

CONCORD ~ July 2014

Prayer for the Month

O Lord our God, who art in every place,
from Whom no space or distance can ever separate us;
We know that those who are absent from each other
are still present with Thee.

Into Thy holy care and keeping we commit our dear ones
now parted from our sight,
and may we know that through prayer and worship and
sacrament, by drawing near to Thee,
we draw near to each other. **Amen.**

A prayer used by Lowry Hamilton, Rector during WW1.

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane.

0161 **998 2615**

Dear Friends,

It is heartening to hear people, who have perhaps recently moved into Northenden, saying that they find it a good place to live, with things happening to make it better, and they compare it favourably with other parts of Manchester which we sometimes look at enviously. So whatever your memories of an earlier Northenden (good, idealised or bad) don't forget that it has a lot going for it! Now!

Having written that, I do have to admit, and even lament, that the Farmers' or Street Market is a shadow of its former self. A year or more ago I used the phrase "Use it or Lose it." I am afraid now we are losing it, but I can also say that efforts are being put in to regenerate it, by Forum and Civic Society, and by our councillors. One of its problems, which has been highlighted to me by a disabled visitor in May, and by local shop traders in June, is that by locating it where it is we lose the 17 parking spaces which are normally there on the new parade. My answers were twofold; one to approach the people who set it up with a view to creating disabled parking even on Market days, and the other to point out that between them our shop traders have the answer to our parking problems ~ in their own back yards! There is ample parking space, if only they work together to clear and make secure the land behind the parade and to make

it well known. Then we shall have our own smaller scale equivalent of the excellent, and money generating trade creating parks behind Cheadle high street. I should hope that the Forum, working with the City council, can find ways and means to achieving that. Perhaps readers should badger the shop owners about this too.

I have spent quite a lot of time lately ~ more than usual ~ in work connected with St. Wilfrid's school. One point that has come out is that there is (yet again) a new version of the National Curriculum coming out for September. I am torn between a recognition that knowing what is expected of all schools is good, and a fear that when politicians and pundits tell us *what* to think (rather than teaching us *how* to think for ourselves) we are on dangerous ground. One item, which I gather has been included as a specific requirement for the first time, is the theory of evolution.

Now I have no problems with the science of evolution ... No, let me rephrase that; the science of evolution is work in progress, and it may be one, or even two, generations before we understand adequately how it worked. What I mean is that as a scientific study, it is on the right lines, and I would add, "thank God for it." Where I do have a problem is when evolution gets a capital "E", and becomes the origin myth of 20th century man. (yes, I do mean 20th). When people, especially our young people in schools, think that this is *all* there is to say about life and the meaning of the universe and no more needs to be said, then it becomes a distortion of reality rather than the whole truth.

I will develop this later on in this issue, but let me say here that I want to say both "Thank God for these scientific studies and developments" and "In the beginning it was God who created the heavens and the earth." They are not contradictions, but rather the one compliments the other; one begins to say how it happened, the other says who is behind it, and what it is for.

But now read on.

Greg Forster

Magpie ...

... still flies over The Tatton Arms. It remains an eyesore, and there are contradictory reports as to its future; one person says negotiations have broken down, but another

suggests a scheme will be lodged with the Planners by 2015. Lots of people have dreams, but dreams have to be funded whether they are flats or a restaurant or a community centre, so we will have to watch the proverbial space.

What is worth noting about it is that the whole site is within the Green Belt, and also within the Conservation Area. But the building itself is not "listed". The present building dates from about 1900, with a muddle of later additions behind the mock Tudor façade. At some stage outbuildings behind, which created a courtyard behind the newly renovated "Boat House", were demolished, so the "brownfield" area is bigger than it might seem from the present standing structures. The rubble and rubbish on the car park needs to be tidied up, and the iconic façade should be preserved, but beyond that ... Magpie would not want it left to get more derelict.

... has seen that at the British Legion site, pressure has been put on the owners to get it tidied up ~ but until conflicting claims and responsibilities are sorted out it will remain a blight on its neighbours. The new Forum is trying to get the owners to explain publicly what they are up to.

... wonders whether readers have started training for the boat race ~ on August Bank Holiday Sunday, starting at Simon's Bridge. Pump up your dinghy; polish up your rubber ducks; book the date now, and help raise money for Christie Hospital.

"We will remember them" 1914-1919 ~

7. The Rev. Ronald Allen, M.A., M.C., r. 1938-44

Last month I gave space to Lowry Hamilton, who served as an army chaplain during the Great War. There is another Rector with significant connections to that war. He was here during the Second ~ Ronald Allen. When I first came to Northenden people told me about my predecessors, and there was an implication that Mr. Allen had attracted a certain amount of suspicion at the beginning of that war. He seemed to disapprove of it, they said. I was puzzled, not least because in the church archives is a photograph of him taken in 1939, parading a group of lads along Ford Lane, under a caption that they were junior volunteers for what became the Home Guard.

Perhaps the explanation comes from the remark of an old serviceman (Navy, I think, from WW2) when I shared my misgivings about “celebrating” Remembrance Sunday: “No-one understands the value of peace and hates war more than an old soldier,” he said. If you look on the list of Rectors in the church, Allen’s name stands out from the rest. Most have M.A., or B.Th., or even D.D. after their names ~ academic, theological awards. Allen also has M.C. ~ Military Cross. I have tried to find the particular circumstances in which he showed “conspicuous gallantry in active operations against the enemy”, but the award was made as part of the King’s birthday honours in June 1919, so there is no specific citation to explain the award.

Allen served as a lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery, D181 Bde., in France and in Flanders. Presumably he stuck to his guns under fire from hostile artillery or an infantry attack, or exposed himself to fire as a forward controller to target the guns, as subalterns might be expected to do, perhaps in the final months of the war when stalemate turned into rapid retreat and then rapid advance and field guns could find themselves in the front line.

Whatever the reason, someone of proven gallantry might well feel able to express from first hand experience his misgivings ~ if indeed that rumour is true ~ at the grim prospect of a repeat performance, and at the same time show leadership and support to those called on to defend our shores again.

**The Rector’s booklet, *We Will Remember Them*, is now available from the Church. It reprints (or pre-prints) these articles which appear in *Concord*, together with some more information, and colour photographs.
Price (first edition) £2.00**

The Reason Why ...

The focus of this series of articles is human heroism and sacrifice, and people’s reactions both at home and in the field to the Great War. For this reason I have not said very much about the reasons for the war, or the strategy which led to such slaughter. But some comment is necessary as we draw near to the actual anniversary.

On 28 June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife, Sophie, Duchess of Hohenberg, were shot dead in Sarajevo, by Gavrilo Princip, one of a group of six assassins (five Serbs and one Bosnian Muslim) The political objective of the assassination was to break off Austria-Hungary's south-Slav provinces so they could be combined into a Greater Serbia or a Yugoslavia. To be fair, it succeeded, five years and 11 million deaths later!) It seems that Serbian military officers stood behind the attack. The assassination led directly to the War; Austria-Hungary issued an ultimatum against Serbia, which was partially rejected, not least because their deliberately tight deadlines made discussion and negotiation impossible, even in the age of the electric telegraph. Austria-Hungary declared war, but Serbia's ties with Russia, which (as perhaps now) saw itself as the guardian of all Slavs, brought the Russians in against Austria. A network of alliances and promises brought Germany in to support Austria and France in to support Russia. As noted in a previous article, Germany tried to by-pass France's defenses by invading Belgium, and by August 4th this brought in Britain as we honoured a treaty some 80 years old, protecting Belgium.

Tactics were outdated, at least to start with, so that initially cavalry were pitted against machine guns. The answer to a line of trenches was the mass charge by infantry, preceded by an artillery barrage intended (but often failing) to clear both barbed wire and the enemy's trenches. It took two or three years to develop more effective weapons ~ not least the tank (max. speed ½ mph!) ~ and less suicidal means of attack and defense, but casualties were still horrendous. More British soldiers *died* on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, in 1916, than were *deployed* to the Falklands or in Afghanistan. Scarce wonder that the parish war memorial here in Northenden has 62 names on it.

The war poets began by voicing pride and hope, but very soon their poetry took on a bitter and tragic edge, as they portrayed lives snuffed out and, as they saw it, inept planning. Two soldiers, Bill and Jack, describe their general, jauntily greeting his men as they trudge up to the line, as "a jolly old card," but soon comes the savage punch line in Sassoon's poem ~ "but he did for them both in his plan of attack."

As we look back we should not belittle the heroism of the Bills and the Jacks, or their wry humour and stubborn courage; but neither should we belittle the horror and vicious cruelty of the conflict, even if we wonder, "was there a better way?" They did sing in the trenches about the "lovely war", and that said something about their morale, but there was a grim blackly humorous inversion there, of the kind which modern kids used when they said something they like is "wicked."

We may even shudder at the arguments used to justify what was going on; ~ the German generals who justified themselves over their banquet by saying that they were proving Darwin's theories of the survival of the fittest, to the horror of the then neutral American journalist who was sitting in.

So don't believe Michael Gove if he tries to tell us (as he did at the beginning of the year, by all accounts, when talking about British history) that the "Blackadder" version of the war is false. (In the final episode of the comedy series Blackadder, often used as a discussion-starter in school history lessons, Baldrick and co are gaily joking in a fetid trench, till someone blows a whistle, they climb out over the edge and the screen goes black and the sound cuts. Truly black humour.) This peaceloving hindsight needs to be balanced by acknowledgment of high ideals, even noble sacrifice, and a recognition that strategists were looking for a better way. But episodes of goodness, such as I have described in this series, cannot negate a story of man's inhumanity to man.

Millions of lives later, after the collapse of Russia freed their armies to come west and they made an almost successful push towards Paris in spring 1918, the Germans overstretched themselves and American forces tipped the balance. The allies counterattacked in summer and autumn, British forces were back in Mons, which they vacated in October 1914, and the armistice came. In some ways we are still unpicking the muddle they made of the peace ..., but that's another story.

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 Enid Pinch, 445 6778

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

THE GOD OF SCIENCE.

Many people, especially those exposed as children for the first time to the stories of science, think there is a contradiction between the Bible's accounts of creation and what they hear from the scientists. Because science is the dominant way we understand the world nowadays they then assume that the Bible's accounts must be wrong, and there are sly propagandists of atheism who encourage that idea. But perhaps I do them wrong; perhaps they are not sly propagandists, but simply rather ignorant. They read Genesis thinking it is a misguided attempt at science. It is not that kind of story. (Would they take the poem, *My love is like a red, red rose*, and understand that the beloved in question was losing her hair as her petals fall, had black spot and green-fly, and was rather a prickly character?)

Science tells us *how* things came about and *how* they work ~ or it aims to, and is not doing a bad job about it. Thank God for it, as scientists find out what God already knows. The bible's stories and poems about creation are a different kind of literature. They are telling us who, and a bit about why, not just how. There is one God, and he made all we know and see just by saying so. (That is a challenge to the world around, when Genesis was written, when they thought all kinds of different gods had a hand in it, and had fought over it. Nowadays we could take it the other way too, and affirm that there is a God, who is Creator ~ it is not just a mechanistic process.) Sun and moon and the animals, which in the pagan myths of the time had divine powers, are made by the one God, on his say-so, and named by (that is, are under the authority of) the man. And it is orderly (made in the story to a timetable, kind by kind, and not chaotically) and is very good, for all the problems that have arisen within it.

And why? Perhaps the clue to that is in the enjoyment God takes in his creation ~ he takes time out to look, and appreciate what is very good ~ and in the way humankind is made in his image. We have things about us that are like God, and so can respond to him and relate to him, and can be creative

like him. And like him we relate to the creation, can appreciate it and care about it, and as the story develops relate to each other. That is a different kind of message than Darwin, or Dawkins, or Hawking; neither is wrong, together they paint a full picture.

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 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 £1.50p per person.

For details contact Amy Carline, 07816 888 704

If the first Sunday is a bank holiday or a school holiday, check with Amy to see if alternative arrangements have been made.

- July 6th 9.00am Messy Church
11.00am The Rev. Tim Nicholls (Holy Communion)
6.30pm United Service at Methodist Church.
- 13th 11.00am Mr. Phil Maltby.
6.30pm Circuit Service at Wilmslow
- 20th 11.00am Mrs. Joyce Curtis
- 27th 11.00am Mrs. Audry Barnard
- Aug. 3rd 11.00am The Rev. Tim Nicholls (Holy Communion)
6.30pm United Service at St. Wilfrid's
- 10th 11.00am The Rev. Margaret Hall

Community Lunches

Wed. 9th July ~ 12 noon till 1.30pm
And then Aug. 12th (Details to be confirmed)

Northenden Civic Society meets on July 8th (second Tuesdays) in St.Wilfrid's Church Hall, as normal, 7.30pm. Its website is open -find it on < [www . northendencivicsociety . org](http://www.northendencivicsociety.org) >

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](mailto:gsf@stwilfridsnorthenden.org.uk)

Services :

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

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

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. This includes teaching sessions for children too.

July 6th 10.30am Family Communion & Centenary Parade
6.30pm United Service at Northenden Methodists'
13th 10.30am Holy Communion
6.30pm Evening Worship
20th 10.30am Holy Communion
6.30pm Evening Worship
27th 10.30am Morning Prayer
6.30pm Holy Communion

August 3rd 10.30am **1914-2014** *Lest we forget.*
6.30pm United Service at St.Wilfrid's

10th 10.30am Holy Communion
6.30pm Evening Worship

Sunday Scramblers, for 3½ to 6 year olds, and age 7 upwards ~ meet in the Church Hall unless there is a Family Service, between 10.30 and 11.30am Sundays. Contact details, 998-3304.

Drop in on St. Wilfrid's ...
On Sundays from 2.30 till 5.00pm
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!



Watch out for the Brownies: they are 100 years old this year!
The family service on 6th July will recognise this.

Weds. 2nd July Bible Study, Rectory, 8.00pm

Women's Group meeting on 7th July ~ the Barbecue! 7.00pm

NB. No bible study on 9th July.

Tues. 15th School Year Six Valedictory Service in Church.

Weds. 16th Bible Study, as above.

Thur. 17th 9.15am School end of year service.

Followed by usual communion service at c.10.10am

No bible studies, 23rd or 30th July.



The Nigerian Congregation are holding an International Prayer Convention, in the church, on 26th & 27th July ~

Sat. 9am – 3pm, Sun. 12.30 – 3pm.

The main speaker is Bp. Timothy Yahaya, from the diocese of Jalingo, in Nigeria.

Note that the morning service on 3rd August will reflect the centenary of the beginning of the first world war. Details have yet to be arranged, but I hope that there will be some British Legion or ex-service representation. It will therefore not be the usual "first Sunday" Family Communion.

Registers ...



Baptised on Sunday 15th June;
Ryan John Tierney, Emily Grace Worth

Christian Aid Week ran from 11th - 18th May. Thanks to everyone who was involved, both in our churches and our School. The total raised was £903, even though far less collecting house to house was done this year. Cheques have been sent up to Christian Aid head office for this.

Open Days ...

The next full Open Days at St. Wilfrid's will be linked with the national "Heritage Open Days" weekend on Sept. 13th & 14th. Before then the tower will probably be open on the Northenden Boat Race day, Aug. 24th

Triathlon !

The very thought of it takes my breath away, but Kathryn Morgan, St. Wilfrid's treasurer, is game for it. "This whole triathlon thing" (she writes) "is a big thing for me, as two years ago I did strength training but not running. Then I started running and it's evolved into a triathlon. I'm doing it with four women friends who are also actuaries in London, and we're all running for pants."

If that sounds odd, and not the sort of thing you'd expect to read in a church magazine, read on. She in fact preached about it too, on June 1st. "It's to raise money for Smalls for All, a charity that sends pants and bras to Africa and also sponsors girls' education. I support it as it's practical and feminist."

As she explained in the sermon, "western" style underwear gives a woman dignity and status in many parts of the Third World, which in turn offers her some protection against abuse. It implies that there is someone who cares and will protect her, as well as offering something of a protection in itself. "I'm planning to bring a box," she adds, "to the back of church, for people to put pants and bras in which I can send to Scotland where the charity is based."

She is doing this triathlon on 13 July. "The triathlon is a sprint distance" (yes, that's what she has written! What would a long distance be?) "- 400m open water swim, 21km bike ride and 5km run - at Dorney Lake near Windsor. I have a fundraising

page too; <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/kathrynmorgan1>
Money is also useful." Good luck, Kathryn, and more strength to
your elbow ~ and knees! G.S.F.

**NORTHENDEN
Neighbourhood Forum.**

Future meetings at St. Wilfrid's **Church Hall** on first Thursdays of
the month ~ i.e. July 3rd, &c., at 7.30pm

THE NORTHENDEN BRITISH LEGION BRANCH

HELPS WITH ***WELFARE** ***VETERAN BREAKS** * **MORE SERVICES.**

PLEASE CALL IN ~ Mon., Wed., Fri., 10.00 – 14.00.

Above ASHTON RAINS ESTATE AGENTS, 372 PALATINE RD,

Crafternoons; a series of events and activities is being run in
this area by the "Generation Projects" to support people, mostly
elderly, who are left isolated and perhaps bored. The idea of
"crafternoons" is to mix socialising with the production of some
art or craft work which may be displayed at Wythenshawe
Hospital (where there are many designs exhibited along the
corridors). This takes place at the meeting room at Moorside on
Robert Owen Gdns. on 6th & 20th July & 10th Aug. between 1 and
3pm. Other parts of the scheme are simple afternoon teas at the
Wythenshawe Park Courtyard Café (6th July, 10th Aug), and an
oral history project, though I'm not sure of the venue for that
now. For details, contact Marie on 946-6431.

Churchyard. I have recently been asked by a couple of people
if they could volunteer to do work in the churchyard. What I
have told them, and would tell anyone, is that they are welcome
to help, and I suggest that they tidy up an area around their own
family graves, or the rows leading to those graves. What I can't
do is be there to provide equipment or work with them. I have
also pointed out that at this time of year ~ and especially perhaps
this year with its warm and wet spring ~ the grass outgrows any-
thing that we can do with the limited funds available, that we
would hope to have cut everywhere at least once during the full
year, and that we deliberately keep the grounds as a wildlife
haven as well as a graveyard: i.e. it will not be weed-killed or
mown down to be a green desert.

