

# Wilbraham St Ninian's United Reformed Church

*Egerton Rd South, Chorlton-cum-Hardy,  
Manchester, M21 0XJ*

**March 2017**



Loving and Mysterious God

As we come before you at the beginning of  
Lent

We give thanks for your inclusive Love:  
the love that does not form barriers,  
the love that welcomes all with arms wide  
open,  
the love that suffers as we abuse it  
and try to change it.

We praise you for your love that never fails

**Amen**

*Michelle Jarmany, NW Synod Prayer resources*

Interim Minister

Rev Alan Poolton

Secretary

Kath Lacy

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From the Editor..... March 2017

## A Lent Reflection

Lent offers us the opportunity to take time to reflect with Jesus in the wilderness on our fallen world, to decide what words and principles we will live by, to face our temptations and to determine how we will repent and respond. Today's world is one of gross inequality, where many millions of people still live in extreme poverty and go hungry, despite there being enough for all. The rich world's refusal of restraint and the temptation to put our material comfort before godliness are part of the problem. We have created an unfair global trading system that allows us to enjoy cheap clothes and food but causes others to suffer. Many of the farmers and workers who grow the tea, coffee and other products found in our store cupboards aren't getting paid fairly.

In the 2017 Women's World Day of Prayer Service we will hear stories from women and girls from the Philippines who are victims of domestic violence or sex trafficking, migrant domestic workers in the country or abroad, and survivors harmed emotionally and economically by disasters in the environment or unsustainable development policies. As the Order of Service says, "How can we hear these stories and not realise the sinfulness of structures that consolidate economic inequality?"

But as Paul writes to the Romans, God wills life and offers the healing power of repentance. And we, by grace and following Christ's example, can reject temptation. We are called to confess and take on our ethical responsibility to answer God's call for justice. One way is through Fairtrade, which is a strategy for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Its purpose is to create opportunities for producers and workers who have been economically disadvantaged or marginalised by the conventional trading system. Fairtrade is good news - and a way we can respond practically to our hurting world.

## Fair Trade Fortnight -

### Traidcraft Big Brew

#### Coffee morning Saturday 11 March

This church is committed to Fair Trade, as a way of ensuring that producers of our food in the Third World get a decent return for their work. We use fairly traded tea and coffee and Pat Anstis runs the Traidcraft stall. To mark Fair Trade Fortnight this year, we are holding a Coffee Morning on Saturday 11 March from 10.30am to 12 midday in the New Hall.



There will be fairly traded tea and coffee, and cakes and biscuits made with fairly traded materials, and a stall with a wide range of Fair Trade products. We can get food and drinks more cheaply than by fair trade, but fair trade enables producer communities to pay for health services and education for their children. It cannot be right that poor producers are paying for our cheap food.

Please buy a ticket (£1.50 for a drink, but buy a cake to go with it) and come to the Big Brew. **Better still bake something with Fair Trade ingredients and bring it to sell or share.** The profit on the morning will go to Traidcraft Exchange to fund development projects.

(Thanks to *George Morton* for this article)

# News Round up

## Family News

We send our warmest congratulations to **David and Barbara Williams** on their Golden Wedding Anniversary this month. David and Barbara were married at what was then St Ninian's on March 1<sup>st</sup> fifty years ago – we trust that they did not have to make the tea after the service!

Birthday wishes go to **Michael Morgan** who celebrated a “big birthday” with the Morgan family at the very end of February.

We were saddened to hear of the recent illness of **Chris Burton's** father. Chris has visited him in Dorset and he seems to be improving but is still very frail. Please keep the Burton family in your prayers this month.

## **Andy Braunston Accepts Call to Glasgow.**

On 19th February **Andy Braunston** led worship and preached at a combined service for the 6 congregations in the Glasgow Southside Cluster comprising of Giffnock and Moss Park (which already have a minister) Priesthill, Shawlands, Barrhead and Stewarton (in north Ayrshire). The contexts of the vacant churches range from trendy Glasgow suburb, out of town estate, small town and small village. Andy and Ian met members of the congregations at social events on the Saturday and were delighted when the Cluster voted to call Andy with a 95% affirmation. Andy accepted the Call which is now subject to the concurrence of the Synod of Scotland. Andy hopes to start in June and Ian will now be considering his options for work. The Cluster need to work out the specifics of which churches Andy will be working in and the Synod will be looking to either extend the existing manse or buy a new one. We're sorry to see him move so far away but we wish Andy every blessing in this new phase of his ministry and wish him and Ian every happiness in Scotland.

## Good News from the Afternoon Congregation

Your editor is delighted to bring more good news from the Afternoon Congregation. First, one of our members, Robert Kityo, who has been worshipping with us since April 2014, and has suffered many refusals and serious delays in his asylum process, was told by an immigration judge at the conclusion of his latest hearing on February 16th that he will be granted leave to remain in the UK. The formal decision by the judge needs to be written up, and the Home Office will have a further two weeks in which to lodge an appeal against the judge's decision. But there were floods of emotion from the four witnesses and twenty-five friends who had come to the court to show their support for Robert, when the judge said that Robert's case has gone on long enough and that the evidence is strong enough for him to take the very rare step of announcing to the court at this time that he will be making judgement in favour of Robert's claim for asylum. If all goes as planned, Robert will soon be able to move forward with his life and he will do so with the love and blessing of all who have walked with him on this long and difficult journey in which he has shown such courage.

Doris Umelor was admitted to membership by Alan Poolton at the recent service. She came to the UK from Nigeria. Doris made contact with the First Wednesday group and, from there, began to worship in our church. In January she undertook her main asylum interview and the church funded her travel costs to the Liverpool offices of the Home Office. Doris has now been awarded Leave to Remain in the UK as a result of that interview. This means that, within a three-week period, we have been able to celebrate asylum successes for Ann Maru (Kenya), Robert Kityo (Uganda), and Doris Umelor (Nigeria) - all members of our church - with other decisions and hearings still in the pipeline. Please keep Ann, Robert and Doris in your prayers, and pray for the work done by the Metropolitan Congregation in their mission.

# Dates & Rotas

February 27	Elders' Meeting 7.30pm
March 2	Open Church: 10.00 am – 12.00 pm. Quiet space for prayer & reflection
March 3	Women's World Day of Prayer Service Wilbraham St Ninian's 7.00pm
March 5 <b>Lent 1</b>	Rev Alan Poolton (Interim Minister)
March 9	Open Church: 10.00 am – 12.00 pm. Quiet space for prayer & reflection
Saturday March 11	Fair Trade Fortnight "Big Brew" Coffee Morning 10:30 – 12:00
March 12	Rev Dr Walter Houston
March 16	Open Church: 10.00 am – 12.00 pm. Quiet space for prayer & reflection
March 19	Adrian Curtis
March 19	<b>Church Meeting</b> preceded by faith lunch
March 23	Open Church: 10.00 am – 12.00 pm. Quiet space for prayer & reflection
March 26	<b>Mothering Sunday</b> Worship Group led by Ella Burton
March 30	Open Church: 10.00 am – 12.00 pm. Quiet space for prayer & reflection
April 2	Worship Group led by Chris Burton

# Readers & Readings

Taken from "Roots on the Web" 2016 Revised Common Lectionary Year A

February 26	George Morton	<i>Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2; Psalm 99; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9</i>
March 5	Ian Meadowcroft	<i>Genesis 2:15-17, 3.1-7; Psalm 32; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11</i>
March 12	Joyce Henry	<i>Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17</i>
March 19	Alastair Lyall	<i>Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42</i>
March 26	Ella Burton	<i>1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41</i>
April 2	Brenda Beckett	<i>Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45</i>

**\*\* Please check readings with the preacher in good time before the service \*\***

***Thank you to Kath Lacy for producing the Readers' Rota.***

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## Women's World Day of Prayer

On Friday March 3rd at 7.00pm Wilbraham St Ninian's is hosting the WWDP service. The service has been compiled by women from the Philippines and is based on Jesus' parable in Matthew 20:1-16, about the Kingdom of Heaven. While Jesus sees no wrongdoing in giving generously, the workers who felt entitled to receive more strongly complained. This dialogue has been turned into a question for the 2017 WDP theme: "Am I Being Unfair to You?"

All are welcome to attend and anyone who wants to volunteer to participate should see Kath Lacy.

## SYNOD “BIG DAY OUT” 2017

North Western Synod, together with Mersey Synod, is holding another **Big Day Out** on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July** from 10.00 am at Southport Convention Centre

**Tickets cost £8 for adults before 17<sup>th</sup> April, and after that date they will be £10 each; children 16 years and under have free entry.** Please note that, although there is no cost for children to attend the day, they will need to book a ticket.

The programme will include:

### Speakers:

- ❖ **Revd John Proctor** - Acts: The Church in Action
- ❖ **Revd Steve Chalke** - The Church and Peace-making Initiatives
- ❖ **Revd Richard Church** - Walking the Way
- ❖ **Revd Andrew Roberts** - Holy Habits
- ❖ **Lawrence Moore**
- ❖ **Grace Pengelly**

### Workshops:

- ❖ **Dementia** – awareness in worship & work within the community
- ❖ **Developing the Church in the community**
- ❖ **Gathering and telling stories**
- ❖ **Puppets in worship**
- ❖ **The Naked Vicar**
- ❖ **Magic/clowning**
- ❖ **Art in worship**
- ❖ **Drama**
- ❖ **Crafty Christians & Fun Science**

Each church is asked to bring a large sealed envelope which publicises their own church. The outside of the envelope may be decorated in any way that you would like – but please do not put the name of your church on the outside of the envelope. Inside the envelope please put the name of your church and any interesting information you would like to share about it. The intention is that each church will take a different church envelope away with them at the end of the day, and perhaps make links with that church after the event.

**This will be a great day for all ages, please advertise the Big Day Out in your church. Tickets can be booked via Synod Office now - phone 0161 789 5583 or email [admin@nwsynod.org.uk](mailto:admin@nwsynod.org.uk)**