

1 .

## CONCORD ~ June 2014

### Prayer for the Month

Loving Lord God, inspire us with your presence  
and guide us with your truth;  
may your Holy Spirit bring reassurance in time of difficulty,  
comfort in times of stress,  
direction in times of uncertainty,  
joy in times of celebration and delight,  
wonder and praise for both your creation and our salvation,  
and understanding both of you and of each other.  
Through Jesus Christ your son, our friend and brother. Amen.  
*This year Whitsun ~ the feast of the coming Spirit ~, is June 8<sup>th</sup> .*

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane.

0161 **998 2615**

Dear Friends,

The beginning of June sees the Christian festival of Whitsun, or Pentecost. It represents the birthday, you might say, of the church, when we celebrate the pouring out of God's holy Spirit on the early church, and remind ourselves of what that can mean for us today as we learn to copy them.

There are two or three sides to the account, in Acts chap. 2 in the New Testament (your light reading for the week-end?), of what happened. The first is the enthusiasm of the early church; the second is the way they shared their faith and people responded; and the third is the support and help they gave to each other ~ the fellowship, or teamwork ~ as a follow on from it

We read of how the core members of the early church, about 120 men and women, were meeting and praying together when the wind of the Spirit blew through them, inspiring their praise in their own language, and others that he gave them, so that they told of the mighty works of God in their worship. His mighty works, which should lift our hearts too, are seen in the wonders of creation, but more specially in the love which we see in what Jesus did for us. His life and teaching, but above all his death to make amends for our broken relationships, and his resurrection to demonstrate our reconciliation to God, are naturally at the heart of our faith and our gratitude to God. Our hearts too should be lifted in thankfulness and praise.

2.

As people around noticed this St.Peter stood out and explained it all, challenging people to recognise that it was in Jesus specially and uniquely that God had revealed his plans and acted to bring us back to him. He challenged them to change their attitudes to Jesus, and to the world around them, and commit themselves actively to his community. Thousands did.

And then we read how they met together to learn the christian message and lifestyle from the apostles (how often do we?); to share the encouragement and comfort of shared food and drink (how often do we take the opportunities afforded at coffee mornings, or after church?); they met to pray and worship together, in small groups or larger ones in the Temple; and they were generous to each other in practical ways, sharing what they had. (How often do we, even as a church, buy a new one before we look to see if there is one we can share?)

And Luke's summary of all this, at the end of the chapter; ~ God used all this to rescue people.

Back in April, The furore about whether David Cameron was right to say that Britain is a Christian Country hit the headlines after Concord went to print. It is still worth discussing.

I will not comment in detail on Mr.Cameron's reasons for making his assertion. There has been a long tradition (perhaps the long legacy of Mr.Cromwell) that politicians do not "do" religion, but if it does mean much to him, as he says it does, I would not begrudge his comments at the main Christian festival, so long as there are no ulterior motives.

The letter of response from members of the British Humanist Association in The Telegraph actually missed the point. I suspect they are using the politically correct concern over causing community disharmony as a rather cynical trick to score points against their bête noir. Their concern for the feelings of minorities is in fact rather condescending. It is interesting that the next day a number of leaders from Muslim, Sikh and Hindu communities were prepared to go on record as saying that they do regard Britain as a Christian country. They are prepared to recognise our history and the forces which still shape our present culture even if they would disagree with them, rather than trying to suppress them for doctrinaire reasons.

The Humanists were wrong to quote percentage responses to a questionnaire, or even the census, as proof of either their beliefs, or whether Britain is a Christian country. Truth is not proven by counting heads, even august and learned heads. It is true (or false) because it is true (or otherwise) in its own right, whoever agrees or disagrees with it.

Having said that, I would also suggest that those who responded to them by quoting British history or the constitutional position of the Monarch or the Church of England are wrong too. These are material facts, part of the background. True, our history has been shaped by a Christian tradition, and Christian institutions do still play a formal part in it.

But a country is "Christian", surely, by virtue of its observance of Christian values (more than church practices) now, rather than because of its history. On this, perhaps the jury is out. Christian respect for the sanctity of life, at its end and particularly at or before its beginning, is being called in question by our current practice over abortion and discussions of euthanasia. Christian understanding of the nature of Marriage has been undermined by the very politician who asserts that we are a Christian country. Support for the socially and economically weak in our community is a hallmark of a Christian society: there are those who would say that this is also being undermined by the policies of both the present government and also of its alternatives. The point at issue here is not whether the poor are getting enough or too much in handouts, but rather are they being genuinely enabled to achieve their full potential economically and personally. Integrity in personal and public life is a hallmark of the Christian vision of society (my own view ~ as rector of St.Wilfrid's church! ~ of St.Wilfrid's arguments with the kings of his time is that he was trying to assert moral standards based on criteria above and beyond the whim of the local warlord). This integrity would include what is condoned in the behaviour of politicians and the men of power in finance and industry.

So a country is Christian in so far as its vision of itself matches these standards, and its laws and public conduct live up to them, even if it embarrasses the BHA. What do you think?

So now read on.

***Greg Forster***

Magpie ...

... The Tatton Arms continues as an eye-sore, but there are indications that there is a potential developer, who sounds keen to get on with things ~ no more can be said yet, but another little bird tells him that there are plans afoot, or in hand, or whatever. At the British Legion site, pressure is being put on the owners to get it at least tidied up ~ but it is better done voluntarily than through the courts at present.

... so Barclay's Bank in Northenden is closing. People immediately asked Magpie if he knew what was going to replace it. The answer to that is No, but he might run a competition to suggest the most and the least desirable options! Sadly the Co-op Bank is unlikely to put in a bid. Dare he mention High Rise buildings, even tongue in beak? Have your say!

... was saddened that our Riverside Park had been doused in weedkiller in early April, and so asked awkward questions. He hopes that the message will get through that such vandalism is unwelcome. He wondered what toxic chemical was used ~ Glyphosate, they told him, which will allow regrowth within six months and loses effectiveness after touching the soil. It's all work, he supposes, for the working man to do. They did not say what it does to children, so he has asked again about the risk assessment for its use near the play area. The council does consult the Environment Agency before using it near the river. What the EA said was not divulged.

... as foreshadowed in last month's Concord, enthusiasts for Laurel and Hardy descended on Northenden at the beginning of May. They were not, in fact, in bowler hats, but fezzes, since this particular group has latched on to the film "Sons of the Desert," and go by that title. There was a parade on Sunday morning, with the police band and apparently the Chief Constable himself; they had special showings of films at the Plaza cinema in Stockport, and on the Sunday afternoon many of them climbed St. Wilfrid's tower to admire the view. No-one knew of a Laurel and Hardy film which features swinging on bell ropes, but someone ought to make it! They came from foreign parts as well as England ~ Wales, Scotland, Holland and Germany, and reputedly Canada and the U.S. Someone whose day job is with Historic Scotland was taking notes of how we do heritage tourism here,

too. Why Northenden? So far as I know L & H had no direct connections here, but some of their enthusiasts live here and suggested our hotels; the convention moves round each year.

... has a vested interest in the weather, and has noted that on one day in May the temperature in the Rectory garden reached 40° Celsius ~ but the thermometer was admittedly in direct sunlight on a dark wall. Whatever, let's have more of it!

... and talking of degrees, Celsius or otherwise; someone commented, on her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, that 70°F is 21° in Celsius. Yes, you're as young as you feel.

... has learned that Northenden, and indeed St. Wilfrid's church, has had an honourable mention in Parliament. It was during the recent debate about the HS2 rail project, and our MP, Mike Kane, who is one of at least two MPs who can claim to live within a hundred yards of the proposed route, informed his colleagues of the admirable example set by Sir Edward Watkin in pioneering fast rail travel. Sir Edward is buried here, of course. In his speech Mike made the following comments;

"Edward Watkin is buried in St Wilfrid's churchyard, a few hundred yards from where I live in my constituency. He was a rail engineer, an entrepreneur, an industrialist and a Liberal MP. He designed the Great Central Railway, from Manchester to London, which opened in 1899. It could be described as the high-speed rail line of its day—it was modern, used the European gauge and brought down the journey time from the great city of Manchester to the great city of London immensely. As part of his rail empire, Watkin began to dig the first attempt at a channel tunnel, which has been mentioned by Government Members. He wanted to connect his railway line from Manchester to London and all the way to France. The project was started, but, unfortunately, it was then opposed in this House, because it did not trust the French. Some 120 years later— **Mary Creagh:** *Plus ça change.* **Mike Kane:** Thank you, Mary. It is ironic that part of HS2 will go along the pathway that Edward Watkin built 120 years ago. It is a further irony that it will pass within metres of his graveyard in my constituency of Wythenshawe and Sale East. That will be a fitting tribute." ... .. (For more, see the Hansard website for 28<sup>th</sup> April)

... but Magpie has noticed what Mike did not mention, that HS2 will still not link direct with Europe, nor, for that matter with Heathrow or Gatwick, so people will still be tempted to use the less than green airways to make those connections.

## **"We will remember them" 1914-1919 ~**

In Northenden we have records of people who served in the Great War. Each month I am telling the stories of some of them.

### **6. Capt. the Revd. Francis Cole Lowry Hamilton**

The Rector at the time of the First World War was the Revd. Lowry Hamilton, and his contributions to the Parish magazine at the time make interesting reading. There are also pieces in the magazine (by him, and by other anonymous contributors) about those serving, and about casualties, which I will have drawn on by the time this series is finished.

One thing which seems clear in the magazine is that there was no inkling of the coming storm. The most urgent item in the August issue, prepared of course in July, was the threat to Church of England finances if the church was disestablished and at the same time disendowed in the way that the Anglican Church in Wales had been. The weather had been good for the parish social gathering, and the Choir had held their annual picnic in Chester. The Sunday School field day had been less lucky with the weather, but the barns at Peel Hall farm had space to keep the children dry and entertained.

Germany and France were at war by the end of July; Germany invaded Belgium in August to bypass, they hoped, the massive French defences and this invoked a treaty of 80 years standing in which Britain guaranteed the integrity of Belgium. On August 4<sup>th</sup> Britain too was in the war, with troops in mainland Europe for the first time since Waterloo in 1815. Mr. Hamilton writes in the September 1914 issue:

Since the issue of our last magazine and with appalling suddenness the nation has been called to face the stern crisis and terrible discipline of war. The very existence of our great Empire, and of our security at home is at stake and through no action or fault of ours the nations of the European world are now engaged in a deadly struggle which must bring distress, desolation and destruction (*sic*) to thousands.

In the history of our beloved land there has been no parallel to the present crisis, nor ever a time when we had greater need to commit our cause to God Almighty in humble penitence and prayer for his guidance and protection. ...

The duty of the Church is to hold up hands of prayer and daily to make our humble confession and Special Intercession to Almighty God for our brave men in the day of their sore need and peril. The root of all evil is forgetfulness of our duty towards God. In the long period “of our wealth” and welfare, God has not been in all our thoughts nor have we observed and kept the Commandments, statutes and ordinances which he commanded for our good always, therefore there is a need that penitence be our attitude, and the nation’s prayer be one for “pardon and peace.”

Hamilton continues in that vein in the rest of his September letter, and in subsequent issues. In the October issue he looks for points for which the nation might be thankful, and finds them in its unity of purpose, both at home and in the Empire. He lists the 35 men of Northenden who were by then in the colours, and singles out P.R.Adshead, of the Dragoon Guards, who had been wounded at Mons. His horse had been shot from under him, and he had lost his complete kit, ( a loss made good by Northenden people.) but was by then back with his unit. .... It was not until November 1918 that British forces were again in Mons. It is interesting that Hamilton speaks of Pte.Adshead returning to be with his “pals”. A sense of comradeship was a feature of this war, both in the regular army and in the battalions that were recruited to augment it, and this could have tragic consequences when a whole unit came from one town or district. One of the books I have been reading in connection with this series puts it with a studied pathos; “... the Accrington Pals were no more,” following a particular assault on the Somme in 1916.

After his general letter in October 1914 Hamilton adds a “Personal” item.

“After much careful thought and anxious deliberation as to my duty at this time, and with the sanction and personal recommendation of my Bishop, I have offered myself to the Chaplain General, to go as an assistant chaplain [without, of course, remuneration] among our wounded and sick men abroad.”

He then talks about the arrangements made for cover in the parish, if his offer is accepted, as it was. In March 1915 he writes from Mount Vernon Military Hospital, Hampstead, but he was

based in the White City stadium ~ with congregations (paraded before him) of 2000, for a service lasting 35 minutes, with a ten minute sermon. It was too cold for more! We sometimes hear of child soldiers who lied about their age to enlist. Hamilton writes about the opposite ~ someone whom he met in the hospital, and whom he says looked about 70! How did he get to the front? "By saying I was 45, and I've done four months of it." "What splendid pluck and spirit," comments Hamilton.

He hoped that his time in the colours would be a year, but he was annoyed to learn, once he got to France, to a hospital created in the casino at Boulogne, that his year's commitment was counted from the time he set foot on the continent, not from his signing up. He reports meeting wounded men from Cheshire and Manchester, and meeting old friends, including a member of the Watkin family, badly wounded but recovering. On a lighter note he happily records that Lancashire Cricket Club had supplied cricket equipment, so that four outlying camps were able to have matches too.

This just dips into his early letters. More in coming months.

## **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

### **NORTHENDEN Neighbourhood Forum.**

The First Annual Meeting took place on 8<sup>th</sup> May, at St. Wilfrid's School Hall. Officers and committee were elected. Details can be accessed via Facebook, and hopefully by June on the Forum's website.

All residents in the Area, and all who work here, or are our elected representatives, have a right to join the Forum and take part in shaping our Neighbourhood. There is *no* charge to join.

Future meetings at St. Wilfrid's **Church Hall** on first Thursdays of the month ~ i.e. June 5<sup>th</sup>, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 7.30pm

# 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.

June 1<sup>st</sup> 11.00am Details still to be arranged as we go to press

# 8<sup>th</sup> 9.00am Messy Church \*\*

11.00am **Whit Sunday** ~ details to be announced

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

\*\* Note; Messy Church has moved to fit with School holidays. The united service has also moved, to fit with other events.

15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, Morning Worship at 11.00am.

July 6<sup>th</sup> 9.00am Messy Church

11.00am Morning worship (? Communion)

6.30pm United Service at Methodist Church.

13<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Morning Worship.

*You will gather that as we go to press the schedule of preachers and services has not yet been prepared. Listen out for details or changes.*

## Community Lunches

Wed. June 11<sup>th</sup>. ~ 12 noon till 1.30pm

And then Wed. 9<sup>th</sup> July (Details to be confirmed)

---

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 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.

June 1<sup>st</sup> 10.30am Family Communion  
6.30pm Evening Worship (standard, here)

8<sup>th</sup> 10.30am **Pentecost / Whitsun.**  
6.30pm **United Service at St. Wilfrid's NB.**

The united service in June has been moved, to fit with other events or commitments in both churches.

15<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Holy Communion  
6.30pm Evening Worship

22<sup>nd</sup> 10.30am Holy Communion  
6.30pm Evening Worship

29<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Morning Prayer  
6.30pm Holy Communion

July 6<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Family Communion & Centenary Parade  
6.30pm United Service at Northenden Methodists'

13<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Holy Communion  
6.30pm Evening Worship

**Scramblers**, for 3½ to 6 year olds, and "**Sunday Club**" ~ for 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 dusk)**  
**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! 

**Farmers' & Street Markets, on Sat. 7<sup>th</sup> June 10am ...**

Bible Studies in the Rectory at 8.00pm ~

Weds. 11<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> June, and 2<sup>nd</sup> July. (NB the gaps)

There will be a Confirmation at Emmanuel Church, Didsbury,  
on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June at 6.00pm.

**Summer Fair** Saturday June 7<sup>th</sup>, 11.00am till about 1.30pm

In the Church Hall ~ sales, food, and all the fun of the fair!

**Open Days** ~ displays and trips up the Tower, on Sat 14<sup>th</sup> & Sun  
15<sup>th</sup> June see panel for fuller details.

June 18<sup>th</sup>. Deanery Synod Meeting, 7.30pm, William Temple.

June 24<sup>th</sup> School Governors meeting.

**Coffee Morning** ~ Sat. June 28<sup>th</sup>, 10.00 - 11.30am, Church Hall.

Watch out for the Brownies: they are 100 years old this year!

The next Women's Group meeting is on 7<sup>th</sup> July ~ the Barbecue.

There is no meeting in June.

Registers ... 

In Memoriam;

Aylwin Jackson (Shawdene Rd.) 89

-----  
**Christian Aid Week** ran from 11<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> May. House to house  
collections were limited this year, but thank you if you did collect,  
or donated at our various churches. Figures next month!

**Open Days ...**

Sat. 14<sup>th</sup> June 12 noon to 5.30pm. Sun. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2.00 to 6.00pm  
Displays about World War 1, and Northenden Forum,

Church Archaeology, and other features.  
And guided trips up the Tower, its bells and clock and views.

### **Planned Giving.**

Many readers know that St. Wilfrid's runs a planned giving scheme. We invite those who want to support the church to give on a regular basis. If you wish to, and are paying tax, you can use it to gift-aid your giving, and we can claim back the tax you will have paid on what you give. During May we received a credit of over £5,500 from the Inland Revenue, covering about 1½ years. That is most welcome, though it does not solve the money problems that I wrote about last month.

To join in these schemes, have a word with the Rector, or the treasurer (Mrs. K. Morgan). For those who prefer something more hi-tech, it is possible to give through a standing order at your bank ~ again contact the Rector or the treasurer.

### **St. Wilfrid's Annual Meeting      *Greg Forster***

This took place at the end of April. Headlines are that Mrs. Lloyd was again elected churchwarden, but solo, when we should ideally have two. She and Miss Mycock will represent us on the Deanery Synod. Only half a dozen other members were elected to the P.C.C., which may streamline business, but is not ideal for a team to share ideas, plans and workload. We may co-opt extra members. Also elected were our team of sidesmen. Can I repeat the thanks that I expressed at the meeting to those who have worked for the church in these various ways, especially to those who have had to stand down this years after long service

### **Northenden Civic Society ...**

... meets on June 10<sup>th</sup> and July 8<sup>th</sup> (second Tuesdays) in St. Wilfrid's Church Hall, as normal. Its website is open - you can find it on [www.northendencivicsociety.org](http://www.northendencivicsociety.org)