

CONCORD ~ May 2013

Prayer for the Month

This day I awake through a great strength ~
I call on the towering power of the Trinity,
trusting his triune might,
worshipping his one true light,
as creation's Creator.

This day I awake through God's strength as my pilot,
God's might to support me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to scan my path, God's ear to hear my prayer,
God's word to give me speech, God's presence to protect me.

This day I awake convinced of God's Unity
revealed in his triune power; in him I stand.

*Based on St. Patrick's Breastplate ~ Atomriug indiu.
Trinity Sunday is 26th May.*

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane. 0161 998 2615

Dear Friends,

Welcome to May's Concord. Once again we have a fair amount of news about the community in Northenden ~ though the publishing schedule means that not all the news you read will be quite up to date. (I may get more information onto the email/website edition.)

At St. Wilfrid's we have begun using a modern language version of the Lord's Prayer in some of our services (some of our children were overheard praying, *I will be done, my kingdom come!*). That is as good a reason as any for us to look at one of the versions of the prayer we find in the Gospels, and try to learn from it both how to pray and what Jesus himself prayed for.

Christian Aid Week is from May 12th to 19th. I should be grateful for any help people can give by way of collecting door to door, and (from the other side) by giving as people do the collecting! Despite the problems we feel to do with our own economy, we are well off, for the most part, as compared with many areas of our ~ God's ~ world. Except when faced with major crises the approach of Christian Aid (and most such charities nowadays) is to help people to get on their feet and help

themselves. This is done through local churches or community groups. It is well worth supporting and I commend it to you. Posters and leaflets available in church will explain more of their work, and read on later in Concord.

And just a bit of indulgence for me: I cannot speak a word of old Irish (it is all double-Dutch to me!) but I called up the Irish text of St. Patrick's prayer of protection on the internet back in March, as his "day" approached. You may know Mrs. Alexander's hymn based on it, in which we draw to ourselves God's power, based on all that he has done and been through for us. Another version, by Kuno Meyer, has a different tone, recognising that God's loving power is all around us as we live and move and have our being. Both versions can inform our praying and worship. What comes over from the Irish is not just that, but also the fun which the writer-poet ~ be it Patrick or someone else ~ had with words as he prayed (and surely God the incarnate Word appreciates such fun) repeating phrases, echoing sounds and stringing words together all beginning with the same sound. I have tried to capture that in the prayer for this month, printed above. But creation is full of fun (despite its problems) so let's enjoy it in the presence of its Creator.

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 Enid Pinch, 445 6778.

The main hall and smaller rooms are available for hire;

~ contact Sue Shaw at the Central Manchester Office, 834-5797

Northenden Civic Society

There is a meeting of the society on the second Tuesday each month, in St. Wilfrid's Church Hall, at 7.30pm. Its **website** is <www . northendencivicsociety . org >. It also has a **Facebook** site: < www.facebook.com/NorthendenCivicSociety > ~ or access this via the website. Meetings May 14th & June 11th.

Northenden Methodist Church

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

Sunday Services.

****Usually the 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 this is a Bank or School Holiday, check with Amy to find out what alternative arrangements may have been made ~ in fact the next two are 19th May, and 16th June.

May	5 th	X **	
		11.00am	The Rev. Gill Newton
		6.30pm	United Service; the Rev. David Bown
	12 th	11.00am	The Rev. D. Bown. General Church Meeting.
	19 th	9.00am	Messy Church
		11.00am	Pentecost ~ Mrs. Olivia Tu'ihalamaka
	26 th	11.00am	Mr. Bob Bartindale
June	2 nd	11.00am	Morning Worship ##
		6.30pm	United Service @ St. Wilfrid's
	9 th	11.00am	Morning Worship ##
	16 th	9.00am	Messy Church
		11.00am	Morning Worship ##

^{##} Preaching Plan details not available as we go to press.

Community Lunch

Wed., ~ May 8th, 12 noon till 1.30pm

(Next lunch, Wed. June 11th ~ 12 noon till 1.30pm)
 Luke chapter 11¹⁻¹³ ~ The Lord's
 Prayer

There are two places in the new testament where the Lord's Prayer is reported. In Matthew's Gospel ch. 6, where there is a rather formal version, and here in Luke ch. 11, where Jesus has been praying, and then gets asked by his students how to pray. His answer here is briefer and less formal (though some older translations reflect the way Luke's version got supplemented from Matthew by people copying from memory.) The lesson that I take from this is that there is no one "proper" version of the Lord's Prayer, in whichever language you are asking about. Take the prayer as a pattern and example, not a straight-jacket, and mould your praying round it. (If anyone *really* insists on the "original" version, it begins something like "*Abban di bishmayya ...*")

In fact, in this chapter of Luke, there may be traces of a third version, in which the prayer *may your holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us* replaces *your kingdom come*. This reads very like Luke's understanding of how the Kingdom of God begins to work, as hinted at in Acts ch. 1 v6-8, and it is found in a couple of early Christian writers. To pray for a deeper understanding and experience of God's Spirit at work in us is no bad thing.

Jesus began by telling his followers to call God "Father". We tend to take that for granted, but very few of Jesus' contemporaries used the close and warm term "Abba" in their prayers, and none, so far as I know, told their followers to do the same. The word has the warmth and closeness of Daddy, or Dad, without sounding quite so trite and with a touch more respect. A modern Palestinian child may well call her father *Yabba*, I am told. This is something St. Paul recognised as a distinctly Christian gift and privilege (see Romans ch. 8 v15) and we should be aware of this and relish it in our prayer and spirituality ~ as does the converted Muslim authoress of the book, *I dared to call him Father*. I note that in Luke's version The Father is not even distanced from us by the addition here of "in heaven".

So we pray that his name may be treated as holy, and held in respect and honour. This is not just about God's label, but about his character and nature. The name says something about the person (and a Jew might in fact speak of God as "The Name",

rather than run the risk of taking his name in vain.) We pray that we, and the world around, will give God the reverence that is due to him, not just in terms of worship, but in our attitudes to him and his creation. We pray too that his kingdom will come. This is not a prayer about heaven, or the end of the world, but about the way God rules and shapes our lives in the here and now. It is about his Spirit inspiring and guiding our behaviour ~ and that of all around us ~ within this world, so that the standards and qualities of the kingdom are lived out, whoever or whatever system has political power or moral sway in the community where we live. That is, I believe, Luke's take on the phrase "kingdom of God", and he derives that picture of it from Jesus himself.

The parable which follows the prayer backs this point up: our heavenly Father is well able and only too willing to give a Spirit of holiness to those who ask him ~ a Spirit who works not only by emotional and mystical experience, but also through the care and support and camaraderie which God's people give to each other.

The phrase *our daily bread* is probably one of the best known tag lines in common use from the bible or the prayer book. Ironically, for the scholars it is one of the most difficult to understand. The Greek word is unique, never occurring except in this setting. Is Jesus talking about the food we need each day, and praying that we have enough to be confident for tomorrow too? For most of us in Britain today that is a prayer that has been well answered ~ though not for us all, and not for everyone in a wider world where there is enough for everyone's need (at the moment) but not for everyone's greed. A good point to remember as we get ready for Christian Aid Week this month!

But is that what Jesus meant? Might it be spiritual food, truly substantial food for the future ~ the big Tomorrow ~ that he is talking about? I don't know, though I believe that the rest of this prayer is about practical things for the present world. But perhaps there is a double meaning; the kingdom of God is about living for God's future rule in the here and now, sharing the feast of God's future banquet in our day to day lives, sensing how the God of the future touches our lives in the present.

There may be the same kind of ambiguity in the next clause of the prayer, which in Luke reads *Forgive us(at this point in time) for our misdeeds, for in fact we are ourselves (continually) for-*

giving everyone who is indebted to us. Debt may be moral, but could also be monetary (and in Matthew's version which uses the debt word in both halves of the clause this is even more possible). Whether this was intended in the Lord's Prayer or not, Jesus (and the bible as a whole) shows what the late Bp. David Sheppard called a bias to the poor. Sin does need forgiving ~ but crippling debts need sorting out too, come the jubilee ~ the great day when in God's name wrongs are righted and injustice remedied ~ and for Jesus, I believe, the jubilee begins now.

We can expect God to forgive when we ask ~ his generous welcome is key to Jesus' message and the atoning effect of the cross, but he does expect us to go on reflecting his welcoming character out of gratitude for what he has done for us. At the end of Luke's gospel (ch. 24 v47) the risen Jesus explains to his disciples how repentance with a view to forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed to all nations. Conventionally this is understood as meaning that individuals must change their mind (repent) about their sinfulness and confess it in order that they may receive forgiveness. That is true, I believe, and a comforting message. But I wonder also if it should be taken this way too: people must change their attitudes about the sins that have been committed against them, so that they begin forgiving the people who hurt them, rather than nursing their grievances. That is a bit more demanding and harder to accept, let alone do. But it is part of the message! Sometimes our prayers need to be "Lord help me to want to forgive ..." rather than "Lord, I forgive ..." or "forgive me."

The final clause in Luke's version of the prayer is also a bone of contention. Some of you will remember the upset in the 1970s when a new version was introduced into our prayer books which read "lead us not into the time of trial". That was itself a time of trial for some of us! The scholars, probably rightly, argued that Jesus had been thinking of a time when God's people would face persecution and all kinds of practical troubles (St. Paul calls it "the tribulation" in some of his letters). We were to pray for rescue from that. For comfortable 1970s Britain that was too much like ivory tower academics scoring points; I suspect that for first century Jews (with Rome breathing down their necks) or for 21st century Syrian or Egyptian Christians it is a very realistic prayer. Once again, our English language does not have the breadth of meaning in one word to cover both moral testing and temptation

and material and political dangers. Once again, Jesus' words cover a wide and seemingly ambiguous range of needs, and our prayers should encompass our middle eastern brothers' and sisters' needs as well as our own.

But even more difficult to understand is how God might lead us into this situation. (And maybe St. James came across people who thought the prayer was suggesting that there were times when he would direct us towards temptation: see James ch. 1 v13) Surely it is God's business to lead us away from such things! Perhaps our problem is that to ask God to lead us anywhere is (for us) an unusual and unexpected request. To ask him not to lead us where he would not (presumably) want us to go is even more unexpected (especially if we understand it simply as moral temptation.) Perhaps there is an emphasis on the "into" bit. In the old prayer book version: *Lead us not into (but away from) temptation.* That is quite probable, but without knowing how Jesus put the emphasis on the words it cannot be proven. The negative does come right next to the "into", however. But more; we should remember that their assumption would probably have been that God was guiding them in all circumstances. To ask him to lead would not be an unexpected thing. To pray that that leading would be away from testing times and situations would be natural, and is in fact found in Jewish prayers from about that time.

And finally, briefly, the parable: it is to encourage us to have the nerve, the cheek, to pray (v8) and to recognise that God is like the father who knows how to give good gifts, and wants to give gifts for our good, especially a Spirit of holiness, to his children.

Wythenshawe F.M. broadcasts in the neighbourhood ~ local news, music, views, diary events ... Tune in to 97.2 FM., or you can also listen online at < [www . wfmradio . org](http://www.wfmradio.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

SerVICES :

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

Also on Thursdays there is a communion service, at 10am.

We run “**Scramblers**” ~ which I mustn't call a Sunday School ~ for children from 3½ to 7, in the Church Hall, ...

... and “**Sunday Club**” ~ for children from 7 upwards ~ in the Rectory, both between 10.30 and 11.30am Sundays except when there is a Family Service in church (May 5th, Jun. 2nd, &c.)

The Nigerian Anglican “Restoration” Congregation meets weekly at **12.30pm** for about 2 hours in St.Wilfrid's Church. The service includes traditional and lively modern music.

May 5th 10.30am Family Communion

6.30pm United service @ Methodist Church

*Thurs. May 9th 7.30pm **Ascension Day** Service at St.Wilfrid's
For the whole of Withington Deanery*

12th 10.30am Holy Communion
6.30pm Evening Worship.

19th **Whitsun / Pentecost**
10.30am Holy Communion
6.30pm Evening Worship.

26th 10.30am Morning Prayer
6.30pm Holy Communion

June 2nd 10.30am Family Communion & Parade Service
6.30pm United Evening Worship @ St.Wilfrid's

9th 10.30am Holy Communion
6.30pm Evening Worship

Please Note also a Confirmation Service @ 3.00pm ~ venue t.b.a.

Note another event in the Deanery ~ the licensing of Bryan Hackett as Vicar of Brooklands, 3pm on May 12th.

Drop in on St.Wilfrid's ...

**The church is open on Sundays from 2.30 till 5.15pm (-ish)
for private prayer, for enquiries, or just to look around.**

To visit at other times, please contact the Rector.

The next Open Week-end will be on June 22nd & 23rd ~ with displays and the opportunity to climb the tower.

The Parish Registers -

In Memoriam ...



David Heath (Penarth Rd.) 33, Ruby Minty-Quigley -,
Stephen Bradley (West View Rd.) 41,
Roy Davies (Bradgate Close) 84.

Dates for your Diary ~ it's all

happening!



Wed. 1st May Bible Study ~ Rectory, 8.00pm.

Thu. 2nd Church Council Meeting. 7.30pm Church Hall

Note the Farmers' Market in the village, Sat. 4th May.

Tue. 7th Archdeacon's Visitation; St. Matthew's Stretford,
7.30pm ~ for swearing in of Church officers, &c.

Mon. 13th Women's Group, 7.45 for 8.00pm Rectory

May 13th to 19th. Christian Aid Week.

Sat. 18th Summer Fair, Church Hall, 11am – 2.00pm.

Wed. 15th 22nd Bible Studies, ~ as above. NB **not** 29th

Thurs. 23rd 9.15am (ish) School Whitsun service.

Sat. 25th Coffee Morning; Church Hall, 10.00 – 11.30am

Thu. 30th May Folk Music Concert, 7.30pm in Church

Remember the Farmers' Market in the Village, Sat. 1st June.

Wed. 12th **June** Bible Study ~ Rectory, 8.00pm

PCC Meeting to be announced.

Women's Group

Please note that the date of the May meeting, on the 13th is not regular ~ to avoid yet another bank holiday.

No speaker has yet been booked (but failing anything else the subject may be a visit to the Somme battlefield.)

Further ahead, there will be no meeting in June, but for July, whet your knife and fork and your appetite for a Summer Barbecue.

For all meetings you are most welcome, even if you have not been before; there is no formal membership ~ just turn up!

In April we had a coffee morning in the Church Rooms, organised by Joanne McNiven. I billed it as for Manchester Children's Hospice In fact I had misheard what Joanne told me, and it was for the

children's <i>hospital</i> ~ towards comforts and entertainment for some of the teenagers who are treated there.	<i>GSF</i>
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Magpie ...

... still flies round *That Building* from time to time. No 1 Church Rd., that is. It was discussed by the Council's full Planning Committee on 18th April, and the developers' revised proposal was accepted by them. This means that within six months they are intending to remove the top of the lift shaft, the top of the stairwell, and the storey above the *brise soleil* or halo around the building. In addition (and we must watch that they do this, I suggest) they intend to drop the height of that halo by 0.9 metre. While it is good that the matter is finally being resolved, it was very clear that the prime consideration on the part of the councillors on the committee was the calculation that the developer would probably appeal again if they rejected this scheme and there was far less certainty that the council would win this time round. In other words, many of the Northenden residents who attended the meeting felt that the council were caving in to blackmail. The question was raised as to whether the decision could in that light be subject to judicial review. Cllrs. Paul Andrews and Nilofar Siddiqi supported the Civic Society's opposition.

... the local action group trying to keep our Library open continues with its campaign, and is liaising with similar groups across the city. There is a consultation going on about how the library service will be reshaped. That finished on 17th April, but will not be reported on until a council committee a month later. Libraries in other districts of Manchester have been spared and money found, at least until alternatives can be made ready.

... The Rector tells Magpie that he (and several other people) have asked the Council for the costs of the library, and how much they expect to be saving by closing it. Such information was apparently not available ~ despite the fact that these planned cuts are designed to save the council money. Eventually, after the closing date for the consultation, the figures came ~ £66,700 p.a, of which £13,070 is spent on the building ~ too late to be fed into alternative proposals from local campaigners. How convenient!

... meanwhile, back at the ranch, a score or so people occupied the Library on Sat. 13th April for an hour and a half after

closing time. They had quite a jolly time, joking with the odd security officer or policeman who dropped in, and with council officers who officially were not amused, but who clearly had a sympathy for the protest. You might think that an hour and a half of sitting in would be boring, but far from it: someone found a book of local history (what else would you expect in our library?) and they spent the time reading local anecdotes to each other, including tales of riotous behaviour in the streets of the village!

... and on Monday 15th, another lively and light hearted event to make the point. Several dozen people, from pensioners to toddlers and babies in pushchairs, gathered at the traffic lights at the centre of the village, and spent an hour going round in circles, waving their banners and jigging to Mike Kane's bagpipes, from one corner to another as the green man lit up. Traffic was no more disrupted than usual, and lots of motorists beeped their support under the benign eye of two PCSOs. Earlier in the day a petition of some 2,000 names had been handed in to Sue Murphy, acting lead councillor for cultural services, at the Town Hall.

St. Wilfrid's Church ~ annual meeting,
28th April

St. Wilfrid's AGM takes place too late in April to be reported on here. We will report in June on what happened.

St. Wilfrid's Church ~ envelopes /
planned giving

The church planned giving scheme runs from April to March and so new envelopes were issued last month. If you are already in the scheme you should have your envelopes by now. (if not, contact the Rector) If you are not in the scheme but would like to be, have a word with Mrs. Morgan, Miss Sundar or the Rector. Instead of envelopes some people use a bank standing order and forms are available in church to set one up. Forms are also available if you are willing to "gift aid" your offerings, asking the Government to refund to the church the tax you pay on what you give the church ~ but make sure that you still pay tax after April's coding changes before committing yourself to this.

Christian Aid

In addition to the support Christian Aid gives for development it tries to reshape the way people ~ the "big" people ~ think and

act. There is a G8 meeting (of the major industrial nations) in Northern Ireland in June this year, and the message Christian Aid will be trying to get through to them is that **there is enough food for everyone, IF...** and they list four ifs.

The world produces enough food for everyone, yet one person in every eight on this planet is living with the pain of hunger. It is the world's most shocking problem and our toughest challenge. It's unfair; it's unjust, and ... it is totally preventable. We can push world leaders, Christian Aid asserts, to end this injustice by tackling these four big Ifs.

Tax *If we stop big companies dodging taxes in poor countries so that millions of people will have access to this funding and can free themselves from hunger.*

Land *If we stop poor farmers being forced off their land and if we use crops to feed people, not to fuel cars.*

Aid. *If we make the right investments to stop people dying from hunger, and help the poorest people feed themselves.*

Transparency *If we force Governments and big corporations to be honest and open about their actions that stop people getting enough food.*

These are big ifs, but if we press our leaders to make these happen and if they do, then there will be enough food for everyone

This year the UK hosts the G8 group of world leaders. They must rethink their policies and actions in order to change the future of millions of people who struggle against hunger every day. By acting together we can make this happen. Latest updates and information about all this can be found on the Christian Aid website ~ christianaid.org.uk/IF, or on email at warrington@christian-aid.org.

From a Christian Aid leaflet.