

From the Manse

Dear Friends,

How do you see the Church? I don't just mean your own local church – although I do mean that, too – but the Church as a whole?



Do you see it as a place where Christians gather for fellowship, worship and mutual support? If that is your primary view of the Church, then other people's attitudes to what we do, and are about, won't matter too much to you. And so, for example, it probably won't worry you too much if other people know whether the church has fellowship/house groups or not, or where or when they meet.

Most of you will know me well enough by now to know that I have a different view of what the Church is about. This is because when I look at the Gospels, I see Jesus and his disciples spending much of their time in the public eye. Lots of his teaching, healing, and ministry took place in the open air and in front of crowds – not all of whom were his followers, indeed some of them were often quite hostile. If Jesus was ready to carry out his ministry and teaching in public, perhaps we should be too.

Quite a number of people have had reservations about letting the cameras for *Island Parish* into the church. Because I think we have a message to share, then I think we should use the means available to us, including television. I know *Island Parish* doesn't tell the whole story, any more than a casual observer of Jesus at work would have seen the whole picture, or heard his entire message. I have been amazed at the hundreds of letters, e-mails and cards I have received as a result of the television series. I have been even more humbled and touched by the way in which our ministry as a church on the Islands has touched others – often in quite profound ways. What has been shown has not always been a perfect and sanitised church. Jesus and his disciples, who were far from perfect, also lived their lives in the public gaze. Perhaps we should ask ourselves what we have got to hide today, that Jesus was prepared to show then? Last month I wrote comparing the Church to Woolworth's. One of the

essentials of retailing is displaying your goods – sometimes advertising them on the television. What means are we employing to display our ‘goods’ as a church today?

Every blessing,

David.

A Visit by Cornish Methodists, June 1st 2009

Most of you will remember the Ascension Day visit by several hundred Methodists from across Cornwall a few years ago. Steven Wild, the chair of the Cornwall Methodist District is keen that another group should come over on the Scillonian again this year. Ascension Day is not possible because the new Bishop of Truro is coming over then to bless the bells in the Parish Church.

So, the visit will be on Monday June 1st. The programme will be similar to last time, when there was a service on Holgate’s Green and we provided a sandwich lunch. Please keep this date free and, of course, all offers of help nearer the time will be gratefully received.

Letter from Len

For many year two ladies, Margaret Parrett and Helen Williams have holidayed on Scilly (often with friends) and have come to worship and also attended the Friday Fellowship meetings - they stay in one of Arthur Perry's houses opposite the chapel in Well Cross. Last Saturday we received word from Margaret that Helen had suddenly died, and would we let friends over here know. Helen had broken her leg just before Christmas and seemed to be making good progress but quite unexpectedly passed away. It is a great sadness for all of us who remember Helen and a tremendous blow to Margaret. Margaret hopes to come as usual in June, but it will be a visit of very strong emotions I would imagine.

Fellowship Week, 2009

It was agreed by St. Mary's Church Council some while ago that we would invite the Revd. Martin Broadbent, former Chair of one of the London Methodist Districts, to lead our Fellowship Week this year. We have asked him to help us explore Healing and Wholeness.

He will be leading sessions each evening from Wednesday March 18th to Friday 20th. Because it is Mothering Sunday on the 22nd, and it is our turn to host the joint service in the morning, Martin will be leading a service, which will include the opportunity for prayer for healing and wholeness, in the evening. This will be preceded by a tea, to which everyone is invited. This will replace the Friday or Saturday supper that we have held in the past.

Programme for the Week

Wednesday March 18th, 7.30 pm

The Ministry of Healing in the Church Today

Thursday March 19th, 7.30 pm

The Healing of Communities

Friday March 20th, 7.30 pm

The Healing of Memories

Sunday March 22nd

4.00pm ***Church Family Tea***

6.00pm ***A Service, including Holy Communion and the Ministry of Healing***

As a Church community we have experienced lots of hurts and pains over the past few months. I pray, and hope very much, that Martin's visit will be part of the healing process that we all need.

David

Alpha Course

A course to explore the basic claims of Christianity is underway on the islands. Six St Mary's people are attending the weekly Alpha course at Peter Laverock's house, l'abri, in Rams Valley. Peter says, 'Please pray for these people, and ask Jesus, who has been given all authority in heaven and on earth, to empower us for this task of making disciples. These six people come with genuine questions and pastoral needs and only Jesus, by the power of his Spirit, can change hearts. Jesus encourages us all in Matthew 20 v18 not to doubt his resurrection power, but to take part in the great commission of spreading his teachings all over the world. Please pray for the Alpha Course, trusting in Jesus, for the work of the Holy Spirit to be done.'

The Alpha course is a popular and proven method of explaining Christianity to anyone we know who is in the least bit curious. Over two million people in the UK have been to an Alpha course. The course leaders here on the Isles of Scilly are Peter Laverock and Jen Nightingale, who have simply invited people they know to come along. A typical Alpha evening works like this; share a meal, watch a talk by Nicky Gumbel on DVD and discuss it. The first three sessions we have done are: Who is Jesus? Why did Jesus Die? and Can I be sure of my faith?, and the course goes on to discuss praying, healing, temptation, the Holy Spirit and the local church.

Peter says, 'I've invited people by saying there's no pressure and there isn't. Conversion can be a quick or slow process. Nicky Gumbel says it's like people on a sleeper train from Paris to Berlin; some are wide awake for the whole journey and know exactly when they crossed the border, others are less clear about the route and the landmarks, but all the people who stay on the train arrive in a new place. Assurance comes from three things; the Word of God, the Bible (which we can all pick up and read), the work of Jesus (which is historic and completely deals with the heart of the human problem), and the work of the Spirit in our lives today, as he gently persuades us of the grace and truth that came through Jesus.

If you would like to come on a future Alpha course please get in touch with Peter, Jen or our minister, David Easton.

Women's World Day of Prayer

This is a global movement of informed prayer and prayerful action organized and led by Christian women. The services are held on the first Friday of March.

Its origins date back to the 19th century when Christian women in the USA and Canada started cooperative activities in support of women's involvement in missions at home and abroad. They encouraged each other to pray for their missions and this led to annual days and weeks of prayer. At first these were within their individual denominations but by the early 20th century the different denominations had come together to organize interdenominational days of prayer – one in the USA and one in Canada. These were combined in the 1920s as the first Friday of Lent. The service was then distributed to other countries and the Women's World Day of Prayer came into being. In this country, the first services were held in the early 1930s.



The symbol was designed in 1982 when the service was prepared by the women of Ireland (both north and south). It comprises arrows converging from the four points of the compass, four figures kneeling in prayer, the Celtic cross and a circle representing the world and our unity through all our diversity.

The service is written by a different country each year and that country becomes the focus of the world's prayers on the day itself. This year the service comes from Papua New Guinea and the theme is 'In Christ there are many members yet one body', which is appropriate because that country has many languages, cultures, traditions and beliefs.

Nowadays the service is not restricted to women and all are welcome to attend.

Information from www.wwdp-natcomm.org

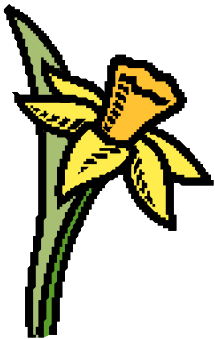
St David's Day (March 1st)

St David (Dewi) was a 6th century Celtic monk, abbot and bishop. He was born into an aristocratic family of SW Wales. His mother was a saint, St Non. After being educated in Cardiganshire by a monk named Paulinus (later canonized), he went on a pilgrimage through S Wales and SW England where he founded religious centres such as Glastonbury and Croyland. He also went to Jerusalem where he was made a bishop.

He eventually settled in what is now St David's, where he lived a very frugal life and established a very strict religious community – the monks worked very hard and ate only vegetables and bread and drank only water. There is a story about him – he was preaching to such a large crowd that many had difficulty seeing and hearing him. The ground where he was standing rose under his feet so that he came to be standing on a hill and everyone had a better chance of hearing him.

He died in 589 and his last words to his followers were 'Be joyful and keep your faith and your creed. Do the little things that you have seen me do and heard about. I will walk the path that our fathers have trod before us.'

On a Tuesday, March 1st 589 the monastery is said to have been 'filled with angels as Christ received his soul'.



From the 12th century, David's fame spread throughout S. Wales and as far as Brittany and Ireland. After he was canonized in 1120, St David's cathedral became a popular centre of pilgrimage and from 1398 his feast day (March 1st) was celebrated in every church in the Province of Canterbury. However, this was stopped after the Reformation. In the 18th century March 1st became a national festival in Wales.

Anne Gurr

A.C.A.T. Action by Christians Against Torture

Island members continue to write letters to governments throughout the world in respect of the torture of those who oppose harsh regimes and the abuse of power.

This month's newsletter speaks of the hope given by President Obama in his announcement that the military-run trials in Guantanamo Bay were to be suspended. Later he signed an order that the prison camp should be closed as soon as possible, and in any event, within a year, despite known difficulties of where prisoners should go.

The President also ordered closure of all U.S. so-called 'ghost prisons' world wide and an end to the extraordinary rendition of prisoners to other countries. These are all very good signs from the human rights point of view.

We need to continue to pray for all in positions of trust that they follow the way of Justice, Peace and Mercy.

Jesus said 'I am the resurrection and the life'

Lord of life, creator and sustainer of all,
Be with us now as we hold before you
Those who suffer torture and brutality
From agents of their governments
We remember especially those for whom we have been writing.

As we name them, we pray also for their families, and all who are hurt by their suffering.

We pray in the Name of Jesus
Who suffered as they are suffering
And who went willingly to death
In the strength of his faith in your power,
Taking the way of the cross
And gaining the reward of resurrection. Amen

Mary Ratcliffe

Latest news of Nathan from William and Tricia

Dear All,

Nathan spoke to us by phone on his birthday, 25th January, for the first time since leaving for Uganda. He is currently on Bukasa, one of the forty-three inhabited Ssesse islands in the northwest of Lake Victoria but has no access to the internet.

He tells us that he is experiencing a wonderful time ministering to the fishermen on the islands. His background has enabled him to communicate on the same level and he goes out in the evening with the fishermen and ministers to them on the boat. He has taught them to sing 'Will your anchor hold' and 'I will make you fishers of men' and says it is great to hear them singing in harmony when they are launching their boats each night. He has told them that he is there to share with them the love of God - and they are eager to learn about this God of love and some have come to faith in Christ. Last week he spent some hours talking to a Muslim about the way of salvation, answering many questions that the man put to him about the Christian faith. Nathan said that today the man came to his service where he was preaching to the fishermen. Having made friends with the fishermen he is able to buy fish at the local rate, instead of the inflated amounts 'white people' have to pay, and he cooks them twice a week for the team. He has shown them how to use a 'whiffing line' (that we use for catching mackerel) and teaching some how to swim (the people - not the mackerel!).

Every day young people come to the hospital where Nathan is staying, to talk to him. He and his team have cut the grass in a field, made up goalposts and started a small football league that is successfully providing an alternative to the drinking and gambling habits of many of the young men in the area.

He tells us he is experiencing a real blessing and growing in the Lord. When they return to Jinja from the Ssesse islands next week they plan to travel to North Uganda, which is an area of greater risk, and Nathan has asked for continued prayer for the safety and ministry of the team.

To those who are supporting him in prayer and financially he thanks God for your faithfulness in sharing in his ministry. Please also pray

for the people that the YWAM team are sharing the gospel with – that they might know the Christ who called the disciples at Galilee as their own Lord and Saviour.

With love in Jesus

William & Tricia

The Senility Prayer

God grant me the senility to forget the people that I never liked anyway
The good fortune to run into the ones that I do,
And the eyesight to tell the difference.

Now that I am older but refuse to grow up, here is what I have discovered:-

1. I started with nothing and still have most of it left.
2. My wild oats have turned into prunes and All-Bran.
3. I finally got my head together – but my body is falling apart.
4. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
5. If all is not lost then where is it?
6. It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.
7. The only time that the world beats a path to your door is when you are in the bathroom!
8. If God wanted me to touch my toes, He would have put them on my knees.
9. It's not hard to meet expenses any more – they are everywhere.
10. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking of the hereafter....I go somewhere and then wonder what I am here after!

This was taken from the magazine of Trinity Methodist Church, Royton who had read it in the North Shore Methodist Church magazine, who in turn got it from the Huntingdon Methodist Church magazine. When something is good you can't stop it going the rounds!

Mother's Way
(Luke 2: 19, 51)

You treasure those things,
Keep them safe in your heart.
Where did the years go?

Everything still so fresh...
The birth, those moments alone,
Your first looking
Into each other's love.

And the visitors
With their wonder and wisdom,
With their gifts and their gazing,
Everything still so fresh...

Then the growing years,
Baby into boy,
Into man,
Into joys and sorrows,
Into life away from your helping,
Yet you alone hold his history in your head.

You treasure those things,
Keep them safe in your heart,
Of course you do...

You are his mother.



Daphne Kitching

...ooOoo..

There is an old Jewish saying:

God could not be every where,
And therefore He made mothers.

God shows in your face

You don't have to tell how you live every day
You don't have to say if you work or you play;
A tried true barometer serves in the place
However you live, it will show in your face.

The false, the deceit that you bear in your heart,
Will not stay inside where it first got to start;
For sinew and blood are a thin veil of lace,
What you wear in your heart, you will wear in your face.

If your life is unselfish, if for others you live,
For not what you get, but how much you can give;
If you live close to God in His infinite Grace,
You don't have to tell it, it shows in your face.

A Chinese Proverb

If there be righteousness in the heart,
There will be beauty in the character.

If there is beauty in the character,
There will be harmony in the home.

If there is harmony in the home,
There will be order in the nation.

If there is order in the nation,
There will be peace in the world

If there if peace in the world,
What a wonderful place this would be.

We thank Dorothy Armstrong of Trinity Methodist Church, Royton for sending these to us.

Hand-written on the wall of Mother Theresa's room

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centred;
Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;
Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;
Be successful anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;
Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;
Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;
Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;
Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;
Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God;
It never was between you and them anyway.

...ooOoo...

New Book

Barbara Hasler has just published a book entitled '*Dear God*' which is a selection of material for use in worship, discussion and teaching. The book is available from Barbara for a donation to Medecins Sans Frontieres.



“...he’s one of the results of our
‘Risk Assesment Survey’!”

We thank Jen for sending this to us

Birthday Greetings

We send greetings this month to Steve Burrows, Lily Didlick, Claire Jenkins, Alistair McNicol, Len Michell, Simon Morris, Val Parker and Heather Terry. We hope you all have a lovely day.



Bats

I found this in the magazine of Royton Methodist Church and thought it very topical because a bat has recently taken up residence in the Parish Church. I understand that the lady members of the choir were not enthusiastic when the bat decided to join their choir practice!

Following a lengthy meeting, three ministers were relaxing over a cup of tea in the session room when the subject of bats invading their respective churches arose.

The first minister said that he and his warden had caught the bats and transported them about 20 miles into the countryside but when they returned to the church the bats had already returned before them.

The second minister said that he had done a similar thing but had driven 50 miles before deciding to release them, and they were back before them!

But the third minister said that he'd had a similar problem but solved it in a more unusual way. He had rounded up the bats, baptized and confirmed them and they've never been seen since.....!



Anne

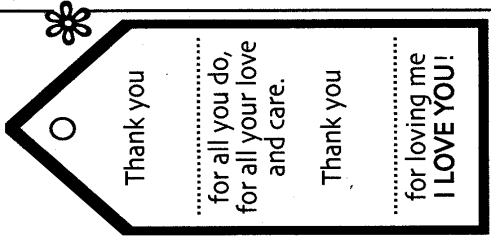
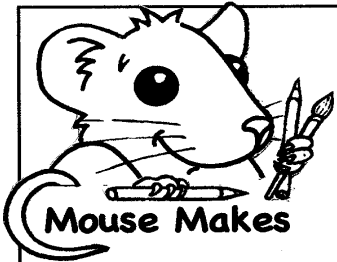
Some observations on life today

A child, like your stomach, doesn't need all you can afford to give it - *Frank A. Clark*

The rich are not always godly; but the godly are always rich - *Anon*

Do what you can with what you have where you are - *Theodore D. Roosevelt*

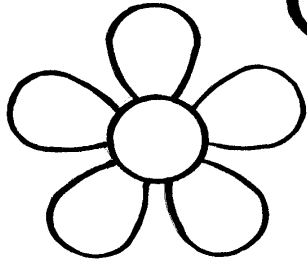
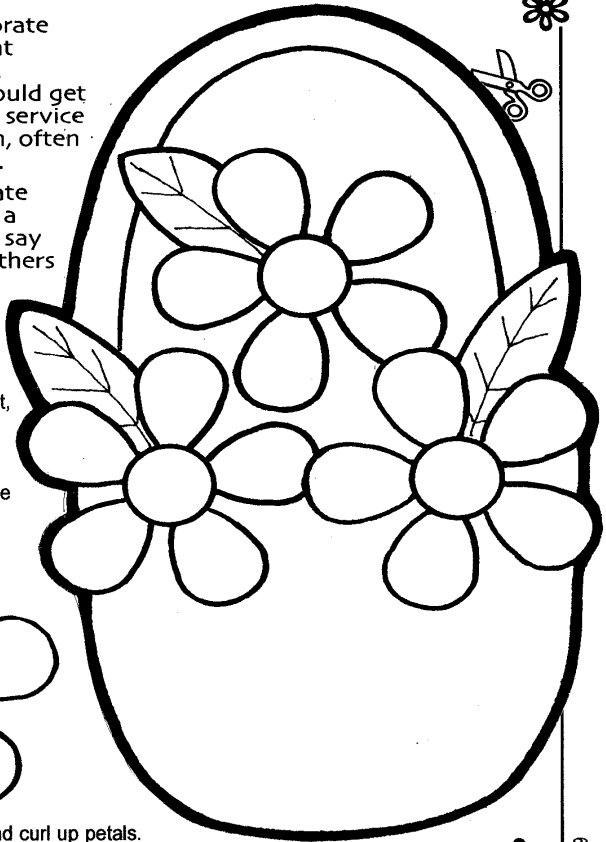
It is not marriage that fails, it is people that fail - *Harry Emerson Fosdick*



Many Christians celebrate the 4th Sunday in Lent as **Mothering Sunday**. Originally families would get together for a special service at the 'mother' church, often at the local cathedral.

Today we still celebrate **Mothering Sunday** as a family day, a time to say 'thank you' to our mothers and all those who look after us.

To make a **Thank You** card, cut around the flower basket, colour in then glue onto a folded blank card. Cut out the tag, glue to tag shaped card. Punch the hole and hang from the basket with ribbon.



Cut out this flower, colour and curl up petals. Stick on basket with a blob of glue to give a 3D effect.

Mar09

Diary Dates

March

- 3-5th David Easton on visit to Ceredigion Circuit
4th Lent Lunch, Parish Church Hall, 12-1.15 pm
6th Women's World Day of Prayer, 2 pm Parish Church
7th Saturday Seekers
9th David at District Policy Committee
11th Lent Lunch, Parish Church Hall, 12-1.15 pm
David at District Superintendents' Meeting
17th St. Mary's Finance Committee
18th Lent Lunch, Methodist Church Hall, 12-1.15 pm
18th-22nd Fellowship Week, led by Revd. Martin Broadbent
22nd Mothering Sunday
23rd David leading *Walking Week* Walk looking at churches on
Bryher & Tresco
24th David leading *Walking Week* Walk looking at Churches on
St. Mary's
25th Lent Lunch, Methodist Church Hall, 12-1.15 pm 25th
St. Martin's Fellowship, 7.30 p.m.
26th St. Mary's Church Council, 7.00pm

April

- 2nd Circuit Meeting, 7.30pm, St. Martin's

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