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Prayer for the Month.

Loving Lord, who shared the joys of a human home,
and the trials of a human life;

We praise and thank you for all that you have done for us
and shared with us;

We pray to you for our world and yours, that it may
become more a place of respect and peace, love and support;

And we ask that in our lives and in our homes and in our
actions you will be present,
to bring your love and hope and joy into our years.

So hear our prayer, O Prince of peace; Amen.

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane, Manchester, M 22 4 NQ

0161 – 998-2615

gsf @ stwilfridsnorthenden . org . uk

Dear Friends,

I will simply say, at this stage, Happy Christmas ~ even
though it is, as I write, of course well over a month away, and
you will see this long before Christmas proper begins. Happy
Christmas anyway.

Later in the magazine you will find comments about the
Congestion Charge. Again, at this stage, I will simply say Vote.
Whatever your ideas about it (I will voice mine later) we should
all take the opportunity to influence events, since we have it.

And I also hope in due course that everyone in Northenden,
not just “stakeholder groups” will have a chance to comment on
plans and ideas which the City Council are putting together for
the village over the next decade or more. Watch out for publicity
(and comment on the Civic Society’s own proposals too).

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.

Dec. 7th

11.00am The Rev, Brenda Shaw

6.30pm United Service at St. Wilfrid's

14th 11.00am Holy Communion
The Revd. David Hardman

21st 11.00am Carol Service
The Revd. David Sanders

Dec. 24th ~ Christmas Eve

5.00pm Circuit Service at Baguley Hall.

Dec. 25th. Christmas Day

10.30am Morning Service. The Revd. David Bown

28th 11.00am The Revd. David Bown/

Jan. 4th 2009 11.00am Morning Worship

6.30pm United Service @ Northenden Methodist Ch.

Community Christmas Dinner

Wed. 10th Dec. 12.30pm

NB. By ticket only.

Fun Bingo Sat. Dec. 20th. Noon – 2.00pm

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 Lesley Thomson (491-1323)

The main hall and smaller rooms are available for hire;

~ contact Peter Todhunter (Meeting House Warden) 834-5797,

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:



Communion on Sundays at 8.00am,
and on Thursdays at 10.00am

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

... "Scramblers", 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.

Dec. 7th 10.30am Family Morning Service & Parade.
6.30pm United Evening Service @ St.Wilfrid's

14th 10.30am Morning Worship
6.30pm Evening Worship

21st 10.30am Morning Worship
3.00pm Christmas Carol Service

Dec. 24th 11.30pm Christmas "Midnight" Service

25th Christmas Day ~

Services at 8.00am and 10.30am (Family Service)

Sun. 28th 10.30am Morning Worship
6.30pm Evening Worship.

Jan. 4th 10.30am Family Morning Worship
6.30pm United Service @ Northenden Methodist Church

Drop in ... 2 – 4pm. **(-ish!)**

St.Wilfrid's church is normally open each Sunday
from 2.00 – dusk,

for prayer, visiting and just looking round, enquiries about
baptisms, weddings, ancestor hunting, ... &c.

But building work is going on; the church may be closed to
general visitors, though if it is and you have a specific
query call at the Rectory during those times.

It's All Happening ..., for your diaries ...

Mon. 1st Dec. 7.00pm Women's Group (Rectory) see panel

Wed. 3rd 8.00pm Bible Study (Rectory)

Thu. 4th 7.30pm Church Council (Church Hall)

Wed. 10th 8.00pm Bible Study (Rectory)

Note Christmas Services listed above. There may also be some
bell ringing before the "midnight" service, and on New Year's Eve.

Note too the Farmers' Markets on Dec. 6th and Jan. 3rd. I believe that something special is being planned for the 6th Dec.

Women's Group: December. Sue Forster And in December, food yet again ~ the Christmas party on Mon. 1 st , from 7.00pm
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FROM THE REGISTERS;

BAPTISED...

... on Sun.19th Oct. Molly Patricia GILMOUR & Ruby Mae GILMOUR
... & on Sun.16th Nov. Eleanor Lucy Jessica ENGLAND

IN MEMORIAM ...

Harry Brown (Church Rd.) 87, Irene Wilson (Bradgate Close),
Sally-Ann Falshaw (Fallowfield) 47, Harry Haworth (Sunset Ave.)

Repairs and Improvements. GSF

If you have been near St.Wilfrid's church building recently you will have seen the scaffolding and shuttering. The long awaited work on the side aisle slates is under way, and already we have four inches of insulation in those roofs. The work will probably last until beyond Christmas, and during that time the tower door will be our main access to the building. There will also be times when the aisles will be unsafe or dirty, and have to be fenced off. Some of the ceiling panelling is loose and needs to be re-fixed. With those limitations, however, it will be business as usual. Sorry for any inconvenience. The good news is that despite some leaks, the old timbers are in beautiful condition.

Christmas ...

GREG FORSTER

The first thing to say about Christmas is that there is a God, and that he lets us know about himself and about his interest in us not just from the glories of the starry heavens above, or the rest of creation, and not just from the moral law within us, our sense of fairness and conscience, but by coming in person to show us what he is like and what he expects of us.

I know that's hardly a new message, but it remains true, and bears repeating, and is there for us to latch on to and live up to. "God so loved the world," St.John tells us, "that he gave his one and only Son, so that whoever comes to trust him should not perish but have eternal life." When John speaks about "the world" there he is not talking ecology, but humanity; you and me and everyone else around, as well as his creation - the

environment we live in. Jesus' birth and life (and death and resurrection) were God's way of reaching out in caring love to us.

You may ask how I can speak in one paragraph of God coming in person, and in the next quote a text about God sending his Son. Fair comment. We are struggling to put the wonder and exuberant love and generosity of God into simple words. The same St. John also struggled, but he begins his story of Jesus by linking his person and nature intimately to God's very being. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God ... and the Word became fully human and lived alongside us, full of generous love and integrity, and we saw his glory, a glory that belongs to the one and only Son." That too may sound hard to grasp, too good to be true, but it is at the heart of Christmas. What we see in Jesus is what God is like, and how God is reaching out to invite us to share our lives with him here, and hereafter. Enjoy Christmas!

WesleyOwen Books and Music

123 Deansgate, Manchester.
(Opposite John Rylands Library)

The place to go for Christian books and music, Bibles and bible-study aids, Christian presents for your god-children, and for Christmas ~ or for a cup of coffee while you are in Manchester.

Magpie ...

... was flitting about by the river the other day (why is always the other day, not some day, or this day? Is there something special about other days?) ... Anyway, the other day he was by the Riverside Park, and went to land on a tree (now there's another esoteric question. How do you land on a tree? Shouldn't birds tree in a tree?) Whatever! He went to perch, and there was nowhere to perch. That floored him. So many trees had been butchered, (Can you butcher a tree ...? ... Oh, never mind!) though there were some interesting posts and things in the vast airy void left where the trees weren't any more. A slide and a pole and some frames. Interesting, he thought; it must be for those human chicks ~ and then he saw a grown up human sidling up to them and trying to have a go!

... so he flitted on (what is the past tense of flit? Could it be "he flat on"? or "flatted"? or even "flit?") Anyway, what-

ever. He flew on to the churchyard, and there, underneath the huge beech tree in the middle he noticed some daffodil bulbs shooting from the earth ~ and this was the middle of November! The Rector is clearly wrong to announce the church fair on Nov. 29th as a Christmas or even a Late Summer fair. It must be a Spring fair!

... has heard people talking about the effects of a Congestion Charge boundary under the M 60 in Northenden. Will the village become a park-and-ride car park, someone wondered? Someone else, who lives in the village, suggested an alternative ~ to leave our cars in the golf club or hotel car parks just across the bridge, and walk over each morning, so avoiding the charge.

... but Magpie wonders why no-one has asked him to feature in those adverts in favour of the scheme. Seriously, he won't have to pay if he flies, will he? ~ and it's a greener, healthier alternative. Everyone should try it.

... the other day (yes, another other day) a friend emailed Magpie a copy of ch. 23 of the Sustainable Communities Act. It makes riveting reading, and he thought all his readers should see it, so here goes: °Ã'®6Kc6...| CÆÓi Ó> + "nExFai`ÿ2Û , -•ötŽ†^ai™ %éÛİpØ»AY>õ^>:l\$%â "'dê 5 Oy Zi‡ `ðÖ^ .gÅ´ °*"c`d±M^ÂLœAÊ
Wonderful things, emails! Wonderful things, Acts! Frustrating things, computer programmes!

... and another thing, since riveting has been mentioned; it seems B of the Bang may be scrapped, since its rivets, or rather welds, are not reliable. Magpie hopes, after all the fuss over what might happen when that particle collider thing in Switzerland ~ the big bang machine ~ was turned on, that its removal will not leave a black hole in the middle of Manchester. But then again ... no, let's not go along that line of thought!

... saw the results of a ballot conducted recently by the National Union of Teachers. 29% of members voted, 51.5% in favour, 48.5% against. They then announced that there was a majority of 51.5%. I'm glad they aren't teaching maths. The majority among those voting was 3%, and only 15.2% of members were in favour. I think that puts them in a minority.

Sue Forster writes ...

CONCORD, DEC. 2008.

Thank you for my marvellous party and for the splendid picture, card and cake which came as a total surprise. I'm sorry the celebrations had to be delayed, but everything was no less enjoyable for that. A repeat performance, I'm afraid, for December as we get into festive mode. Do come and join us.

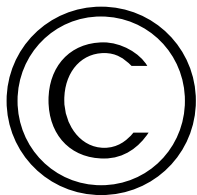
On a more sombre note, as we look forward to Christmas, many others, for various reasons, do not. I hope everyone who would otherwise be alone will invite themselves to the Rectory on Christmas Day. It is not an intrusion ~ we enjoy having others to join us and look forward to it.

We hope also to take gifts of warm clothes, cup-a-soups and biscuits to the drop-in centres in Manchester for street-people. Please let us have any contributions by 15th Dec.

And above all, have a very happy, Christ-centred Christmas.

Sue Forster

As the debate hots up and time comes to decide, how should we vote?



Congestion ©harge

Greg Forster

I have written before about this, and suggested that there is something fundamentally flawed about a scheme which charges 20% of the people to pay for the benefits enjoyed more by the other 80%. I am now slightly puzzled by the advertising campaign which speaks of only 10% of people paying, and so 90% being able to vote yes without it costing them a penny. I presume the 20/80 refers to motorists, and without the 10/90 to anyone and everyone. However, "No taxation representation" the fundamental injustice still remains, as does the feeling that there is something immoral in asking people to vote for something that won't cost them anything while someone else pays. What is more, it has struck me since writing last month that

many of those 20% will not even have a vote in the matter, since they live outside Greater Manchester. What was that slogan that launched the USA? "No taxation without representation".

In November I attended the debate organised by the South Manchester Reporter about the TIF and Charge proposals. It was lively, and at times heated. I felt that the case against was better presented, and that a stronger case could have been made in favour by a different speaker.

Levenshulme was well represented, and seemed to think it was being sidelined in the proposals. Sadly, few people from

Few people from south of the Mersey were at the debate.

south of the Mersey seemed to be there, though we too seem to have been short changed by the scheme, as I have suggested in previous months. The point was made that there is no plan B, so that if the vote is No, then there will be few of the proposed improvements to transport in the region, and that this sounds like bribery or threat, rather than sound transport engineering.

One point in favour of the scheme (though not expressed very well at the debate) is that it will be "green", reducing pollution in the city. This may or may not be so: I am not convinced that it will reduce traffic ~ perhaps it will merely free up more space for the 80% ~ but for us the primary source of traffic pollution is the Motorway network which threads through Wythenshawe, Northenden and Gatley. If anything traffic may increase on it, as people try to avoid going through the zone boundaries. The air quality maps produced by Manchester Council in connection with their long term planning show higher levels of pollution along the Motorways and at "our" junctions. The scheme does nothing to deal with congestion or pollution on the Motorways.

Having spoken in the debate about the way Wythenshawe and Northenden were left out in the cold, and about the 20/80 injustice, I was asked how I proposed to vote. My answer

Reducing traffic would be a good idea; this scheme is not the one.

was that, reluctantly, it would be No. Some scheme for reducing traffic would be a good idea; this one is not fair enough, not effective enough, not extensive enough and not green enough.

If, however, the scheme does gain approval, I think we should press for a further debate, or open public discussions, as to how it can be improved and extended.