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**Cover Picture;** ... is by John Hill-Wilson; after what bodes to be the wettest January on record, here's February Fill-dyke, or rather a picture of Withington Golf Course (the corner of it that is actually in Northenden) in the floods of the early 1970s.

Prayer for the Month.

Almighty God, who show to those who are mistaken the light of your truth, so that they may return to your way of right living and right believing;

Grant to all who belong in the community of faith in Christ that we may turn our backs on what is against what we believe, and follow all that is in keeping with it,

Through our Lord Jesus Christ himself. Amen

Based on the collect for the second Sunday of Lent, Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>.

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane.  
0161 998 – 2615

Dear Friends,

"I brought you here," remonstrated the irate mother as she belaboured her wailing child on his backside, "to enjoy yourself at the sea-side, and enjoy yourself you will!" It must have been some years ago ~ or may-be not ~ because such actions are not now considered P-C, but it serves to highlight the way our society thinks about itself.

Enjoyment is the key criterion for saying how well something is going. Do I enjoy myself, the evaluation sheet asks, at the training conference for visiting police station cells?

Do I enjoy preparing accounts for this charity? The questionnaire on volunteering asks, and so on. I do not get into either of those activities for enjoyment, though I would say I am content to be doing them. They are necessary; they are right and proper, and in their way rewarding.

I am reminded again of a cartoon. The vicar is saying goodbye to people at the church door after the Lenten service. Steam is coming out of his ears as he talks to a woman who looks put out. She has obviously voiced a complaint. "But madam," he says, "it was not meant to be a 'jolly little sermon'!"

Despite efforts to class churchgoing as a leisure-time activity, the church is not part of the entertainment industry. If a service is enjoy-able, all well and good, but my heart sinks when I hear that kind of praise ~ if it is in fact praise. Moving, yes I hope, or uplifting or even challenging or thought-provoking, but enjoyable is to damn with false praise. It is the wrong way of thinking about what we are about.

Our worship of God is not an entertainment for us to enjoy, but an expression of our feelings of love and awe towards him, and to a lesser extent towards each other. It should move us and inspire us; we should be more than content to be engaged in it. It is a duty, as our services remind us, though not a harsh duty but a joyful and rewarding one. It is part of truly being what we are. And the more of our heartfelt selves we put into it (forget the vicar and his not so jolly sermon) and the more we reckon up what God has done for us, the more we get from it.

Dare I say it? Enjoy ... No, be moved and rewarded this Lent.

Yours faithfully,      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 Lesley Thomson (491-1323)

The main hall and smaller rooms are available for hire;

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

## The Date of Easter!

Greg Forster

This is not normally something to get excited about, though there have been times in Church history when people did ~ not least our own St. Wilfrid, but that's another story.

This year is a bit remarkable, however. I have looked through calendars back into the 1870s and cannot find a year when it has been so early (it is 23<sup>rd</sup> March, in case you haven't noticed, and that brings Ash Wednesday and a host of other festivals forward too). There were a few years that I could not find, and the books did suggest that 22<sup>nd</sup> Mar. might be possible.

So how do we get such a wide range? Start with the fact that Jesus' death took place at the Jewish Passover in 30AD. The Passover is tied to the Jewish lunar calendar ~ the full moon in the springtime month Nisan. This is tied back to the solar year every so often by adding an extra month, though that does not always mean that our Easter and Passover tally. The church ties the date in to the solar year by latching on to the first full moon after the spring equinox. The equinox this year is 20<sup>th</sup> March (thanks to Feb. 29<sup>th</sup>) and the full moon is on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

But Easter, celebrating Christ's resurrection on the third day, is on a Sunday. So we go to the first Sunday after the full moon, which this year is 23<sup>rd</sup>. So now you know! (Incidentally, the fact that we celebrate Sunday, rather than the Sabbath ~ Saturday ~ as Christians, is strong evidence that something happened that as big enough to change the hallowed custom of centuries! That something was a resurrection from the dead.)

And if you want to work out the date of Easter next year, ... I suggest you do what I do, and look in your diary!

I imagine that this year particularly we shall get calls for Easter to be fixed. I can see the strength of such a call, given the way School terms and other things are fixed in relation to it. But that actually misses the point. What is awkward for the secular world is not so much Easter as the Bank Holidays. While I would not want to see Good Friday, with all its sombre sacredness, dropped as an official holiday, there is nothing sacred about Easter Monday. I'm easy about it. Let the schools, Parliament and the rest take a bank holiday (and more in the case of the schools) at a fixed point if they want, so that the holiday industry can get in gear and school terms be a standard length. Christian Easter will still be the first Sunday after the full moon ... and the bank holiday? I'm not sure, but perhaps April 1<sup>st</sup> is appropriate. An All Fools' Day bank holiday would be just about right.

# Northenden Methodist Church.

Palatine Road.

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

## Sunday Services.

Febr. 3<sup>rd</sup>            11.00am Mr. Arnold Jones  
                          6.30pm United Evening Service at St.Wilfrid's Church.  
10<sup>th</sup>                11.00am Miss Joyce Burgess  
17<sup>th</sup>                11.00am Holy Communion. The Rev. D. Bown  
24<sup>th</sup>                11.00am The Rev. Brenda Shaw.  
Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup>            11.00am Morning Service  
                          6.30pm United Service at Northenden Methodist Church.

## COMMUNITY LUNCHESES ...

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays in January ~  
**13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> 12 noon to 1.30pm**

Fun Bingo: Sat. 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb., noon to 2.00pm.

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R. B. L. Northenden.

The Royal British Legion branch will now be holding committee meetings and advice sessions in St.Wilfrid's Church Hall. This should allow more privacy than previous arrangements. The first Committee meeting there is on Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11am.

Greetings ... Just after the New Year we received a card from Marianne and Gordon Jones (the previous Rector) sending their greetings and asking to be remembered to friends here. GSF

" Don't dump it, donate it !!! "

This is the interesting slogan on a poster from the Tree of Life Centre, St. Mark's URC church, Oatlands Rd., down in Wythenshawe. At their community shop they are prepared to accept unwanted furniture, household items and white goods. Contact: 0161 437-0835. "Help us to help others," they say.

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# St. Wilfrid's Church,

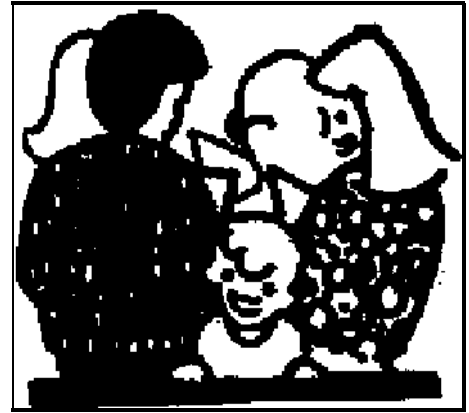
*Ford Lane. (Off Church Rd.)*

Rector: Greg Forster (998-2615)

Organist: Arthur Mellor (928-0472)

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.

Febr. 3<sup>rd</sup> 10.30am Family Communion & Parade Service.  
6.30pm United Service @ St. Wilfrid's Church.

Ash Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> Feb. 8.00pm Holy Communion

10<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Baptism and Holy Communion  
6.30pm Evening Worship.

17<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Morning Worship  
for the nearest Sunday to St. Valentine's day !  
6.30pm Holy Communion

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

Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup> 10.30am Family Service and Parade for  
Mothering Sunday  
6.30pm United Service @ Northenden Methodist Church

Please note how the evening services from Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> onwards will take place at 6.30pm

Drop in ... 2 – 5 (ish)pm.  
St. Wilfrid's church is open each Sunday  
from 2.00 – Dusk,  
for prayer, visiting, enquiries, ancestor hunting, &c.

IT'S ALL HAPPENING ... for your diaries  
Sat. Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> ~ don't forget the Farmers' Market  
10am – ca. 4.00pm on Palatine Rd. (& Mar. 1<sup>st</sup>)

WOMEN'S GROUP meets in the Rectory for a light evening  
at 7.45 pm for 8.00pm start on  
Monday Feb 4th, in the Rectory ... Well, what do you know?

Wed. 6<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday ~ service at 8.00pm in church.  
Weds. 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, ... "Emmaus" Course in the Rectory  
7.45 for 8.00pm start. An exploration of Christian believing.  
Thu. 21<sup>st</sup> PCC meeting in Church Hall. 7.30pm.  
Sat. 23<sup>rd</sup> 10.00am ... Coffee Morning, Church hall.

Mon. 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Women's Group @ Rectory, 7.45 for 8.00pm.  
~ and a date for later in the year! We hope to have a concert on  
Mon. 5<sup>th</sup> May (the bank holiday) given by Lyra, the Russian group  
whose last visit was so successful. More details and confirmation  
of the date nearer the time ~ but book this in your diary now!

## From the Registers ~ In Memoriam ...

Ann Davies (nee Mellor) (Cornwall, but born in Northenden)  
died 7<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2007, aged 74.

Gladys Curran (nee Shingleton) (Timperley, but born here) 87.  
Joan Mellor (Lee House), Ann Jones (Brett St.),  
Winnie Kennerley (Ford Lane). Terry Davies (Morrell Rd.)

## Maggie ...

... looked over the Rector's shoulder in January, while  
he was searching the Manchester City Planning website in  
connection with the Tatton Arms. No news then about that, but  
the interesting information that "This site was last updated on  
03/12/2009." (Yes –09!) Is that what they mean by future  
planning, if not futurology?

... it was the coldest day of the year. To be honest,  
that was not difficult, because it was only 3<sup>rd</sup> January, but it was  
decidedly chilly. There was a crunching and a munching in the  
conservatory, and the door opened to reveal a medium sized  
hedgehog tucking into the cat food. A little while later there was  
quite a large hedgehog there (not the same one, I hasten to add;  
they don't grow that fast ~ I think), and yet later still there was  
a small hedgehog. "Who's been eating my porridge," asked

Goldilocks the cat (not her real name). Yes, the Rectory garden hedgehogs have not been reading the right books, and are still awake and well and pottering around despite the frost ~ though they do seem to sleep in if it's raining.

... has seen the programme for Northenden Players Theatre Club for the current year. Now that they are using the Methodist Hall, with its larger stage and auditorium it might be worth contacting Eileen Wilkes to see what tickets are available. Her number is 998-9976. The performance in February (3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>) is A Letter of Resignation, by Hugh Whitmore.

... and has also seen the plans for their former home, the so called Boat House in Boat Lane. The façade on Boat Lane is to be retained, while single storey extensions into the car park at the rear, with patios above, seem to make an imaginative use of the space and building, to create three family houses. Parking is to be further to the rear, which is not so good for Magpies, since it seems to involve felling some tall trees. Bang go all those charking matches with the corbies.

... understands that Northenden Civic Society has been making comments about Manchester's "Local Development Framework" ~ the guidelines for planning decisions in the city for the next 20 years, which are being updated at present. He also understand that they are looking at a more detailed Plan for Northenden, which they are considering presenting to the Council; What ideas do you have for improving and developing our Village over the next decade? ~ or perhaps de-developing it might be your vision. The Rector could pass on any ideas, in writing, preferably, to the people involved. Blue skies thinking allowed (we don't want smog, do we?) or something more down to earth. (more gardening, perhaps)

Last month Magpie commented on the experiences of a fellow reporter. At the time rumour suggested that justice had been rather too summary. He has now been assured that due process was followed. Whether that led to justice he cannot say.

... can now tell the time, ... or rather, he could tell the time all the time, but now he has something to tell it from. The Ford Lane face of St. Wilfrid's church clock has been out of action for many months. It turned out not to be some catastrophic mechanical failure; merely a piece of rubber hose that had perished, so the connection on the drive shaft was no longer connected. But now it is connected, thanks to the rector who revealed true grit (most of it rubbed off into his hair from the soft

sandstone of the tower walls) in crawling into the back of the clock-face to remake the connection. Emerging from the depths halfway up the tower he remarked to Magpie that it reminded him of his old computer – which only crashed when the rubber band inside it broke.

#### DOWN TO EARTH ...

Readers may know that the church supports the development charity "Send a Cow" (and may recall our comments about the dis-information spread about such work last Christmas (-06). Here is an extract from a recent letter from them, which shows the way this project benefits people in Ethiopia.

Fikre Teshome and his wife used to struggle to grow enough food for their family. Then, in 2003 they received sheep, apple seedlings and vegetable seeds. Thanks to the sheep manure, plus the training and ongoing support that Fikre and his community group received from Send a Cow, those saplings have flourished. Fikre has been able to grow a larger variety of produce on his small plot – creating a healthy diet for his family. By selling saplings crops and lambs he's earned enough to send his eldest son to college.

"We now lead a peaceful life and are able to plan for the future, to secure money to cover college fees for my other children," says Fikre.

Now the family has been able to pass on a sheep to one of their group members. That means another family can benefit from the generosity of supporters in this country, and build stronger bonds within their community, and increase knowledge of organic farming techniques for generations to come.

CHURCHYARD FLOWERS ETC.

GSF

I suppose this is my annual grouse! Please remove flowers and wreaths from the graves and cremation plots in the churchyard when they are dead. I shall be removing all Christmas stuff if you do not by 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb – the end of the church's Christmas season