following Sunday when we have a wedding booked.

§ And additional services over the week-end as we welcome the visit of a Bishop from Nigeria. Watch out for more publicity.

Northenden Players have a performance on this Sunday, and arrangements for joint services are juggled to avoid a clash.

Drop in on St. Wilfrid's ...

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

On Aug. 5th and Sept. 2nd the church will be open from 2 till about 2.45pm in this way, and then will be in use for a service.

The church will also be open on the last Saturday of each month, from 10am till noon (in parallel with the Coffee Mornings). To visit at other times, please contact the Rector.

The next open week-end (with tower climbs and displays, &c.) is Sept. 8th and 9th, to coincide with the national "Heritage Open Days".

Dates for your Diary ~ it's (not) all happening!



Please note the normal events **not** happening and so not listed!

The date of the PCC meeting for August is **23rd**, at 7.30pm, in the hall. We are experimenting with less frequent meetings.

But do note the two **Farmers' Markets** on Aug. 4th and Sept. 1st.

Northenden Boat Race is booked for 26th Aug. starting at about 1.00pm at Simon's Bridge, and finishing at the Weir. Events at the riverside, the village green and possibly refreshments in St. Wilfrid's Hall. The event is intended to raise money for Christie's, and it is rumoured that Christie-Bear will be in attendance to urge everyone on. If possible the church tower will also be open for climbers and viewers, with a charge going towards the cause.

Women's Group. There was nothing in July, but mark **Aug. 6th** in your diaries. John Kendal, a friend of ours, will be talking about life as a Vet and then as a Teacher. SDF.

The Parish Registers –

In Memoriam ...



Dorothy Gurley (Withington) 92, Barbara Nolan (Sale) 79,
Tony Gurbutt (Sale) 68, Graham Padmore (Gibwood Rd.),
Dorothy Hibbert (Kenworthy La.) 88,
Margaret Gabison (Brett St.) 93,
David Longson (Wythenshawe) 56.

Married, in the Parish Church on Tues. 17th July

Monica Kai-sen Chan to Samuel Raymond Stewart Chadwick

June's "Midsummer Madness" Concert for the Booth Centre raised £160, for which they are grateful. Thanks to all involved.
And counting ...

Congratulations to Audrey Blake who has just clocked up ninety years, and to Agnes Davies who passed that milestone a few months back. Best wishes too to Dorothy Rowley, who was 99 a couple of months ago.

Thanks to two Sidesmen who have recently stood down due to infirmity: Doris Nadin and Joyce Blackburne have given sterling service over the past years ~ decades even ~ but have decided to hand over the books to someone else now. We are most grateful to them for their help over that time.

Magpie

... was happily flying past the church one afternoon in early July when a tree flew past him, going the other way. Magpie is used to odd events, but this one called for further investigation. It was a tree, a small willow, and it was soon followed by another two. Where did this flock of trees come from? The answer was plain to see; they had been roosting for far too long in the high level gutters of the clerestory roof, and had just been rooted out and shooed away by the Rector.

"Hello," said Magpie, "what are you doing here?"

"Gardening, of course," replied the Rector in a matter of fact sort of voice. "Hadh't you heard of the Hanging Gardens of Northenden?"

"You didn't fly here, did you?" asked Magpie in surprise, since there was no obvious way up, "Or have you got a sky-hook?"

"If only!" said the Rector, "But seriously, there's a ladder on the other side, and a stairway half way up onto the lower roofs."

... picks up the story of the Police Station where Benny left off last month. It closed on 26th June, or thereabouts, and the officers based there now report to the big Wythenshawe station at the beginning of their shift. But lo and behold, a week or so later it reopened as a comfort stop where officers patrolling in the Northenden and north Wythenshawe area can brew up, &c., mid-shift.

... Benny, who wrote this column last month, has filed his last report. He was, after all, a very elderly Boxer, and had kept on running long after most of his kind would have given up.

... has been looking into the size of print on medicine bottles, and the like. It's tiny, isn't it? Less than half the size of this print (which is, for the record, 10 point Verdana). That is true even for eye drops. And when you have an operation for cataract, or other eye trouble, you are given a sheet of instructions about immediate post-operation care to read, even though it takes a couple of days before your eye-sight is clear enough to read. It's all rather like the instruction on the *bottom* of a shop-bought quiche ~ "Do not turn upside-down".

... is glad to see that the British Legion site on Royle Green Road is now opened up with an access road down into the development. It looks as if the houses behind the frontage will be ready for sale or letting in the near future. There are various tales as to what is happening about the intended Legion club building, but Magpie has nothing definite to report.

... and things are looking up with another of the development sites around there ~ the old Spread Eagle is coming down, and will probably be empty ground by the time this Concord hits your door-mats; eleven houses are to be built on the site, similar to those on the next-door Bell Croft.

... has again been asked about "that thing" at the end of Church Rd. The developers' appeal against the council's refusal to allow their extra three metres took place on 3rd - 5th July. We hoped that soon after then we should know, but the inspector has to go away and read up all the arguments presented and policies that are relevant. That could take up till Christmas, according to an insider at the Planning Dept. The piles of paper on the inspector's desk at the hearing were certainly massive, and even so she did not have all of them with her. However, it was suggested at the Civic Society in July that we would get a judgment by the end of August.

It was interesting to see how the enquiry worked, particularly the ways of the developers' barrister; he plodded through the niceties of words in the planning policy with all the alacrity of a Galapagos tortoise, dissecting them more finely than a mediaeval theologian discussing the angelic inhabitants of a pin-head. In such ways the interests of democracy are served. So roll on Christmas: with equal alacrity we shall come to learn the fate of the Green Dalek.

... "Is Father Ted in?" asked the caller at the presbytery door.

"I'm afraid not," replied the housekeeper, "he's on a course."

"Fr. Tom, then?" tried the visitor.

"He's on a course too," she responded, "and Fr. James is away at the infirmary seeing old Mrs. McGinty."

"Well, I'll have to leave it," shrugged the caller, impressed at the training that the priesthood were receiving, "tell them I called, would you, and I'll try again another day."

That evening over supper Fr. Tom asked his colleague about the day; "How did you get on then, Ted?"

"Oh, it was a grand course, you know. I must go on it again. I went round in one under my handicap. What about you?"

"Oh, it was a good day to be sure," Tom replied, "My horse came in first in the three-thirty at 10 to one, and I shall be buying old Mrs. McGinty that bottle of brandy she was asking after." Ted raised his eyebrows. "It was her tip," said Tom, with a grin.

... Seriously though, there are other development issues in Northenden. The rumour is that Camperlands are selling up, and their land with the car park is to be developed too. They have been talking about this for years, however, so maybe it is just another flicker of the old candle ~ but the village cannot afford to lose another parking area.

... nearby, Morrison's are still interested in the present carpet shop on Palatine Rd., and are talking about sub-leasing the back of the building to Halford's as a garage for MOT work. All well and good, but will they increase the price they pay to dairy farmers for their milk to a fair level? That is a more significant question.

... and finally, what a lot of weather we have been having! But think of the alternatives. If Britain did not have any weather, what would we talk about? No-one would stop to gossip in the streets; coffee mornings would fall silent; a deathly hush in the pubs; there might even be no tweets on twitter.

Olympic Northenden.

G S F

We are being told that we should be all agog about the Olympics, and that we are unpatriotic because less than half the country think the games will benefit anywhere other than London. Be that as it may, I thought I would investigate our own Northenden 1948 Olympian. He was Roy Whittaker, who ran a newsagent's on Church Rd., and who is commemorated in the churchyard. I had

gained the impression that he managed to be in both Hockey and Lacrosse teams and to get a medal in both.

Sadly, stories can grow in the telling. He did indeed play in the G.B. Lacrosse team, (but not in the hockey) and Lacrosse was not a competitive, medal event. There was only one match ~ an exhibition event between the British team and an American side. The result was five all, which probably suited the Olympian Spirit (at least as understood in 1948) very well and satisfied honour on both sides. In the hockey G.B. won silver, losing to India I think, but that's a different story and our Roy wasn't in the team.

Green Northenden.

Greg Forster

In July's Crux, the diocesan magazine insert, there was a piece about the Wildlife Garden which has been established on former waste ground behind St.Chad's church in Ladybarn, and opened by Bp. Mark Davies. Splendid! In Northenden perhaps we should blow our trumpets louder.

For a year now we have been working on a community orchard here. It produced two apples last year, one of which went to a gentleman of the road who claimed he needed something sugary, and the other (if I remember rightly) to Mrs. Lloyd, whose idea it was. It is at present situated in the corner of the churchyard to the north-east of the church, between it and the Old Rectory, and more trees were added last winter. At the moment they are quite small, but they produced a fine display of blossom in the spring, and several have fruit ripening.

We hope to create another similar area on glebe land off Ford Lane, bordering Didsbury golf course, but with the weather we have been having that has proved difficult to arrange: after some years neglect, since its occasionally resident horse retired to Pickmere, it is overgrown and very tangled with nettles and brambles, not to mention the aged ash-tree which fell in one of this June's gales. Whom might we get to open it?

Someone was interviewed on the radio about a similar project elsewhere. "But aren't you afraid people will take the fruit?" asked the interviewer. The organiser smiled (or at least, you could hear her laugh). "That's what it's for."

<p>The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) South Manchester Meeting</p>

**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

The next **Civic Society** meeting is to be in St. Wilfrid's Church Hall on Tuesday 11th September.

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS AT St. WILFRID'S AND OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST.

As noted above St. Wilfrid's Church is open during the Heritage Open Days Week-end, 8th & 9th Sept. from noon till 5pm. The national scheme actually runs from the Thursday, and churches, other historic buildings, and locations are open, with events in some cases organised, around the country. There is something, I believe, at the Riverside Park too. For details of what's on when where, see [www . heritageopendays . org . uk /](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/)