

N o v e m b e r 2 0 0 7

Cover Picture; Lest we forget; Northenden War Memorial
(Edited photo by John Hill-Wilson)

Prayer for the Month.

Almighty God,
you have created the heavens and the earth,
and made mankind in your own image;
teach us to discern your hand in all your works,
and to serve you with reverence and thanksgiving;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who, with you and
the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things,
now and for ever, ***Amen***

(One of November's collects from the Alternative Service Book)

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane.
0161 998 – 2615

Dear Friends,

Firstly a correction. I think it was two years ago I discussed with members of the Royal British Legion the practicalities of holding their Remembrance Day parades at St. Wilfrid's and then marching ~ or in many cases hobbling ~ down to the War Memorial. We decided that it would make more sense and be kinder on old limbs for the service to be held as a matter of course in the Methodist Church, if they were happy with this, every year. I confess that I had forgotten this discussion when I put the preliminary notices of the parade in last month's Concord, but was reminded of it when I talked with members of the British Legion Branch Committee in October. So for the formal parade service, you will need to go to the Methodist Church, and for myself, I hope to be down to the memorial as soon as I can after our normal service at St. Wilfrid's.

This leads on to an issue which has been highlighted, not least by the British Legion nationally, in recent weeks. How should we respond to soldiers returning from a war? There has been, it is alleged, a tendency in connection with troops returning from Afghanistan and particularly Iraq to ignore them, downplay their achievements and hope that they would go away. Homecoming parades, if they happen at all, march through empty streets, or past shoppers asking who are they; what are they doing here?

Maybe we have an institutional problem here: the Ministry of Defence has so amalgamated regiments and broken down their local links that no unit can say "This is our home town," and no county can say "This is our regiment, these are our boys." But it is more than that. Both wars, particularly Iraq, are not popular, and (wrongly, I think) they are seen as military failures. As a result people are reluctant to be seen (or to seem) to "support" them by arranging or attending a parade. That link is understandable, but also mistaken. It is wrong to blame or penalise brave men and women, who may themselves be shaken by what they have coped with during their tour of duty, for the political ineptitude or commercial greed which sent them to the battlefield.

There is perhaps a parallel with the reaction in America to returning Viet Nam veterans. The impression one gets of their

situation is that they felt isolated from a civilian population which did not want to know about a war they had lost, and so their trauma was neither understood nor supported. This may be a gross generalisation but it contrasts with the situation after the Second World War in this country, when soldiers came home to people who were sympathetic, grateful, and who had shared a common national danger. Emotionally, psychologically the effects were different, though the battle-stress had been the same. So our respect for bravery, or just for dogged stickability in the face of continuous threats, should remain; our support for the individuals and units involved in these conflicts should not be down-played, even if we believe that the original political decisions to invade Iraq, and not to finish the job in Afghanistan before going there, were flawed if not criminal.

One way of showing this respect is through the annual Remembrance Day ceremonies. They are not a glorification of war; they express a hope for peace, and a gratitude for people's self-sacrifice in conflict.

Another way of showing this respect soon after the end of the Second World War was the establishment of Remploy as a business dedicated particularly to providing useful employment for injured ex-servicemen, whose disabilities would have made them hard to employ in a conventional factory. I can vouch for the quality of their work, since the furnishings in the new offices at St. Wilfrid's school were manufactured by Remploy. Perhaps the ex-service element in their remit has diminished, but the need for disabled-friendly employment has not. It does seem a laudable aim to integrate people with disabilities in the general workforce, but all too often for those not quick enough to keep up in today's automated, high pressure, high speed workplaces that means a failure to find actual work (despite legislation), and a disappearance from people's vision. Out of sight, out of mind.

Which leads on to an expression of concern for the local Remploy factory in the Sharston estate here in Northenden. It has been the Civic Society, and local politicians, who have taken this concern up, and our local MP, among others, has extracted the concession from the minister responsible that any Remploy factory closure in the country will require a specific ministerial decision ~ but how great a guarantee of security is that? In someone else's constituency, with a comfortable majority (or held by another party) what comeback will anyone have against the minister?

There are some features in our community and economic life which should not be measured in purely financial terms, or judged merely by some high-sounding platitude like equality or integration. A fair number of the people who ask me for help of one kind or another would be helped most by a job, ~ but could not cope with a conventional commercial employment. If anything, far from being phased out, Remploy as a whole (or something very like it) could perhaps be expanded, to form the core of what the Government is saying it is wanting to try to do to get the long term sick back into work. Whatever happened to joined up Government? ~ you don't know what you've got till it's gone ... !

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.

Nov. 4th 11.00am The Rev. David Sanders. Holy Communion
6.30pm United Service at St. Wilfrid's

11th 10.45am Remembrance Day Parade Service

The Rev. David Bown, & Mr. John Howell

(my information says 11.00am, but an earlier start is usual, to allow for the silence ~ so "time to be confirmed". Ed.)

18th 11.00am Mr. Duncan Rutter

25th 11.00am Mrs. Margaret Hunt.

Dec. 2nd 11.00am Morning Service
6.30pm United Evening Service

COMMUNITY LUNCHESES ...

2nd & 4th Wednesdays in November,
14th and 28th. from 12 noon to 1.30pm

Fun Bingo: Sat. 24th Nov., noon to 2.00pm.

HARVEST FESTIVAL, 2007.

This year we sent our gifts of money to MRDF (the Methodist Relief and Development Fund) which funds work in places like El Salvador in Latin America, and other remote places in the world.

Our thanks to all who contributed to our total of £96.

KEITH LAITY.

We were saddened last week to learn of the death of Keith Laity, who was one of our local preachers until he and his family moved to Ivybridge in Devon some ten years ago. Many people will remember them, and we send our condolences and love to his wife Anne, and their two daughters, Dorothy and Jenny, recalling their friendship while with us and their service to our church.

J.B.

St. Wilfrid's Church,

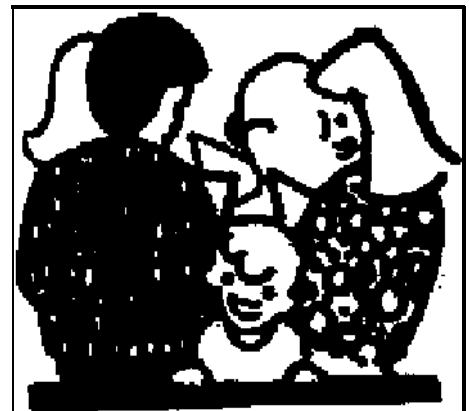
Ford Lane. (Off Church Rd.)

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 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.

Nov. 4 th	10.30am	Family Communion and Parade Service
	6.30pm	United Evening Worship at St. Wilfrid's
11 th	10.30am	Holy Communion (Standard)
	6.30pm	Evening Worship
18 th	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Evening Worship

25th 10.30am Morning Prayer
6.30pm Holy Communion.

Dec. 2nd 10.30am Family Communion and Parade Service
6.30pm United Service at Northenden Methodist Ch.

***The church is open each Sunday from 2.00– 5.00pm,
for prayer, visiting, enquiries, &c.***

There are a number of leaflets and booklets available which describe the church, or specific features within it.

A leaflet about the Millennium Banner is now available as is a revised booklet on the stained glass.

IT'S ALL HAPPENING ... for your diaries

Thur. 1st Nov. P.C.C. meeting, Hall, 7.30pm

Sat. 3rd Coffee Morning. Hall, 10.00am

Weds. 7th., 14th., 21st., & 28th. Bible Studies in the Rectory.
7.45 for an 8.00pm start.

WOMEN'S GROUP meets in the Rectory

at 7.45 for 8 00pm on ...

***... Monday Nov. 12th, (n.b. a week "late"!,)in the Rectory;
Ann Eustace ~ Antarctic Adventure.***

Sue

Sat. 17th Autumn Fair 11.00am – 1.00pm

Mon. 26th Brownies Christmas Coffee Evening and Fair.
Church Hall, 6.30pm.

Charge for admission, which includes a raffle entry and tea or coffee and biscuits. There will be various stalls, Christmas gifts, fancy goods, cakes, and a chocolate fountain.

The Brownies also hope to be holding a chocolate Tombola stall and the chocolate fountain at the Church Christmas fair, but were geared up to its original planned date of Dec. 1st.

PCC meeting to be arranged.

There will be no Coffee Morning in December, and the January coffee morning will be on 26th.

Mon 3rd Dec. Women's Group Christmas "Do", 7.00pm., Rectory
(please bring food for the proverbial half-a-person!)

No bible studies in December.

C A R O L S & F O L K F O R
C H R I S T M A S
K i e r o n H a r t l e y & F r i e n d s

Thursday 6th Dec., 7.30pm, in Church

Adm. £3, Proceeds to the Booth Centre,

Supporting Manchester's Homeless

Maintaining our heritage.

There is no further news on church roofing or downspout repairs.

Open Week-End ~ Church Open Days

The next opportunity to climb the Tower, and the next time we have displays out in church will be in May or June 2008. Meanwhile, the church is open on Sunday afternoons for prayer, visiting, or other enquiries.

Brownies Go Everyclicking!

Our Brownie leaders have asked me to publicise their latest fundraising scheme; they have registered with an internet search engine which donates 50% of its profits to charities nominated by its users. I have a letter of explanation ~ or buttonhole Carol Tawny-Owl at their Coffee Evening. The scheme is to set up your web links so that this site is your preferred search engine, and as you then make searches the charity is allocated a share of the charge. To do this in favour of 2nd Northenden Brownies, you need to register via their unique link: [www . everyclick . com / uk / girlguiding2ndnorthendenbrownies](http://www.everyclick.com/uk/girlguiding2ndnorthendenbrownies) If you can understand what I have been saying, it is probably worth your while and theirs!

From the Registers ...

In Memoriam ...

Margaret Pickford (Brett St.), Marie Moore (Sale Rd.) 95,
Robert Newton (Calder Ave.) 74,
Olive Davies (92), Winifred Beverly (ex Hollyway)

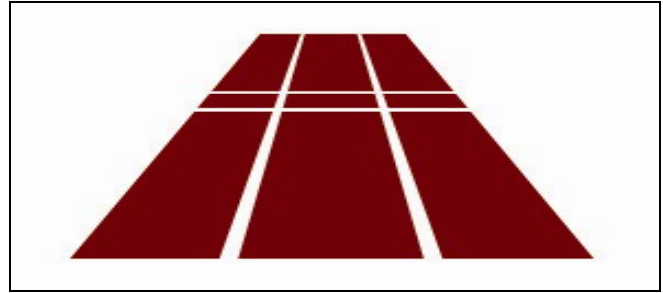
Kathleen and John Blakeley.

Married in the parish church on Sat. 22nd Sept. ...

Kathryn Louise Taylor to Jake Christopher Simpson

The Bishop's visit

Nigel McCulloch, our bishop, visited the parish on Thur. 11th Oct. He led two services on that occasion, one a small preparation



"office", and then the public "Run the Race" event in the evening. Between the two we went walkabout in the village, calling in at the Children's Society shop (where the Bishop learned how to steam press clothing) and Kennedy's undertakers. In both places we talked about the particular issues and problems that arise from their work. We then walked up Church Road to the Police Station, where we spent about half an hour talking with Inspectors Marriott and Roberts about their successes and hopes, and the risks and frustrations they face, in this very busy, but successful patch, covering Northenden, Brooklands and Baguley.

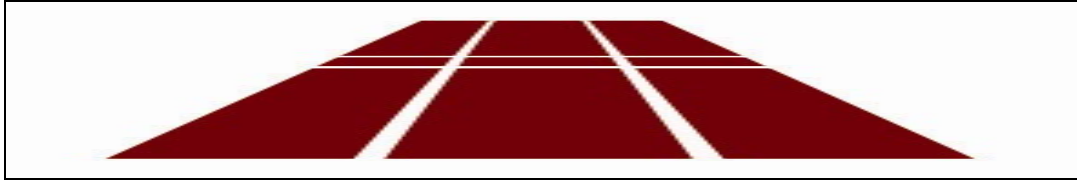
We then went outside to find a press photographer waiting for us (about 20 mins. earlier than expected) You may have seen his pictures with the police, and also at our next stop, the Crown, where the Bishop learned another trade ~ pulling pints. That was naturally a gift for the photographers, and for punning headline writers: "Ale Mary"! I ask you!

There was a reception hosted by the PCC for leaders and activists in the local community, where he met civic leaders, businessmen, members of key local social organisations as well as members of this and other local churches. I hope it was a time for useful bridge-building. It was a good spread too!

For the final event we went into church, where the bishop, using the Commonwealth Games baton as a visual aid and symbol, encouraged us to pick up the relay baton of the Christian faith, and to continue to run with the faith, hope and love which characterise it. Many of us present were anointed by him in token of our commitment to this for the future.

In all a successful, interesting and moving visit and series of events, and many people, even those who could not actually get to the reception or service, have expressed their appreciation of

it. So, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which clings so closely, and let us in our generation run the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the starting marshal and finish judge of our faith.



Harvest Festival ...

GSF

Many thanks for all the produce contributed at the Church and the School harvest festival services. Some of it has already been taken on to the Booth Centre at the Cathedral, and more will be distributed in the near future. Thank you too for all the work that went into decorating the church for this and the Bishop's visit, especially Kathryn Morgan and the others who highlighted key features of the church with flowers for the visit and St. Wilfrid's day which followed on the 12th / 14th. There were a lot of original ideas, using unusual plants, in surprising places!

First Saturdays ...

... have become rather crowded, now that the Farmers' Market is coming to town. As a result a number of the activities which St. Wilfrid's has run on a first Saturday in the past are now being moved around the calendar ~ so check the diary section more carefully than usual in coming months!

GSF

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 heard that the Farmers' Market launch, on 6th Oct., was a resounding success, with several stalls selling out, and

others going back to base for more stock. There was a steady stream of visitors, so that it was never too crowded to be comfortable but always busy. It also brought in extra trade for the local shops and cafes and bars, who were ready to rise to the occasion and welcome new customers. The next one is the first Saturday of November, so make a note in your diaries.

... knows that there is some discussion about the proposals by prospective new operators of the Sharston "Civic Amenity Site" to install new plant and equipment there. The base line is that what is going on there now is inefficient, and leaves far more of the useful rubbish brought there being carried on to mere landfill sites, rather than being dealt with productively. Greater Manchester is not nearly as Green, in real terms, as it would have us believe, and here is a project to bring us into the top league, using state of the art technology for the first time (it is said) in this country. But is it safe? we hear the cry. It will be too close to houses, we hear it said. Will there be more lorries? we hear the cry. What about the smell? we hear the cry. And why here? the question is asked.

Well, the site will be designed to suck smells back in and deal with them, they tell us. And yes, there will be more lorries, but the extra ones will be on long range journeys, using the motor-ways only (and the rail link will be used twice as much too), and there is talk of doctoring Longley Lane to make it less of a rat-run. And as for houses, depending on precisely where the units are situated (near the back of the site, I believe) they should be 200metres or so from the nearest houses, with a screen of trees, or a bank of soil between. And well, gas generation from organic waste does produce a combustible product ~ that's what it's meant to! ~ but under stringent safety regulations.

Magpie won't go rabbiting on about this, but the waste will go on producing earth-warming methane, whether we collect it and use it productively or not. Sharston tip is right on a rail connection, which is a key requirement for the disposal of solid waste from the site; it is right on a Motorway junction, which is again crucial in reducing lorry traffic in urban streets; and it is already there, despite the obsolescent nature of what is there at the moment, and that is the perhaps unpalatable reality.

... met up with some other visitors to St. Wilfrid's church on 11th Oct., quite apart from the bishop. A couple of dozen students at Loretto sixth form college, in Hulme, cycled down here on one of their social and citizenship project days (I forget their proper name for it). They followed river and canal, coped with slips, mud and punctures, had their lunch here and looked round the church, with (on this week end) all the displays and flowers and posters about the faith up, and (the highlight of the trip) climbed the tower, rang a bell, and found themselves being lectured on physics and engineering in the clock-room and bell chamber. (Well, you tell them: what are the forces operating on the bell frame from six bells weighing 2½ tons between them, contrarotating from nought to 30mph and back again in 2½ seconds each each way? Answers on the back of an envelope please, before we ring for Christmas.)

“Diocesan Quota”

Forget the theology! Forget the denominations and church history! Forget new services or old! Forget “fresh expressions!” If you want to generate more heat than light, start talking about church finance, and for Anglicans, a big part of that is the “diocesan quota”. That is, the share of our parish income which is paid over to the diocese each year to cover costs which are managed centrally ~ chiefly the payment of clergy salaries and pensions, but some other administrative things and diocesan projects as well.

Much of the heat that surrounds discussion of this particular part of parish finance is the impression that this money is being taken out of the parish, for no immediately obvious reason, and lost in some central juggernaut ~ the diocese. In fact, as I just said, the bulk of “quota” (or “parish share” as the official term now is) is required in order to pay the clergy, and their attendant costs such as vicarage buildings, training, &c. This means that for most parishes, including Northenden, what goes out comes back in in another way. They reckon that it costs over £30,000 to run a cleric for a year, and though I am not sure whether all the items included in that figure are properly charged against an individual in a parish, it gives you some idea of what is coming back into a typical parish. Whether you think you get your money's worth is perhaps another matter.

We, or at least some of us, are perhaps spoiled by memories of a time when the church's historic central funds covered clergy salaries, and "quota" was just for local administration and the odd diocesan expert. "The Church is rich" people used to say. Well, it is, up to a point, but not rich enough by any means, nationally or as a diocese, to cover its annual costs from investment income alone. Hence the need for increasing "quota" payments. So, since we are about to turn a page, let me pose a question before you can see the answer: how much do you think we pay as "quota" to the diocese at St. Wilfrid's each year?

The amount is calculated according to a rather complicated formula, based on how many people regularly attend the church (averaged over three years), the average income of those attenders (based on a voluntary survey every three years), the proportion that represents of all such attenders in the diocese and on the diocese's budget each year. Do you follow? On a good day I think I do, just! Providing the average income figures are the average of a proper sample (which I wonder about) then the system is probably as fair as any. And the amount we are being asked to pay? This year (2007) £18,432, though for historic reasons we shall be paying about £19,500. Next year we have been asked to find about £22,500, following the revised income survey of 2006. Are you still with me?

We are fortunate to have money in reserve, invested (I believe) wisely and profitably. This helps with our income; it also means that neither the diocese nor other agencies like English Heritage will give us grants towards maintaining a building which is recognised ("listed") as being of regional significance. But let me put this in perspective. Last year our routine income was about £37K, and our routine expenditure over £40K (I am talking in round figures, because some items might be counted as non-routine or routine, depending on how you think of them).

Thus over half our income goes on "quota", though our benefit from the diocese and the Church Commissioners is greater than what we pay in. So, let me put this in context a different way. Our signed up membership (the "electoral roll") was 106 at the last annual meeting. Our average regular attendance in the survey last year was 50 weekly. This means that we are being asked to find £212 next year for each member on the church's roll, or another way, £450 for each person who attends regularly, in order to pay our share to the diocese. This

is of course not a "membership fee", and it certainly won't help the church if you resign from the roll, or anything like that.

As treasurer for the deanery of Withington I see the sums being asked of other parishes, and in terms of the basic amount we are being asked for, we should not complain (though I have my doubts about the validity of our "income survey" figures) Others are facing bigger challenges than we are at St. Wilfrid's. However, I hope this shows you something of the financial demands being put on us, and on all parishes in Manchester diocese, in present circumstances.

G.S.F.