



**Cover Picture.** This year's Remembrance Day Service is at Northenden Methodist Church. This photo by John Hill-Wilson dates from some years ago. The wreath-laying.

### Prayers for the Month,

Almighty God, we give you thanks for the lives of those whom we love but see no longer. May goodness and kindness, courage and perseverance that we remember be an inspiration in our lives; may regrets and the sense of loss be lifted from us and lost in the comfort and support of your love;

Through Jesus Christ our dead and risen Saviour; Amen.

**Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane, 0161 998 – 2615**

Dear Friends,

So what about All Hallows' Eve ~ *Halloween*? Have a party; light all the candles (safely, of course!), wear white, or

yellow and gold, serve angel cakes, and put on haloes, or crowns, or clowns' make-up, bob the apples and celebrate the fun, joy and hope of heaven, not the fear of hell. If you decide to go to town on the fancy dress, award a prize for the finest *saint's* outfit – and if someone turns up in St. Helen's rugby colours, (or Southampton football strip) good luck to them! (They've got good cause this year for celebration in their own right, with three trophies.

Seriously, that is what All Hallows' (or rather All Saints') day is about ~ and its eve is part of the celebrations because in the church calendar a *day* begins at sundown the evening before like the Jewish Sabbath. We should be thinking about the good God does in people, and not the dark side of life; the way he makes us saints, through his forgiveness and welcome. We should celebrate the *fears relieved* by God's grace, not the fears and phobias found behind the cobwebs and black masks.

But where do the ghouls come from? Someone suggested it was because we remember on the night before the nasty things that the saints drive away in the day. Good try, maybe, but I think not. It is probably an echo of pagan Celtic or Anglo-Saxon religion, which associated this time of year with death, and imagined a thinning of the barriers between this world and the other. Fears of the unquiet dead, or of an angry otherworld, were expressed and perhaps tamed by somehow mimicking them. Now that I can't encourage!

So what is appropriate, apart from celebrating saintliness, as we come to this season of remembrance?

Remembering, certainly ~ I hope in a positive way, thankful for the good memories of those whom we love but see no longer Sharing, perhaps (that's the best word I can think of) as we recognise that the "communion of saints" which we talk about in the creed is not just about God's superheroes, but about all God's people, here and in the world to come, all being part of the same team despite the divide we call death

But not praying *for* them, let alone *to* them. If we want a supportive presence in our lives it is to God himself that we should turn. The thought of what departed friends or relatives would have done or said can be very vivid and very helpful, and make their presence seem very real, but treasure it as a memory and don't try to hold someone back with you. We commend them

to God in their funeral: we should not doubt our prayers, or God's wisdom and goodness, in praying *for* them as if they were still ill or troubled here.

And any regrets ...? I believe they are best expressed in our prayers to God. It is natural to wonder *What if?* or to dream *If only!* There may be things left unsaid, or which we wish we could unsay, or un-do. There may even be hurts which still rankle. All these are best put into our prayers to God, and let go, as we speak to him about what we feel and fear and hope.

*Yours faithfully,*      **Greg Forster**

## Northenden Methodist Church.

Palatine Road.

**Minister: the Revd. David Bown,  
5 Kenworthy Lane, Northenden, M 22 4 JF  
0161 998 – 2158**

### Sunday Services.

5<sup>th</sup> Nov. 11.00am Morning Worship: Mr. David Hillary  
6.30pm United Service at **St. Wilfrid's**

This year's British Legion **Remembrance Day Parade** service will be at Northenden Methodist Church:

**Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>**      **10.45am** The Rev. D. Bown, & Mr. J. Howell.

19<sup>th</sup>      11.00am Mrs. Margaret Hunt

26<sup>th</sup>      11.00am Mrs. Joyce Curtis

Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>      11.00am      Morning Service

6.30pm      United Service at Methodist Church.

**COMMUNITY LUNCH** ... on **Wed. 8<sup>th</sup>**, 12.00 noon to 1.30pm  
at the "Eatery". Victoria Rd.

**Wed. 22<sup>nd</sup>**, Cold Buffet Lunch (same time & venue)

**Fun Bingo:** Sat. 25<sup>th</sup> Oct., 2.00 – 4.00pm.

### NEW DAWN COUNSELLING.

Free, professional counselling at the New Dawn Community Centre, Button Lane, Northen Moor. Tel. 0161 – 962-8100.

*Counselling in a Christian context*

The service is free, though donations towards the costs are welcome.

Magpie ...

... has been watching the Rector's antics with a spade around St. Wilfrid's churchyard lately. What on earth (or under it) has he found? Well, apart from the drains, not much it seems ~ though there were rather more bones than he expected. (But that was why *he* was doing the digging, when all's said and done) It seems that the *old* drains, put in when the church was rebuilt in 1874-6, must have displaced some graves even though they were following the path. There were some odd scraps of glazed pottery, mostly Victorian, and some broken clay pipe-stems. It looks as if people nipped out of church for a smoke even then, and threw away their dimps in the form of broken pipes!

... has also seen some of the rubbish which gets dumped in the ginnel between the church and the hall. Not only has he found too many beer cans, but also some little polythene sachets. They used to be plain, though for those in the know it was obvious that they had contained drugs, probably cannabis. Now there are some new ones. They are actually labelled! There is a picture of a cannabis leaf printed on the plastic. There's cheek for you! But Magpie wonders ... if the purchaser finds the contents is not what the label proclaims, or is too diluted, can the supplier be taken to court under the Trades' Descriptions Act?



The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)  
Wythenshawe 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,

Magpie has overheard some of the discussions about the new Linear Park ~ or whatever name it will go by in the end (any ideas?) ~ and is looking forward to it. Work is now supposed to start on it in January, with clearing and landscaping. Next financial year there should be some children's play apparatus. A "friends of Northenden Linear Park" has been set up among local residents and users, to support the work on the park and encourage its proper use. Watch out for the publicity about its meetings.

... also in the picture above is the Tatton Arms. Now if ever there has been an underused opportunity, there is one, staring us – or some enterprising entrepreneur – or some go getting brewery – in the face. Magpie has heard (yes he did hear; most of Northenden must have heard, it was so loud at 5.00am) that the last lively landlord, full of the joys of spring or something, let off a fusillade of fireworks at that early hour. It got reported to the Police as a gunfight, it seems, and the helicopter was scrambled. There were some doubts about the recent new Licensing Act, but in this case it came into its own as the police had the license revoked instantly. We live, it seems, in interesting times.

... St. Wilfrid's School is getting a facelift. I suppose that alterations to the main front entrance qualify for that description. It will create a new entrance porch, incorporated with the administrators' office, allow more space for teachers to prepare materials and lessons, and add new library space for the children. (Computers are splendid things, but they tend to gobble up space, and the old library got swallowed by a herd of grazing monitors.)

... Work on the sorting out of the old Barrow Motors (Car Options) site on Palatine Rd. does not seem to be progressing very fast. Magpie understands that this is because of asbestos, and that work is being done inside the building to make that safe before any more obvious work can be done. As for The Church, he has seen a letter which confirms what he guessed last month: the structure is safe despite the fire, has been made secure, and will remain the core of the new developments on the site.

... and the Traffic Lights continue to cause problems. As intended, exit from Church Rd. is easier, but pedestrians are still not clear when they have priority, and some just walk, anyway.

... the children got to discuss stars, which led them to talk about star signs. "Actually," said the nine-year-old, "I'm Vertigo."

## St. Wilfrid's Church,

*Ford Lane. (Off Church Rd.)*

**Rector: Greg Forster (998-2615)**

**Organist: Arthur Mellor (928-0472)**

[www . stwilfridsnorthenden . org . uk](http://www.stwilfridsnorthenden.org.uk)

### Services:



On Sundays at 8.00am, and on Thursdays at 10.00am there is a Communion service (using the old Prayer Book).

**There is a "Sunday Club"** for 7 – 11+ year olds in the Rectory at 10.30am, for about an hour, and ...

**A Sunday School**, for children from 3½ to 6+, meets in the Church Hall from 10.30 till about 11.30am., except when there is a Family Service (for parents and children together) in Church.

5 <sup>th</sup> Nov.	10.30am	Family Communion & Parade Service
	6.30pm	United Evening Worship (@ St. Wilfrid's)
12 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Evening Worship
19 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Holy Communion & Baptism
	6.30pm	Evening Worship
26 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Holy Communion (1662)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec.	10.30am	Family Communion,

## Parade and Toy Service.

***Please note too that the church is open each Sunday afternoon from 1.45 – approx. 5.15pm (or dusk if earlier), for prayer, visiting, enquiries, &c.***

### **F** or your **D** iaries

**Wed. 1<sup>st</sup> Nov.** Bible study, Rectory, 8pm ~ on “All Hallows, &c.!”.

**Sat. 4<sup>th</sup>** Coffee Morning (church hall) 10am ...

**Mon. 6<sup>th</sup>** Women’s Group ~ 7.45 for 8.00pm, Rectory.

**Weds. 8, 15, 22, 29.**

**Bible Studies, as above; resuming Luke’s Gospel.**

**Thu. 16<sup>th</sup>.** PCC Church Hall, 7.30pm.

**Sat. 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec. Christmas Fair.**

**Mon. 4<sup>th</sup>** Women’s Group Party. **NB 7.00pm** Rectory.

**Thurs 7<sup>th</sup>.** **7.30pm in Church**

**Carols for Christmas Folk.**

### **WOMEN’S GROUP ... NOVEMBER**

This month the speaker is Rachel Fordyce, who works on BBC Radio 4’s “You and Yours” programme. *Sue Forster*

### **F** rom the **R** egisters ...

#### **I** n **M**emoriam ...

Gertrude Williams (Haughton Dr.) 93, Jenny Ackerley (Sale) 66,

Thomas Malloy (Boat La.) 89, Jean Pritt (Orchard Rd) 73,

Sylvia Bebbington (Royle Green Rd.) 73,

Gerald Reed (Shawdene Rd.) 82, Fay Miller (Patterdale Rd.), 82

Thomas Dawson (Greenwood Rd.) 81,

Edward Brunyee, (Kerfoot Cl.) 80, Jessie Stonall (Weston Gr.) 92

#### **B** aptised on **S** unday **22<sup>nd</sup> Oct.**

Mason James Whitby.

#### **and C** ongratulations ...

Bernard and Margaret Burbidge celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary, surrounded by family and friends, with a service of thanksgiving and reaffirmation of their promises in Church on Sat.

21<sup>st</sup> October. Is “Many Happy Returns” the appropriate wish on such occasions? Congratulations, at least!

### **Toilets update ~ church and hall:**

*Greg Forster*

The work on the Church Toilets, in the south porch, was delayed, partly to fit in with our main contractor’s schedule, and partly because the old drainage pipes needed more powerful machinery than expected to clear them. It may be possible to use them, rather than digging new drains from the porch to the church hall. We await developments (as at 24/10/06) As I have said before, any work will be fenced off for safety but this may cause some inconvenience in gaining access to the graveyard and especially to the tower plot. Please bear with us, and be careful as you pass the works areas. Our apologies for the difficulty.

### **St. Wilfrid’s C/E Primary School, Northenden.**

If you want to get your child (grandchild/great-grandchild) in to the church school, please get an application in as soon as possible. For various reasons outside our direct control we are now having to allocate places for the Nursery when some of the children are barely two. (Decisions are made in March). And if you want a specifically “church” place, *do* approach the Rector. He may well know you, but won’t necessarily recognise the child’s surname in the middle of a busy meeting of the admissions sub-committee . Application forms, and details of the admissions procedures, are available from the school, in person or by ringing 998-3663 .

### **DRESS CODES.**

*Greg Forster*

The trouble with commenting on the recent fuss about what Moslem women wear, or BA allows its staff to show, is that I will do just what I want to take others to task for doing, namely hyping a socially delicate and possibly divisive situation. But here goes

Firstly, I think Jack Straw was right to the issue of *communication*. In face to face conversations we are geared to learn not just from the audible words but from visible gestures and expressions. Few people have formally learned to lip read, but that kind of perception does play a part in communication, even for people who are not in any way deaf. For those who (perhaps

without realising it) are suffering mild hearing loss it is of greater significance. The same goes for learning a language. We may think we are just picking up the sounds, but we learn how to make them visually (can't you remember the fun you had when the teacher tried to get you to pronounce the French "u" sound and pulled such crazy faces?) True, we also use telephones, but then the sound is focus direct into our ears, and our minds geared to that kind of attention. I remember from those distant days when I had a beard how deaf colleagues complained, because even that obscured what I was saying to them so that they could not "hear" my lips. So, for fullest communication we do need to see what people are saying, so that if your job is communication you do need to allow for that.

Having said that, I wonder whether so many other government ministers needed to weigh in to the debate, especially when their comments were directed towards a judicial process (an employment hearing) which was then unfinished ~ *sub iudice* ~, and related to matters which were not their departmental responsibility. It smacks rather of a rather dangerous, scare-mongering kind of populism ~ and that from a government which has made a virtue of combating racism.

Having said all that, should people have the right to wear what they want to, either as religious statements or fashion statements? My first instinct is to say yes, of course, but then I realise there are some things which people wear which I find offensive, or at least jar aesthetically. Does Jack Straw ask western women wearing low slung jeans and bare paunches to put more on, I wonder, since that represents a distraction to communication, and for some people would be morally offensive?

I think, then, that I would ask people to think, as they decide what to wear, how it affects the people they will be meeting and the wider community, as well as how they feel about it. So a niqab (veil ~ I think that's how you spell it.), or a dog collar, can simply say "this is me," or it can say "in your face." We have to choose our time and place.

So that leads on to crosses at work. Frankly, BA are taking political correctness and the avoidance of offence (or whatever they think it is) to idiotic extremes. If a necklace or whatever gets

in the way of equipment or is so big that it knocks over the drinks, OK, ban it. If not, no problem! And incidentally, I wonder how consistent BA have been. How would they handle a Star of David pendant (Jewish), bangles (possibly Sikh), a pentangle star (new age pagan, or Wiccan, perhaps), Zodiac figures (astrological), or even an inverted crucifix (satanic)? All of these are *religious* symbols, even if the wearers do not realise what Powers they are putting themselves under, and there are certainly others that I would not immediately know. Some I do find offensive.

But my conclusion is to respect what people choose to wear, so long as it is practical, but to ask them to consider the needs and feelings of those with whom they have to relate. We should be mature, and give others the credit for being mature.

St. Wilfrid's Church,

Ford Lane, Northenden, M22



Carols & Folk for

Christmas

Kieron Hartley & Friends

Thursday 7th Dec. 7.30pm

Adm. £3, Proceeds to the Booth Centre,

Supporting Manchester's Homeless

## **I Believe in ... *life after life after death.***

No, that isn't a misprint. It does suggest that the Christian understanding of life beyond this life is more complex than it sometimes seems, and more glorious.

Firstly, what we are talking about is something which was modelled by Christ, and won for us by him. *His* obedience in going to the Cross challenged and broke the power of death and of wrong. "As in Adam (our human nature) all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Without him there is no promise of life beyond life. And his experience models, or pioneers what he promises us. His death was real, and not to be shrugged off as a mere "nothing at all" in the way some funereal poetry tries to. To the thief on the cross beside him he spoke of being "this day in paradise" and St. Peter describes him as "alive in the Spirit", but then he is raised to a new quality of life in his resurrection, which is clearly described as physical, not ghostly, even if it is different.

Next, we need to consider what life beyond life is *not*. You sometimes hear talk of people living on in the memories of their friends, or in children, or in achievements. To some extent this is true and a comforting thought, but it is not what Christians mean by life after death. Nor are we talking about reincarnation - some kind of recycling where you come back as someone else. Because the words both begin with re- there is sometimes a confusion, but they are not interchangeable and should not be confused. And neither are we talking about continued presence of a ghostly kind around our old haunts. Whatever that kind of experience may be, it is not the Christian hope of resurrection!

So what *are* we talking about? We find two pictures in the New Testament. One is of immediate and continued existence, which Jesus spoke of as paradise in the incident mentioned above, and of which Paul wrote when he contemplated his future in Philippians ch.1 (v21 especially) and spoke of "being with Christ, which is far better (than imprisonment in a Roman gaol!)" The other is resurrection, and Paul speaks of this in Philippians (ch 3v20) when he says "Our citizenship is in heaven, from where we await a saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body ..." I have quoted this from

Philippians to show that these two pictures belong together, but are not different ways of talking about the same thing. Elsewhere the detail is clearer: Paul speaks of a “mystery” in which “the dead in Christ shall arise, and we shall meet the Lord in the air.”

So what is the New Testament talking about? Firstly, immediately after death, it promises to those who love and trust our Lord a state of peace, wonder and glory “with Christ”. This is a very real and substantial existence, not mere shadows and wisps in the wind, but it is not the final story. It is more of a time of waiting – so that when Jesus talks of there being many “mansions” in his Father’s house it may be that the word implies a place to wait for something better, rather than the final destination.

And what is that final destination? It is something which affirms the goodness of the physical world, and yet transforms it. It is something which expresses God’s justice in the face of sin and evil. We speak of the resurrection of the body, and we speak of the Lord returning ~ making his presence felt openly and obviously ~ to the world. We read in the New Testament of the dead in Christ rising to new life, and there is the picture of a new Jerusalem coming down from God to the transformed and renewed earth. St. Paul compares the transformation between our present physical existence to the state of that glorious “spiritual” body to the way in which a plant is the same as the seed from which it grew, yet so much more wonderful. (I Cor.15) St. John speaks about being like Christ, for we shall see him as he is, in the glory of his resurrected body. So “spiritual” in this context doesn’t mean airy-fairy or insubstantial, but purified morally and transformed materially.

But how, and will it be better than this? Even St. John admits to a certain agnosticism here. “It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we shall be like him...” It is beyond literal description, but the vision of the Book of Revelation speaks of the healing of the nations. It also promises that God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. That is not (I believe) just about sticking plaster comfort ~ *There, there, don’t cry.* ~ It implies a healing in God’s presence of the sources of tears in broken relationships and deep hurts.