



20 ~ N o v e m b e r ~ 08

Prayer for the Month.

Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed,

impress in the hearts of all peoples a true love of peace, a willingness to seek conciliation in disputes, and a respect for those with whom they have differences;

grant to our leaders the strength to know when to make concessions, and the humility to take pride in cooperation,

that across a world of limited resources and changing uncertainties we may know peace and justice.

Through Christ our Prince of peace.

Amen

Cover Picture; 11/11/1918 There are a number of military headstones in the churchyard. Behind each one stands a story. This one is not the standard design, but commemorates two decorated soldiers of 1914-18. John H Code was a pre-war champion marksman. As a warrant officer he was involved in a battalion action at Gallipoli from which only a handful returned. For that distinguished conduct he was awarded the DCM. His son, Harold, was promoted through the ranks to 2nd Lieut., and was killed fighting alongside Canadian troops during the German push of mid-1918. He is buried in France. Their story was told me by a cousin of some removes, who visited the churchyard some years ago while researching the family history. GSF

Northenden Rectory, Ford Lane.
0161 998 – 2615

Dear Friends,

With November comes Remembrance Sunday, and this year we celebrate (if that is the right word) the 90th anniversary of the end of the 1st World War. A significant milestone, not least for the half dozen or so still remaining veterans across the country who saw active service. Join us, at the British Legion Parade at the Methodist Church, at the War Memorial afterwards (11.45 or so), or in St. Wilfrid's as we mark that and other wars, and pray for peace and conciliation across a troubled world.

In that connection, I know of some parishes which are attempting to collect people's memories ~ it would be childhood memories of course ~ of the first world war. I have not tried to do that as a formal project here, but if anyone does have such memories, it would be interesting to hear them, and perhaps print them in a month or so. I remember being told by an elderly lady, soon after I came to Northenden, of her memories of soldiers marching off to war from her home town of (I think) Knutsford ~ but that was the Boer War!

"In God we trust" is the motto on American coins, I think, to which some wag, copied by joke postcards and the like, added, "all others pay cash." As I commented last month, it is easy to be wise after the event, and as I write the event is still in the middle of happening as the world's finance markets seem to be behaving like the proverbial yo-yo: going up and down rapidly,

and all in a spin. However, it seems that the wag's advice has been forgotten, and that has been the problem. I know that is oversimplification, but if I base my loan to you on something that you own or do, as a security, then both our positions are clear and reasonably secure. If, on the other hand, I base my loan to you on the security of a loan you have made to someone else, whose reliability in turn is based on a loan he has made to me, we all have a problem. Our wealth, expressed in terms of the loans owed back to us, is only so much empty air, or mere ink on paper.

In God we Trust ~
all others pay cash.

But why comment on this in a church magazine? I could make a point that God is trustworthy ~ but that is a different kind of reliability from what I might hope for from my bank, so is not strictly to the point, though it is true. More to the point is the suspicion (and strict limitation) which we find in the bible of "usury" ~ that is of basing your economy on taking interest on loans. Related to that is the idea of Jubilee, which seems to have been intended to restrain the creation of great individual wealth and concentration of the ownership of property in a few hands, and looked to redistribute resources every generation or so, returning them to the original family which controlled them.

I do not expect that these ideas should be reproduced exactly in our modern financial and economic systems, but the principles behind them, which focus on people and their work and needs, rather than on manufacturing money as an end in itself, are principles which should carry forward to our situation too. Banking, as a means of holding and transferring money, and providing the funds for the creation of tangible assets or useful resources, is an honourable part of our life. When the aim becomes the creation and circulation of debts either from individuals or from other banks, then we are all in danger.

So what of the present situation ~ which will no doubt have changed (pray God, for the better) by the time you read this? It is certainly a warning, and I would take it as a moral

What is happening is a moral warning, not just a technical alert.

warning as well as a technical and managerial one. When money becomes an end in itself rather than as a means of exchange which

enables people to work with and for each other, then there is something wrong. In Jesus' words, Where your treasure is, there is your heart too; you cannot serve God and Mammon-money.

But might we also call recent events a judgment? Perhaps. A system, and the individuals who operate and benefit from it, have been brought up short, and have sustained losses and reverses in the area they count most dear. That, if you like, is poetic justice; an appropriate judgment. And to a certain extent most of us have benefited, and so have faced worries and possibly have had to face some losses. We are interwoven with the system for good and ill, whether we like it or not, and so are caught up when it is called to account. Despite the way some commentators and politicians have been talking, the taxpayer who (so it goes) must be spared the cost of any rescue is also (as like as not) the pension-fund beneficiary, who expected to benefit from airy profits.

So what can we ourselves do? Pray and argue for fairness for the poor (here and abroad) in any rescue package; claw back our own indebtedness, and limit our greed; value people and relationships; be generous as your heavenly Father is generous. And perhaps think, what would life be like in an economy which is not geared up for growth, growth, growth?

And finally, thanks to everyone who has contributed to our harvest collections. Those at St. Wilfrid's will partly be going to places like the Booth Centre which cater for Manchester's street people, and partly will be available here in Northenden for people who from time to time find their giro has not come through, or the like. The gifts are much appreciated; thanks.

Yours faithfully,

Greg Forster

Pre-Christmas Carols
on Thursday November 27th.
in St. Wilfrid's Church;
7.30pm ...

Admission £3.00 ~ Refreshments ~
proceeds to The Booth Centre.

Folk music and Carols for an almost winter evening,
led by Kieron Hartley and Folk.

M a g p i e ...

... understands that work on the British Legion club building is proceeding apace, with an opening date in mind, after some delays.

... also understands that permission for work on the church roof is due in late October, so something should be happening there this month ~ weather permitting (aye, there's the rub!)

... and understands further that the Rector's ideas about hydro-power on the Mersey were picked up by the Evening News as well as the local Reporter, and also by the Church Times. (Was he a scientist? They asked. Do you have to be a scientist to think about the environment?) The problem is finding someone in the Environment Agency who can say whether it would be allowable or not, since neither we nor they want the river blocked and flooding the village when it is in spate.

... is quite a green bird (have you never noticed how the black and white of a magpie's feathers is actually a whole range of different sheens; blues and purples and greens?) so is proud to live in Manchester, which has municipal aspirations to be the greenest city in Britain ~ or is it Europe. More strength to their elbows. But he finds it a puzzle that Manchester Airport (largely owned by the City Council) are asking for permission (from Manchester City Council ~ is there a conflict of interest there?) to demolish a 17th century "listed" cottage on Hasty Lane, near Ringway, and cover two fields and an ecological haven (or should that read heaven?) with concrete and two warehouses for air-freight. Perhaps they plan to paint them green.

... saw the bus coming home. Yes, the bus, from the St. Wilfrid's school year 6 (10/11 year old) "camp" at Kingswood, which is really Denbigh. They, or 27 of them, spent a week engaged in "outdoor" pursuits like climbing and caving and abseiling and getting beautifully slutchy, storming Denbigh castle and exploring Llandudno beach, half of which took place indoors. That's not as crazy as it sounds, since the climbing walls are indoors in a magnificent sports hall, and the caves are fibreglass constructions in a special building. There was a little bit of homesickness, he suspects (but sssssshhhhhh, don't let on) and a great deal of fun, and, wonder of wonders, everyone (well almost

everyone) was asleep by 11pm, so a good time was had by all. As one of the kids said, it was like a great big sleep-over.

... flew into Wythenshawe hospital the other day and noticed a notice (that's what notices are for, after all.) It read:

Trust Headquarters Chapel

Now does that mean that they have got their priorities absolutely right ~ or is the management desperate and beyond human help?

... has also noticed the lunch club, for over 60s, at the Church Hall on Ford Lane ~ lunch, and a friendly chat, for £2-65, from eleven-thirty-ish to half past twelve. And while we're talking about age, Age Concern have a quiz-evening at Lee Court for the over 50s on Weds. Nov. 12th & Dec. 17th, 6 – 8pm.

... but as mere whippersnappers of 50, perhaps they might join the Youth Club (actually for 14-18 y.o.s) for snooker and loud music. Over 30 meet in the Church Hall ~ Tues., 7pm.

Northenden Methodist Church.

Palatine Road.

Minister: the Revd. David Bown,

**5 Kenworthy Lane,
Northenden, M 22 4 JF
0161 998 – 2158**

Sunday Services.

Nov. 2nd 11.00am Home Service
 6.30pm United Service at St. Wilfrid's #

9th 10.45am Remembrance Day Parade Service
 British Legion Parade, Service conducted by The Rev. D. Bown.
 NB the earlier time.

This will be followed by wreath-laying at the War Memorial.

16th 11.00am Holy Communion The Rev. M. Purdy

23rd 11.00am Preaching Team from St. Andrew's church.

30th 11.00am 1st in Advent. Mr. Duncan Rutter.

Dec. 7th 11.00am Morning Service
 6.30pm United Service @ St. Wilfrid's #

Please note, that to avoid clashing with Northenden Players' performances the arrangements for united services are altered. In January & February they will be at the Methodist Church.

COMMUNITY LUNCH ... ~ NB single date !!!

Wednesday 5th. November ~ 12 noon to 1.30pm

Fun Bingo: Sat. 29th Nov, noon to 2.00pm.

Advent Coffee Mornings ...

... will start on Tues. 2nd Dec. at 23 Orchard Rd. East.

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,

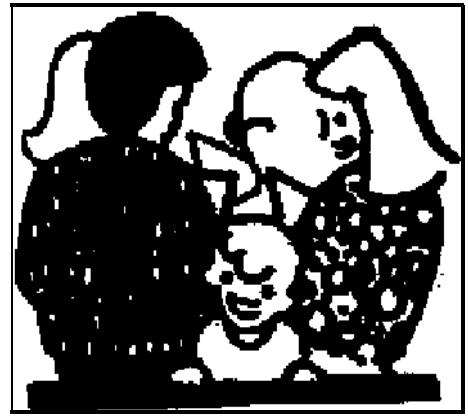
Ford Lane. (Off Church Rd.)

Rector: Greg Forster (998-2615)

Organist: Arthur Mellor (928-0472)

www . stwilfridsnorthenden . org . uk

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.

Nov. 2nd 10.30am Family Service (& Parade)
 6.30pm United Service, @ St. Wilfrid's #

9th 10.30am Morning Worship
 6.30pm Evening Worship

Please note that the Remembrance Day parade service is at Northenden Methodist Church at 10.45am. §

16th, 23rd, 30th. As 9th.

Dec. 7th 10.30am Family Service (& Parade)
 6.30pm United Service @ St. Wilfrid's #

As readers probably know, the Methodist Hall is now being used regularly by Northenden Players for their productions. During their performances the vestry and other facilities are heavily used, and the arrangements for united services have been altered to avoid clashing. In both January and February the united services will be at the Methodist Church.

§ There is a short, wreath-laying service at about noon at the war memorial on Palatine Rd., beside the Social Club.

Drop in ... 2 – 5pm.

St. Wilfrid's church is open each Sunday
from 2.00 – 5.00pm,
for prayer, visiting and just looking round, enquiries about
baptisms, weddings, ancestor hunting, ... &c.

IT'S ALL HAPPENING ... for your diaries

Sat. 1st Nov. Please note the Farmers' Market, 10am – 4pm.
Mon. 3rd Women's Group ~ see panel
Wed. 5th Bible Study/Emmaus course at the Rectory, 8pm.
Wed. 12th Bible Study, as 5th.
Ditto, Weds. 19th & 26th & 3rd Dec.
Mon. 17th School Governors' Meeting.
Tue. 25th Deanery Synod meeting.
Thur. 27th Carols for Folk In Church. 7.30pm.
Sat. 29th Autumn Fair. Church Hall, 11am – 2pm.
PCC meeting ~ to be arranged.

Women's Group: November. Sue Forster

On the first Monday in November that long delayed birthday party, in the Rectory at 7.15pm

And in December, food again ~ the Christmas party on Mon. Dec. 1st, from 7.00pm

From the Registers ~ In Memoriam ...

Nellie (Helen) Bell (Robt. Owen Gdns) 91,
Ethel Meyer (Lovett Wk.) 97, Jeffrey Harper (Kenworthy La.) 79,
Harold Caveney (Benchill) 87. Alan Malseed (Woodhouse Pk.) 58.

~ Baptised ... in the parish church on 21st September ...

Lucy Rose Abbott.

"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.

Wild Northenden ~ Bright and Beautiful ... G.S.F.

This item has been squeezed out for the past few months, but is worth reviving. In October I noticed two buzzards circling over the churchyard and surrounding area. They are becoming more and more common in the countryside around here, and it is nice to see them in our suburban setting too. Once

upon a time, apparently, they and red Kites were as common in towns as crows or jackdaws, picking up scraps and garbage.

Also one Sunday early in October I was looking at the church tower when I noticed a house martin flying over. Admittedly it was heading south, and was alone, but this must be very late in the season for it to be here, even if we are being subjected to global warming and the like.

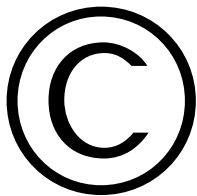
WesleyOwen Books and Music

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.

As the debate hots up and time comes for a decision, how should we vote?



congestion ©harge

Greg Forster

I have written before about this, and suggested that there is something fundamentally unjust about a system of charging 20% of the people for something that the other 80% will enjoy more. I also suggested that this would be ineffective, since 80% of the congestion is caused by that 80% of the people, many travelling around the zoned area orbitally. Indeed, a friend suggested recently that this style of charge, based on crossing a boundary, might actually promote more car use, as people from within the zone are encouraged by slightly lighter traffic to drive to work (or whatever) outside it.

I am also disturbed by the pro-charge advertising which suggests people can vote for it because they won't have to pay it. Someone forty-odd years ago castigated that kind of attitude as "Pull the ladder up, I'm all right, Jack!" Now, it seems, that such selfishness is officially condoned ~ encouraged even.

The scheme favours an "I'm all right, Jack" attitude.

One reason advanced for trying to reduce congestion is that the economic wellbeing of the conurbation requires it. Delivery times are being increased; commerce is stifled; costs are added as goods are stuck in a traffic jam. And yet, as if granting some major concession, the proponents of the scheme suggest that a commercial delivery driver, frequently criss-crossing the zone boundaries, would only be charged, say, £10 in the day rather than once for every crossing. Or he could delay the delivery until after the witching hour of 9.30am. All in the name of speeding up deliveries and reducing costs.

Readers may gather that while the abstract idea of a congestion charge attracts me, the specific details of this charging scheme do not.

Couple with this the defects in the public transport and other improvements suggested for this area, and I am definitely negatively grunted! Proposed improvements to the cycle track along Princess Rd. stop short of Wythenshawe/Northenden. Pro-

The area south of the Mersey seems ignored by improvements

posed top quality bus transit stops short in Withington, omitting Wythenshawe and Northenden. Use of the existing rail network through Timperley, Baguley, Northenden and Cheadle is not even proposed, and seems to have even been discouraged by the powers that be, even though the most crucial part of the idea is already in place ~ the permanent way! I could go on.

The scheme is proposed as being more sophisticated and targeted than the London scheme. I am not convinced. I should like a box on our voting slips ~ if it comes to that ~ saying "Yes, but not this way", but perhaps that is too sophisticated for G.M. Transport planners. Meanwhile, the scheme offers little to reduce high levels of air pollution related to the M60 as it crawls through Northenden.

So, in conclusion, I should like to see radical changes to the whole proposal before I can give it wholehearted support ~ yet we need to control, if not congestion, then pollution and unrestricted vehicle emissions of CO₂, and the like.

Parental Choice!

Greg Forster

When it comes to choosing where your children go to school, the choice is yours, so long as you choose what you are allowed. Forgive the cynicism, but the latest survey has just been published by some University department which shows that a lower percentage of children in grammar schools and faith based schools receive free school meals than do in other schools. This statement of a statistical fact is then followed up by all kinds of questions about whether this is unfair and whether the admission procedures discriminate against poorer children.

At the same time the period for consultation has just finished in an exercise ~ the third in six years, I think, ~ in which our Government is proposing to revise the binding guidance which it offers to schools and local authorities on how they should run admission to schools.

As I said, forgive the cynicism: the first chapter in the proposed guidelines emphasises how parental choice should be made as easy and straightforward as possible. This has been the clarion call of every education minister for twenty-five years or more, it seems, not least on the grounds that if parents make market choices then all schools will be forced to improve or close. And at the same time more and more parents have been included in schools' governing bodies, with the expectation that they will push for better "standards".

What really makes politicians put so much stress on parental choice?

But the second chapter in the draft guidelines sets out all the patterns of choice which a school might offer and which parents might want, but which are deemed unacceptable because they are somehow unfair, or discriminatory, and are so forbidden. Don't get me wrong; many of these practices are indeed improper, like discouraging the disabled or those with difficulties in learning. It just seems ironic that the rhetoric does not match the restrictions on freedom which follow it.

And all the while the reports come out saying that certain schools ~ it is usually faith schools which are in the firing line ~ somehow do not match the bog standard. It is almost as if "it is usually faith schools that are in the firing line" there is a kind of cottage

industry in such surveys. After all, they are relatively easy to do without a great deal of effort, because the Ministry of Education (which is currently called the Department for Children, Schools and Families, I think.) is itself a statistics factory. Much of the data is there at the click of a mouse. (As I said, forgive my cynicism.)

I am not against research, and in fact I think there is a good case for more research into this area. It needs to be at a greater depth, and to show more subtlety, than merely showing that one kind of school is different from another. I might even have a go myself when I retire (but don't let that remark start any rumours). So where to start?

I suppose we have to ask why politicians put so much emphasis on parental choice. The kind of research I have in mind is about ideas and ideologies, you see, (and votes) not just comparative statistics. Coupled with this would be the question of why some people (not necessarily the same) feel it improper for there to be differences between schools, and for people to want to choose in particular ways. There might be speeches which explained this, but it would involve interviewing people too.

And then there is the matter of why parents want to make particular choices for particular schools. What do they see in those schools, whether "faith" or "grammar"? Why are faith schools so popular? Are they really different from the next door county school, given that the current educational mantra, expected to set the tone in every school, is one which every Christian would endorse ~ "every child matters"? Is that popularity justified? Is it based on perceived academic achievements, or on perceived behaviour, or on the ethos of the school, or on grounds of faith in particular?

What makes a school popular?

And those who are suspicious of faith schools: what is their perception of a "faith" school? Is it based on a general reality, on their own individual experiences, or on some caricature of a horror school from their parents' childhood or from their party's or their union's folklore? Or is there some other ideological bias?

And is there something about faith which makes a difference to the families who want their children to go to particular schools~ or is it the other way round: parents who care will do

some-thing about it, and so probably organise their lives and finances ~ and their churchgoing ~ to their children's advantage?

As a project design that is perhaps rather thin, but is, I maintain, less "thin" than a statistical survey which does not ask the awkward questions about motivation.