

# CONCORD ~ March

Prayer for the Month ...

Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth  
and made us in your own image:  
teach us to discern your hand in all your works,  
and your likeness in all your children:  
through Jesus Christ our Lord; *Amen.*

One of the prayers set for this month in the Common Worship prayer book.

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane. 0161 998 2615

Dear Friends,

Welcome once again to Concord. In this edition we have a wider than usual variety of ingredients ~ a book review, a guest slot for the Bishop of London, not to mention a four-liner about the two Archbishops: the village green makes a welcome appearance, and (perhaps less welcome) so ~ yet again ~ does the edifice on the corner of Church Rd. There is some information about changes in the organisation of the Methodist churches in Wythenshawe and the neighbourhood, and an invitation to be involved in the organisation of St. Wilfrid's church ~ at its Annual Meeting.

We are perhaps all too aware of "**the Cuts**" this month, with a national Budget coming up, and the finalisation of Manchester's council budget for the coming year. I cannot speak for my Methodist or Quaker colleagues and the finances of their meeting houses, but I suspect ~ fear ~ that it will affect St. Wilfrid's indirectly ~ in that we will lose at least one of the regular bookings for the Church Hall. This in turn will place a burden on our church finances, which is unlikely to be covered by casual bookings for parties and meetings. This in turn means that you and I, as church members, will need to find more by way of regular giving and donations.

But perhaps more significantly, it represents a **sad loss for Northenden** and its young people. Early in February I was discussing the facilities for young people in Wythenshawe with the youth leaders at the club that meets in the church hall. To my surprise I discovered that the once-a-week meeting in our own hall was the only Youth Service provision in the east side of the area, and that what they provided in the west side had been reduced from

only two centres to one because of a major flood at West Wythenshawe centre. There are, of course, a couple of other centres run by voluntary groups or the social housing association for the area. And I used to complain that Northenden was the poor relation! It now looks as if even what we have is to be taken away.

Many of you will know that I have been interested for some time in seeing a **hydro-electric plant** re-established at the Weir on Mill Lane. It would be a small contribution to meeting the problems of both global warming and worth energy depletion, and a larger contribution to education and publicity about these problems. Last year, however, the company which had been working with us on this reviewed its portfolio of projects, and decided to withdraw from Northenden. The floods at the beginning of February, when the river was as high as I have ever seen it, highlight their reasons. In such conditions it would be essential that no generation facilities should block the flow of the river, and also that they should be above a level where water would short out the electrical installation. They calculated that to solve this difficulty would add 25% to the costs. Other schemes had greater claim on their energies.

However, just before Christmas I was approached by some friends from Didsbury, with links to their Civic Society, saying that they were interested in developing a scheme here, in parallel with a number of other "green" initiatives they have. They would like to investigate the idea further, and there is to be a meeting, probably on March 26<sup>th</sup>, to share all their ideas. I do not think they regard the Mersey as a barrier to involvement from our side, and between us we represent a wider pool of resources and expertise. They were intrigued when I told them that Northenden probably had the first piped electricity in Manchester, when the generator in the old mill made current available to neighbouring houses, and perhaps also inspired the founding of Wylex, with its distinctive flat three-pin plugs which are still to be seen in a few homes in the village.

And finally, farewell to Dr. Sam.<sup>1</sup> Peploe, and friends. From 1729 to '82 he was Rector here (as well as holding several other posts) and when he died he left money to be invested to benefit the poor of Northenden. But the £200 then (8 years' keep for one John Wesley) is chicken-feed now, and the capital is to be used up as if it was income, in line with his original intention. A sad break with a tradition, but, I believe, a realistic use of resources.

Yours faithfully, **Greg Forster** (Rector)

# Northenden Methodist Church

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

## Sunday Services.

March. 6<sup>th</sup>      11.00am The Rev. D. Bown (Holy Communion)  
                    6.30pm United Evening Worship

          13<sup>th</sup>      11.00am Mr. R. Caseley.

          20<sup>th</sup>      11.00am Mrs. M. Hunt

          27<sup>th</sup>      11.00am **(BST !)** The Rev. David Sharples

April 3<sup>rd</sup>.    11.00am **Mothering Sunday**      Mr. R. Clowes.  
                    6.30pm United Communion Service @ St.Wilfrid's

          10<sup>th</sup>      10.30am Morning Service

## Community Lunch

**Weds. 9<sup>th</sup> March** 12 noon – 1.30pm  
... and Wed. Apr. 13<sup>th</sup>      (to be confirmed)

## Fun Bingo

Last Saturday of the Month (26<sup>th</sup>), 12.00 noon - 2.00pm.  
(to be confirmed in weekly notices)

## All Change?

At this present time Methodism is facing times of change, as other denominations are ~ and this is how it works.

Methodist churches are organised in Circuits which can consist of four or five churches, or the Circuits can be much larger ~ up to ten or more churches. One of the ways to help in the organisation and servicing of the individual churches is for the smaller Circuits to combine with larger ones.

In our situation here it is being considered whether to combine Wythenshawe with the Bramhall Circuit. This is what we are working towards and hope to achieve in the next twelve months. It will take time to absorb the changes, but we will still be the same individual churches ~ however, we will have a bigger choice of preachers and worship leaders.

This is, of course, putting it very simply. There are other issues to be thought through and explained!

*Joyce Burgess.*

## **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,

### **Lunch Club ~ Youth Club ~**

Did you know that there is a City Council run Lunch Club which meets in St. Wilfrid's Hall every weekday from about 11.30am, for Pensioners. 2½ courses, for just over £2.50, plus company.

I had also intended to publicise that on Tuesday evenings, from 6 – 9pm there was something for the other end of the age range, also courtesy of the Council; chill-out and games at a Club for 12 – 18 year olds. However, it looks as if from the end of March, if not sooner, that club along with most other elements of Manchester's Youth Service will cease to exist because of the cost cutting that public authorities are all engaged in.

### **Closer to Home ...**

If you want greetings cards, birthday cards or even Christmas cards, not to mention Easter cards or a recipe for making a cake from the bible, have a look on the small stall by the North door in St. Wilfrid's church. You will also find some pamphlets about the Church and its history and architecture, and also a series of stories for children (designed for adults to read to them, perhaps, or just to look over their shoulders) about the world around us, and special events like Christmas and Easter. *Once upon a time ...*

### **NORTHENDEN VILLAGE GREEN**

Have you seen our new benches on the village green?  
Did you notice the newly dug rose bed just before the snow arrived in December?

Well, this is all thank-you to a grant received from Manchester City Council under the title of "A Sense of Place". I am sure this will add to the pleasure that this small area of beauty

gives, and the roses should give a splash of colour for us in the Summertime.

Please watch the roses develop so we can all enjoy them. Our thanks go to Manchester City Council for the £1500 from their "U-Decide" scheme, which covered the costs and for the VAT paid by them. So we look forward to a "Blooming Rose Garden" this Summer.

*Nadine Ibe* (Northenden Community Projects)

-----

***Light Reading? Heavy Going?***

*Greg Forster*

**The Shack** is a book that has provoked controversy and enthusiasm since its publication in America in 2007. It is a best-seller whose chief characters include God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit ~ yet it is set in contemporary middle America. It is a novel, which manages to discuss deep and puzzling truths without getting too heavy and obscure or losing the story and the sense of "what's coming next?"

The danger in writing a review is that you give away the story. I don't want to do that, but I do want to give you some idea of the subject matter, and how the book can touch raw emotions, or resolve emotional strains. The strap line under the title on the cover is "Where tragedy confronts eternity." The particular tragedy is the loss of a child in bitter circumstances. How do you react to that? How do you, should you, could you, might you, would you react to that? There is realism in the answers to those questions, as well as a sensitive and visionary response to the problems posed. Some very small print on the cover suggests that the author is writing from personal experience of unspecified tragedy of his own.

It is a book to give yourself time to read ~ not to be rushed though all in one sitting, unless that is how you want to come at it. I put it aside half-way through for several weeks, partly till I was ready to go on, and partly because of other commitments. But I am glad to have read it, and I commend it to you for thoughtful reading. The cover blurbs compare it with *Pilgrim's Progress*. I don't know. It is more intense and personally charged than Bunyan's allegory, though it does describe a journey from despond to hope. See for yourself how you react.

***The Shack***, Wm. Paul Young,

(Windblown Media/Hodder) 2007, (UK: London 2008) £7.99.

# 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 between 10.30 and 11.30am Sundays ...

... except Mar. 6<sup>th</sup> when there is a Family Service in church.

Mar. 6<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Family Communion & Parade Service  
6.30pm United Service @ Methodist Church

### **Wed. 9<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday Service at 8.00pm in Church.**

13<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Morning Service  
6.30pm Evening Worship

20<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Morning Service  
6.30pm Evening Worship

27<sup>th</sup> 10.30am **(BST)** Morning Service + AGM, see below.  
6.30pm Holy Communion

April 3<sup>rd</sup>. 10.30am **Mothering Sunday** Family Service & Parade.  
6.30pm Holy Communion (United Service @ St.Wilfrid's)

10<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Morning Service  
6.30pm Evening Worship

## Drop in ...

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

Back in 2005 we received grant aid from English Heritage in order to do some major maintenance work on parts of the tower and our chapel roofs. As a condition of the grant they ask us to be open for 28 days (or the equivalent time) during the year ~ hence our 52 half-day's worth of opening! When we asked them for further help

in 2008 they turned us down, but we funded the work on the aisle roofs from the church's own funds anyway.

**Our next full Open Week End, with displays and trips up the tower, is not until Sat./Sun. June 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>.**

*If you visit then, or some Sunday before, there is quite a lot to see once you have given time to prayer and thought. There is a mouse-hunt, of course ~ to find Mr. Thompson's wooden mice ~ and now there is the Riddle of the Sands ~ a challenge to look closely at a tapestry screen in the north aisle, and make out its story.*

Dates for your Diary ~ it's all happening!

### **March**

Wed. Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup> 8.00pm Bible Study. Rectory. (to be confirmed)

Sat. 5<sup>th</sup>. Remember the Farmers' Market, 10am – 4pm.

Mon. 7<sup>th</sup> Women's Group, 7.45 for 8.00pm. Rectory.

*Stuart Kearney ~ 31 years inside. (See note below)*

Wed. 9<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday: Service in Church at 8.00pm.

Wed. 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>. Bible Studies, Rectory, 8.00pm

Thurs. 24<sup>th</sup> P.C.C. meeting, 7.30pm Hall (to be confirmed)

Sat. 26<sup>th</sup> Coffee Morning, 10.00 – 11.30am Church Hall

Sun. 27<sup>th</sup> Church Annual Meeting & Vestry, ca. 11.30am (BST)

In Church after the shortened morning service ~ see below.

### **April**

Sat. 2<sup>nd</sup> Remember the Farmers' Market. Palatine Rd., 10am–4pm.

Mon. 4<sup>th</sup> Women's Group, Rectory, 7.45 for 8.00pm

Sumitha Sundar ~ A trip back to India.

Wed. 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> Bible Studies; Rectory 8.00pm

### **St. Wilfrid's Annual Meeting and Vestry, 27 March, 2011.**

To avoid clashing with Easter, and to meet our legal obligation to hold an annual meeting before the end of April, we are holding the meeting at the end of March this year. Prior to that the Electoral Roll (*our* membership list ~ not the local voters' list) will be revised. If you are not on it and want to be, contact Elizabeth Towler or the Rector. Elections will be held for Churchwardens and members of the PCC. (Nomination papers will be available in Church from early March) Reports will be given on our finances, the state of our buildings, and church activities over the year, &c.

# The Parish Registers

## In Memoriam

George Cottrill (Queenhill Rd.) 84,  
Esther (Tess) Thompson (Ford La.)

### Accounts, 2010

The finances of St. Wilfrid's will be discussed fully at the annual meeting, but briefly, we had a "routine" income of about £47K last year, but routine expenditure of about £49K. You can all do the sums, and see that in the long run that will not work out well! On the plus side, money coming in from the "planned giving" scheme increased by about £3,000 last year, to £15.6K ~ thank you all! On a more worrying note, for 2011, we are likely to lose some of our income from the church hall, as regular City Council bookings are cut. We should know more by the time of the meeting.

### Women's Group.

And on 7<sup>th</sup> March we are back to the usual time of 7.45 for 8.00pm; *Thirty-One Years in Prison!* Stuart Kearney will be talking about his experiences in prison, not as an inmate, I hasten to add, but as an independent Visitor. And then in April Sumitha Sundar will be talking about her recent trip round her homeland of India.

S.D.F.

### Magpie...

... overheard as tea-time drew near, and the children were *still* playing in the garden: "Hurry up and come in, dears, your ice cream is getting cold!"

... the Rector has been up to his tricks again. First it was the St. Andrew's Saltire. Why was it flying in mid-November? The answer ~ just for fun, to see how many people would notice (quite a few did) and also to give some visitors a chance to raise a flag. And it was raised on the "right" day too ~ 30<sup>th</sup> Nov. But what is the other flag that has appeared ~ the yellow cross on the black background? It was flown on the feast of St. Paul's conversion but it is not St. Paul's emblem. A number of people have had a guess, but so far no-one has won the prize for guessing, or knowing, what it is. Perhaps this month someone will get it. Meanwhile, watch out on May 2<sup>nd</sup> for St. George's day.

... Easter is very late this year, of course, even though the Spring Equinox is a day earlier than usual. That was all explained a

few years ago in Concord when Easter was frighteningly early. So, it is the first Sunday after the first full moon (?Apr. 19<sup>th</sup>) after the equinox. Are you any the wiser now? April 19<sup>th</sup> is Passover.

... it's a long storey (or is it a tall one?), though it might explain some puzzlement. The dalek-like building on the corner of church road has some amazing properties. One, for instance, is that it has two basements. One is where you would expect to find it, underground, and is designed for cars. The other is unique. It is about 15cm. above the ground floor entrance (according to their plans published on the Manchester Planning Dept. website), and is designed for shops. Only above this (about 2.5m higher) do you start counting the above-ground storeys, six in all. That explains how it seems the architect is all at sixes and sevens.

... was sitting on the schoolroom window. The teacher asked little Johnny about something they had just been learning. Little Johnny thought for a while, and replied, "I don't know, sir. What do you think?" "I don't think. I know." retorted the teacher, firmly. "That's like me, sir." Johnny responded brightly. "I don't think I know, either."

... was reading some misprinted (or mis-grammared) advice the other day: 'Remember to pray for the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "Hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you.'

... or more seriously (if I can avoid misprints myself), if you see people without a smile, give them one of yours.

... two ladies were enjoying a relaxed cup of afternoon tea at the restaurant. They got to talking about what jobs their fellow tea-drinkers might have. Their eyes fell in particular on a distinguished looking gentleman in the far corner. After some time he finished his tea, settled his bill and walked past them on the way to the door. He paused and leant across to them; "Actually," he said, "I teach deaf people to lip-read."

## **Reading Matters**

Some of you will know that there was a shake up last year at Wesley-Owen, who ran the Christian bookshops in Manchester and Stockport. The Manchester shop, on Deansgate almost opposite the John Rylands Library, is now run by a group called

Living Oasis, who continue to supply Christian books and music, and to run a small coffee-shop.

In Stockport CLC ~ the Christian Literature Crusade ~ took over the shop on Lower Hillgate and also offer Christian books, bibles, music and gifts.

Both stores offer a splendid opportunity to us to learn more about our faith, and about human stories which illustrate how it works out. Biography ... bible study ... hymns and sacred music ... presents for your god-children ... . Have a look next time you're in Manchester or Stockport.

**Archbishops in Town!** At the end of February and beginning of March our two Archbishops, John Sentamu and Rowan Williams, will be in Manchester, marking a milestone in our own bishop Nigel McCulloch's career. See CruX for details.

### **The Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme.**

Back in October, welcoming the announcement by the Department for Culture Media and Sport that the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme, which reimburses VAT on repairs to listed places of worship such as St. Wilfrid's, will continue, the Rt Revd Richard Chartres, Bishop of London and Chair of the Church Heritage Forum, said:

"I am very glad that the Department for Culture Media and Sport has announced that the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme will continue. Abandoning the scheme, which affects every part of the United Kingdom, would have been tantamount to a tax on fundraising; a great disincentive to the hundreds of thousands of volunteers who care for our churches and a blow to the credibility of the concept of the Big Society.

"While I regret that the additional concessions on professional fees, organs and bells, secured in 2006 and already withdrawn, will not be reinstated, I very much welcome the Government's recognition that church buildings make a large contribution to the community as a whole.

"We owe a debt of gratitude to those who have campaigned tirelessly within the Church of England for the scheme to be maintained and also to the Heritage Minister for his informed concern and determination to find a solution which balances economic necessity with a recognition of the role and potential of our church buildings."

This scheme has benefitted St. Wilfrid's significantly over the past few years, and we were among many from Manchester who took up the initiative of Archdeacon Cherry Vann and lobbied the minister about this. It means that churches which are recognised by the Nation as of architectural or historical importance, and so have to be maintained to a more rigorous standard than other buildings, receive support towards the cost of that maintenance.

## Basic Christianity ~ God Speaks, today ...

Last month I wrote generally about basic Christian belief; the month before I wrote about the great effort to get the bible in English in the 16<sup>th</sup> Cent. Here I want to pull those themes together, with the affirmation that God spoke through the words of the bible, and through the actions it describes, and that he uses those words to speak to us today. As we read the old words we are challenged anew to recognise what he has done for us, and to re-evaluate the things the 21<sup>st</sup> century thinks are important, true and right.

The first thing to say is that God spoke in different ways to many different people in 66 different books. To some he seemed to be speaking direct, and they were aware of hearing or seeing his presence, and receiving his commission (Look at Isaiah ch.6, for example) Others just set out to do a good job of describing what happened and the meaning behind it (see eg. Luke ch. 1 v1-4) Other books, perhaps like Job, may be fiction ~ but with a message. We need to read and understand the kind of literature they are using. Genesis ch.1 is not a scientific textbook, nor is Job. ch 28, but both use poetry and narrative to evoke the truth that one God is the Creator of a good world, against a background of pagan polytheism. Not all the bible is as easy reading as that, and its ideas represent a development (not a single snapshot) which leads forward to Jesus, and points in various ways to him.

The bible is inspired; it is also inspiring and worth reading and praying over today. Read a whole book or letter at once, or in sections (but always keep the big view in mind). What does it teach about God, and what he has done for us? What guidance does it give for today? What encouragement? What reassurance, challenge, or critique of our thinking? Does it make us turn the other eye?