

CONCORD ~ *January 2012*

Prayer for the Month ...

Lord of all your good creation, of its past and its future;

May we know your presence and support, your forgiveness and guidance in the coming year;

May we enjoy your goodness and generosity, and show our gratitude by living out those qualities ourselves;

May we see your wisdom and patience, your restraint and humility, reflected in the policies and practices of princes and presidents;

So bear us through the storms and calms of this new year in the knowledge of your love and grace,

And may we continue to honour you in our lives and our worship; for your name and glory's sake

Amen.

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane.

0161 998 2615

Dear Friends,

First of all, happy new year. Whatever else we say it is the chance for a new beginning, even if its launch pad is the old year and its old muddles. So best wishes and prayers for this coming year: may it be a time when our love for God deepens and our awareness of his presence grows stronger.

But will it be a happy new year? If you think of happiness in terms of friendships and achievements and contentment, in the service of God and each other, then we can build on where we are and what we have got now. If you think in terms of wealth or security or what you can buy and spend, then that may be a different story. I do not know, though I suspect the future will not be so rosy in that respect as perhaps we should naturally like.

I'm not saying that just in terms of the stuff we hear almost daily on the news or in the papers ~ the Euro-crisis, or inflation, the cost of living and cuts leading to unemployment. Those are serious ~ don't get me wrong ~ and may well cause problems in the coming year. Indeed, with crisis conferences every fortnight, these comments may be out of date before you read them. They are big things which can affect us as individuals in our

local setting. However, I fear that in the longer term we will look on them as a sort of sideshow.

I'm not talking religion here, but economics, or politics, or whatever word you want to use for the business of living on this Earth here and now. Religion does come into it, because God is concerned with this little bit of his creation, and (as we remember at Christmas, of course) was concerned enough about it to get his hands mucky for its sake. Religion does come into it because, I am sure, our relationship with God in this world as well as the next will have to be at the heart of how we cope with what the future throws at us.

But let me explain. Faced with the economic problems linked with banking, or with the excessive overdrafts that various European countries have run up, politicians have talked of working through the difficulty by economic growth. If we make more and earn more then we shall have more wealth from which to pay back the debt, and we might even be able to borrow more to create that growth. The problem is twofold. Growth is not guaranteed. In fact, as I learned just the other day, when a similar situation occurred in Japan twenty years ago people stopped spending, and reduced their private debt (which was a wise and I believe a very moral thing to do.) As a result there was very little growth for ten years. Literally we cannot bank on growth.

But there is a further complication. For many years we in Britain, Europe and America ~ and Japan ~ have been living with relatively cheap commodities to feed us and our industries. Now that is different. Other nations, with huge populations, have grown richer, and their appetite for the things we have taken for granted has grown. China, India, Brazil, and others are now bidding for the wheat, metals, oil which we in this country have in the past assumed would be easy to come by. So we should not assume that their costs to us, and so the rate of inflation which we face, will come down next year. They might. It would be nice if they did, but (again) don't bank on it. We cannot go on assuming that the pounds in our purses will stretch further each year from now to eternity.

But I have not finished this drear Jeremiad. I believe that to aim for growth and assume it is the way out of our problems is itself a delusion. Imagine that the Earth that we all live on is a

bank. We have been drawing on it for years – centuries. Till recently it had the resources to fund our lifestyles, but it has now dug deep, too deep, into its reserves. Like Northern Rock, or Lehman's, there is a run on it, and we are drawing out more than it has to give us. The assets are its oil, its forests, or the fish in its seas, and it is as if we are drawing out twice as much as it has in its vaults. And the difference between our Earth and Northern Rock is that there is no lender of last resort, no Government to bail us out if ~ when ~ the crash comes. We only have one Earth to draw on.

Like any analogy, that picture has its limits. The "crash" will probably be in terms of soaring commodity prices, and at the same time all the problems associated with global warming. It probably will not be this year or next. But in the longer term it will seem that the more significant conference of December 2011 will not be our Prime Minister's spat with Europe, but the UN Climate Conference in Durban, where it seems that everyone decided to keep talking and make a decision in 2020. The fact that everyone agreed to put the decision off for 9 years was regarded as a great success! Forgive me, but that sounds like a cop-out ~ even if it did mean that no one appeared to be walking away in a huff. It reminds me of a saying attributed to St. Augustine ~ "Lord, make me chaste, but not yet!"

So I am fearful but not sad to hear dire predictions that we will not be able to grow our way out of Europe's financial crisis, and that even China is reckoning on slower growth. Perhaps it is even God's nudge to us to change our attitudes (the religious word is "repent") before it is too late. Painful though it may be, it will give the climate a few more years ~ and with it the low lying islands and drying savannahs and the people on them. But it will mean strains in the way people get on with one another, and the way communities get on. As it is we campaign to avoid cuts in services we rely on. Are we actually right to do that? Probably yes, though such campaigns need to be developed into a more challenging discussion of how, morally, we share out the proverbial economic cake when it is diminishing. And when such debates have taken place, who will give leadership enough to carry people with them in reducing expectations? The solution will need to be just, and to be seen to be just, and borne fairly by richer and poorer.

I cannot offer you an instant solution ~ certainly not in the twelve pages of Concord ~ though perhaps the Christian virtues

of temperance and generosity, patient perseverance and restraint offer us some clues as to where the answer lies. I recall a phrase of the German theologian Jurgen Moltmann, talking to Manchester clergy many years ago now, that we should "think globally, but act locally." It has perhaps been a good sign that in some places and companies in recent years people have been prepared to share out work and take lower total wages, rather than see some made redundant. So there are signs of hope in a stormy vista. Perhaps this is a theme to return to in future editions and future sermons.

Meanwhile, I'm sorry to be so pessimistic, but after such a gloomy opening, read on, and a happy new year anyway!

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

Concord ... remains at **45p** this year, but perhaps will go up next. It is also available free by e-mail ~ just tell the Rector, or email him at the e-address on the St. Wilfrid's page. If you have any news or comment, let him have that too. He is even happier to have an article or two.

Organ Extravaganza ~

*Thursday 12th January, 7.30pm
in St. Wilfrid's Church.*

**A Recital given by Josh Stephens,
Organist at St. Wilfrid's**

Retiring offering in aid of the Booth Centre ~

Manchester Cathedral's work with the city's street people

Refreshments.

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

Jan.	1 st .		<i>No Messy Church planned</i>
		11.00am	Joyce Burgess
		6.30pm	United Service ~ David Bown.
	8 th	11.00am	Olive Tu'ihalamaka
	15 th	11.00am	The Rev. David Sanders; <i>Communion</i>
	22 nd	11.00am	Northenden Team
	29 th	11.00am	The Revd. David Bown
Feb.	5 th	9.00am	Messy Church
		11.00am	Mr. Duncan Rutter
		6.30pm	United Service at St. Wilfrid's
	12 th	11.00am	Mr. Nic Harding.

Community Lunch

Wed. 11th January, 12 noon - 1.30pm ~ normal arrangements
Next lunch ~ Wed. 8th Feb..

Fun Bingo

Usually last Saturday of the Month (28th), 12.00 noon - 2.00pm.
(to be confirmed in weekly notices)

Northenden Players Theatre Club:

5th – 11th Feb. (not Mon. 6th) 7.30pm

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.

at Northenden Methodist Hall, Victoria Rd.

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
(except on 1st January);

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 when there is a Family Service in church ~ i.e. 1st
Jan. & Feb 5th ...

Sunday 1st January 2012

No service at 8.00am

10.30am Family Communion "A New Thing ... "

6.30pm Evening Service @ Northenden Methodist Ch.

8th. 10.30am Holy Communion "Wealth ~ a moral issue."

6.30pm Evening Worship

15th 10.30am Holy Communion "I have called you ... "

3.00pm Nigerian Congregation.

6.30pm Evening Worship.

22nd 10.30am Holy Communion "About turn!"

6.30pm Evening Worship "St. Paul" ?

29th 10.30am Morning Prayer "God's Failures."

6.30pm Holy Communion

Feb. 5th 10.30am Family Communion & Parade *Joseph.*

3.00pm Nigerian Congregation (to be confirmed)

6.30pm United Service **at St. Wilfrid's**

12th 10.30am Holy Communion "Love and Marriage" ...

6.30pm Evening Worship. ... (for St. Valentine !)

Drop in on St. Wilfrid's ...

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

On New Year's Day we will not be open in this way.

On 15th Jan. and 5th Feb. the church will be open from 2 till about
2.45pm in this way, and then will be in use for a service.

We shall be considering additional ways
of opening the church those week-ends.

Dates for your Diary ~ it's all happening!



2012

Wed. 11th 8.00pm Bible Study Rectory.

Thu. 12th 7.30pm Organ Recital Josh Stephens
(see panel)

Wed. 18th, 25th. 8.00pm Bible Study Rectory.

Sat. 28th 10.00 – 11.30am Coffee Morning Church Hall.

Mon. 30th. 6.00pm School Governors' Meeting

Wed. Feb 1st. 8.00pm Bible Study Rectory

Note the Farmers' (and others') Market on Sat. 4th Febr.

Mon. 6th 7.45 for 8.00pm Women's Group

Wed. 8th, Bible Studies in the Rectory.

NB No Bible Study on 15th Feb.

Confirmation here this year. Someone has pointed out to me
that I got the date wrong: that Sunday is **17th** not 16th, June.

But before then, mark in your diaries Thurs. 17th May, when
the Ascension Day service for the Deanery will be in St. Wilfrid's in
the evening. Details later.



The Parish Registers –

Baptised on Sunday 11th December,

by the Rt. Rev. Mark Davies,

Bishop of Middleton ...

Chioma Rosemary Daisy Urum, Kenekwku David Urum,
Advent Chukwuoma Ilechukwu,

Epiphany Chukwudalu Ilechukwu.
In Memoriam ...
Eric Peter Smith (Kenworthy La.) 66,
Ivy Bloor (Morrell Rd.)

Women's Group. *No meeting on Mon. 2nd January 2012.*
The next meeting will be on Monday 6th Feb., in the Rectory.

The New Congregation ...

You will remember, from December's edition of Concord, mention of an inaugural service for a Nigerian Congregation. As I wrote last month, it has been a pleasure over the past year or so to share in worship with the Ven. Gideon Ilechukwu, and other Nigerian friends. There are many Nigerians in Manchester, many of them Anglicans, though they find our English Anglicanism unenthusiastic, I'm afraid. About a hundred of them demonstrated their own enthusiasm in worship at the service led by Mark Davies, bishop of Middleton, on that Sunday, when St. Wilfrid's rang to the sound of gospel singing to drums and keyboards ~ as well as some very heartfelt traditional Anglican hymns.

The bishop was commissioning Gideon to lead a Nigerian Congregation here in Manchester (There are already similar congregations in Liverpool, Birmingham and London, I believe). They will be meeting here in Northenden every month, in parallel with worship in their local parish churches, we hope. The next service is on 15th January, and after that probably on the first Sunday of each month ~ but watch this space. And not only did Bishop Mark launch Gideon onto this new ministry; he also launched four children, including Gideon's own twins, into their Christian lives when he baptised them as part of the service.

St. Wilfrid's School ...

... is now officially "GOOD". That was the overall verdict of the Ofsted inspection which took place at the end of November, and which can now be made public. Those of us who have anything to do with the school have known this for a long time! At the time of writing we are gearing up for what is called a SIAS inspection (as well as eating Christmas dinners, enjoying Christmas parties, and teaching literacy, numeracy, art, sport and all sorts, as you would expect. SIAS stands for Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools, and is an inspection of how we are doing with RE, Worship and the

Ethos of the school, as a church school. We are confident of at least a "good" report on that too.

All this has happened in the middle of one of the most awkward times for the school in recent years ~ but one which we have been dreaming of for some time! The main building is ~ was ~ state of the art 1960s; acres of steel framed window; light and airy, and in the winter bitterly cold, in summer over-warm, and in sunlight so light that computer screens were unusable. For various reasons a scheme which we had for replacing the walls and windows with modern insulation and glazing over the summer was delayed and delayed, and as the inspectors arrived so did the contractors to rip out asbestos panels and glazing (safely) and install the new walls and smaller double glazed windows. Work is now, at last, well under weigh, and by February we should be a lot more comfortable in the school.

So staff and pupils deserve a round of applause and congratulations for what they have achieved and what they have put up with!

Magpie...

... Mentioned the two kingfishers on the Northenden stretch of the Mersey last month. Now he's heard of five Goosanders on our reach. What's a goosander? It's a kind of duck with a hooked beak for catching fish, and is quite spectacular.

... is still concerned about School Crossing Patrols. The council have announced that they have "saved" a number (which they probably never reckoned on stopping anyway). That means that a number have been axed, including the two on Palatine Rd., ~ one of the busiest commuter runs in Manchester ~ and Longley Lane, which is still a long, straight, fast piece of road, despite the recent traffic calming chicane. Write to the council! Write to your MP! E-mail [cllr. p. andrews @ manchester. gov. uk](mailto:cllr.p.andrews@manchester.gov.uk) ~ he's the chair of the committee which made the decision. Write to the Evening News, which ran a campaign in November/December. Better still, get your children or grand-children to do the writing with you.

... and it seems that the cost of retaining the "saved" patrols is actually to come from the schools' budget of the council, not its highways' budget as hitherto, so children are still being docked the resources they need.

... was looking over Mary Portas' shoulder as her report into High Street shopping was launched just before Christmas. He noticed that credit was given to organisations which had contributed evidence, including "South Manchester Council." Who they might be is not certain, but Northenden Civic Society (and also Chorlton C.S., we believe) submitted their ideas and plans for the areas, so perhaps we have been promoted to District status.

... that, and some other issues like the new Localism Act, prompts him to ask whether it is time to revive the idea of a Civil Parish Council in Northenden. The statutory two year gap since the last attempt must be nearly over now. Or is it just not yet the right time to ask again?

By the time Concord is on your doormats we may have had a decision about the tower block at "no.1" Church Rd. It comes up on 22nd Dec., which is too late to get in this edition and will be old news by the next, so watch someone else's space!

STOP PRESS! The Council Planning committee turned the application down again; an appeal is likely to the Secretary of State.

... is amused to think that the universe has a bo's'n. He is called Higgs, apparently, after the skipper who first thought he must be hiding there somewhere. Is there a cox'n too? he wonders. The bo's'n to keep everything shipshape and Bristol fashion, and the cox'n to keep it on the right heading. Seriously, the scientists think they may have caught a glimpse of one of these fundamental particles, twice, from different angles, in that great electro-magnetic doughnut they have built under Switzerland at Cern. (In fact it is also under a bit of France. Does the bo's'n have to show his passport as he crosses the border?) Praise God for their skill. Praise God for the wonder and intricacy of his creation, though I wonder if he is a bit miffed that the bo's'n is sometimes called the "God particle" on the grounds that it is (allegedly) so fundamental to everything there is. "My glory will I give to no other." But on the other hand, is that a kind of back handed concession that there is Someone out there, behind everything, even if it is unscientific to admit it? Praise the Lord, anyway!

... but did you notice the fuss a few months ago when the people from the doughnut announced that they had caught some particles exceeding the speed limit on the way from Cern to Italy. They were so apologetic. They'd fired something off ~ a neutrino, I

think ~ and it had got to its destination before it was allowed to. Nothing should exceed the speed of light (186,000 miles a second, except it was travelling in kilometres) but these errant particles had dared to go at 186,002 m.p.s. Seriously though, the Cern people put their evidence out very cautiously and asked for comments. The media got the story and woke several eminent people up too soon before breakfast, and bounced them into saying it could not happen, before they had heard the evidence. (That's media for you) Some scientists think you can treat God in the same way; he shouldn't be there by their calculations, so he isn't. It is more honest and scientific, surely, to keep an open mind, even if it is inquisitively agnostic like the Cern people's approach to their speed merchants. Praise the Lord, anyway. Creation is even more surprising than Newton, or even Einstein, thought. Meanwhile, apparently the Neutrino Family have done it again, and the Italian police are trying to catch them with a speeding ticket.

Thank You...

... to Concord advertisers and distributors for their contribution to your magazine in 2011.

Note that the distributors may be knocking on your door this month for the year's subscription ~ though some leave it until the evenings draw out and a knock is less alarming.

Thank You Too ...

... to everyone involved in the Folk & Carols concert in early December. £127 was sent on to the Booth Centre as a result. This was a creditable sum, given the wildness of the weather that night. The music is also available on-line at stockportfolkradio. Put that into a search engine, and it will come up. If you download it contributions are invited to the Booth Centre for the privilege. And on the subject of the Booth Centre, thanks too to everyone who contributed to our collection before Christmas of soups, sweaters and the like. They have been duly delivered, and appreciated.