

YOU SHALL ALSO LOVE THE STRANGER BECAUSE YOU WERE STRANGERS IN THE LAND OF EGYPT

At the end of September, most of the clergy in the Kensington area and some from nearby Central London, spent three days at a conference organized at an ex-Seminary in France. The fact that we were in France had two tremendous pluses. First of all, we couldn't easily get away and secondly, apart from the Bishops of London and Kensington, it had been agreed that none of us would wear clergy dress. Apart from those whom we knew, we were anonymous to one another. If we wanted to know our neighbour, we had to find out and introduce ourselves. It was a liberating experience for most of us. Whoever we are, a huge human weakness is to be judgmental and to label people without even knowing them. In this instance, about 130 people were able to meet and spend time together as committed Christians without pondering over whether someone was charismatic or evangelical or anglo-catholic. What do those labels mean, you may say. Well, exactly. Most of us are complicated beings so to label us is to put us in a strait-jacket.

Far more important that we should ponder the question put to Jesus by an unnamed person: Who is my neighbour? His answer was the parable of the good samaritan which indicated that my neighbour is the stranger in our midst. Someone who may be very different from me and from you and not necessarily the person next door. From the earliest books of the Old Testament, the teaching has always been that we should love the stranger so what we need to develop is a dialogue with our neighbours whoever they are, and especially if they are different from us. To get to know them can only enrich our lives and break down barriers.

Arising from the ashes of September 11th is an emphasis on the importance of dialogue. We have seen an armed response; yet we know that the quest for peace overrides retaliation and rightly so. All of us are aware from personal experience how relationships deteriorate with lack of communication. Telephone conversations have their place as do e-mails but nothing can replace face to face space. It is a reason why we all have a responsibility to use each opportunity available to break down barriers born of ignorance and fear of the unknown. It is not only the task of world leaders. It is easy to attach religious labels to groups of people who carry out fanatical actions which bear no relationship to that faith. Centuries ago, we had the Crusades and then the Inquisition and the Reformation. Much of that history makes depressing reading. In our own lifetime, we have seen actions carried out in Northern Ireland by supposedly Christian groups which bear no resemblance to the teaching of Jesus. It is necessary for us to separate faith from what is done in the name of religion and to promote dialogue on our own doorsteps.

It is also necessary for us to look honestly at the root causes of the depth of hatred towards others that we saw on September 11th and to consider what we can do to rectify them. We each have a voice and an opportunity in a democracy to make

representations to Government.

Peace is what we all want in our hearts. November begins with the feast for all the Saints and the commemoration of All Souls. Shortly afterwards, we observe Remembrance Sunday and those who fought valiantly for our peace. There can be no better time to consider how we can follow in the footsteps of the good. Many of the Saints were missionaries who trod foreign paths and worked with people of other faiths and languages.

We need to follow their example, relating to people whoever they are, discovering what their difficulties and pains may be, learning about their faith and in so doing enriching our own and believing it unashamedly. On the Mount of Olives, Christ made it clear that he might well be the stranger in our midst. Will he say to you and me "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" or will we be like the disciples on the road to Emmaus and fail to recognise him?

Freda Evans



JACOB KHEMELE SHARES NEWS OF OUR MILLENNIUM GIVING

I am sure you all remember our special millennium project (£2000 in Y2000) that actually raised £10,000. All the money was sent to support vital work in South West Tanzania - a water project in Kyombo, a community health programme and St. Luke's hospital in Milo. A framed display of information and pictures will be placed in the church hall soon, so do look out for it.

On 28th September we were most fortunate to welcome Jacob Kahemele to St. James's, together with Louise Orton from Christian Aid. Jacob is employed by the Diocese of SW Tanganyika as coordinator of the community health programme that we supported. He gave us an invaluable update on its importance for the rural population and conveyed thanks to all at St. James for our gift.

The majority of Tanzanians are subsistence farmers and UNICEF studies now estimate that half the children in the country are malnourished. Jacob travels round the villages, identifying such children and giving advice on nutrition to their parents. To compound this problem, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is having a devastating impact on the whole infrastructure of the country. Jacob spoke of the national tragedy of the thousands of teachers who will die each year and of the personal tragedy of each such death on family and community.

Jacob's energy, knowledge and commitment were an inspiration. The challenge to us is to continue to help to alleviate the grinding poverty that is the root cause of so much suffering - through our giving, our campaigning and our prayers.

Ann Peterken

SCOUT GROUP NEWS SUMMER 2001

One of the main activities I enjoy as a Scout leader is, perhaps unsurprisingly, camping. With a promotion at work enabling my taking my annual leave more or less when I want it, we decided to shift our summer camp from the unreliable weather days of Whitsun week to the joys of August. Unfortunately this date wasn't changed 'till Easter and by this time most families had of course already booked their holidays. Sadly this meant the first ever cancellation of a camp, however we're now close to setting next year's date already to negate this possibility in future!



However, we were able to enjoy two weekend camps in the summer term, one was a training camp for the Cubs at our HQ; a successful but as ever tiring weekend (do Cubs ever sleep?). The other was the annual 'Borough Camp' at Walton Firs campsite in Cobham; again a successful weekend with a large number of Cubs and Scouts attending. Third Hampton Hill Guides were there as well and I enjoyed the pleasure of an enrolment which included my daughter Kim.

A couple of programme highlights in a short summer term were our annual Superscout challenge, an evening of sporting, mental and accuracy challenges won by Jonathon Boyton and another annual event - the Grand Parent Scout Cookout Challenge. In this event the Scouts are challenged to form groups with their parents and cook a three course meal on wood fires.



Unfortunately it rained all day and the wood was soaked, however true to our motto we were prepared for this and cooked on gas in the hall instead. Some amazing meals appeared with various winners for each course.

Low-light of the term was Peter Horner's successful application for a job in Bradford. Pete had a wealth of experience, ideas and enthusiasm and will be sorely missed. I wish him well in his new post, but all is not lost as we look forward to his presence at our camps.

Our autumn term programme contains a lot of exciting activities and outings ranging from quiz nights, air rifle and climbing outings, to a trip to the dry ski slope at Sandown Park, along with day incident hikes, orienteering and cyclocross competitions. Phew! Can we fit it all in? Can we keep up? Feel free to come and find out!

The Beavers can look back on a successful summer term. As the weather improved we could hold more activities outside on the rec. One evening of obstacle races was thoroughly enjoyed, causing a great deal of excitement. As the number of boys in the colony grows, our ordinary evenings of games and activities become increasingly busy. One evening in particular which should be noted however was the end of term swim at Hampton Pool. Many parents joined their sons for a swim and a picnic, although I believe our young male leader suffered greatly as a human climbing frame in the pool! We also held an end of term party with fun, games and traditional party food. Overall, the term was lots of fun, which is after all part of our motto at Beavers. Although the evenings are now drawing in, we have another busy programme to look forward to in the Autumn term, including of course the Christmas party!

SONGS OF PRAISE 40TH ANNIVERSARY

One Sunday in September we were fortunate to go to the Royal Albert Hall for the recording of "Songs Of Praise" 40th Anniversary and what a memorable evening it turned out to be. The music was provided by the BBC Concert Orchestra who accompanied the choirs of over 1000 singers drawn from the Royal Choral Society, the London Welsh Male Voice Choir, the Choristers of St. Paul's Cathedral, the Saint Michael's Singers and the Croydon Seventh Day Adventist Gospel Choir. Add to this the magnificent Father Willis organ plus 5000 enthusiastic audience and one has the recipe for a marvellous evening.

The compere was Pam Rhodes; guests included Daniel O'Donnell, Jonathan Veira, Graham Kenrick, Gloria Gaynor and Sir Cliff Richard. Both Gloria Gaynor and Sir Cliff Richard had recently been in U.S.A. and had seen more closely the devastating effects of the recent terrorist attack but as we sang the final hymn *Thine be the Glory* (twice - once as an encore) the Words of the last two lines "*Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son, endless is the victory thou o'er death has won*" really brought home the power of this musical experience.

Do hope you saw the Programme on October 7th (video recording available to borrow).

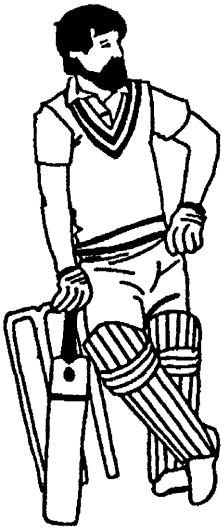
Jill Goddard

ANNUAL LEAF-SWEEP AND GUTTER-CLEANING DAY **SATURDAY 1ST DECEMBER STARTING AT 10A.M.**

Please come and help - bring bucket and brush if possible. It's usually quite a jolly occasion!!

REFLECTIONS on becoming 80

By the time you may be reading this I shall recently have celebrated my 80th birthday. I am unlikely henceforth to follow the practice of another much better known citizen, who declined to rise until he had established that his obituary had not appeared in the morning press, so that he could face with more confidence what that day had in store for him. Nor am I likely to replicate the action of that other man, who on ringing up to complain that his obituary *had* appeared, was asked where he was speaking from! But on this subject, it did cause me satisfaction to find that on virtually consecutive days in September the *Independent*, *Telegraph*, *Times* and *Guardian* newspapers printed lengthy tributes - with photographs - following the decease of a close friend of 50 years, the former Essex opening batsman T.C. 'Dickie' Dodds. The son of an Anglican vicar, one of whose other sons, Canon Arthur Dodds, led the prayers at his Thanksgiving Service, Dickie and I, as we found out later, emerged from over five years WW2 Army service with one thought deep in our minds - how could this indeed be the "war to end all wars" and how could we best play a part in bringing this about.



Not so easy! But we had each been led during and shortly after that war period to peoples's lives that had been profoundly changed and turned Godwards through the work of Moral Re-Armament - in my case through a pre-war office colleague whom I had previously regarded as my worst enemy! Past precepts became no sound basis for future God-led action until damaged relationships which clouded the new envisioned horizon had been faced and wherever possible repaired. Then our immediate fields opened up for a wider witness to God's transforming power, in Dickie's case a county cricket one, in mine a full-time missionary and finance administration one.

Our "fields" did come together when we conferred as to whether he should ensure his benefit match against rain, a costly item to consider in what was the predicted wet summer of 1957. We both felt not, a decision richly rewarded when a fine three days (particularly enlivened by a Denis Compton century before lunch) yielded a sum estimated by the *Times* in today's money at £33,000. Dickie made it all available for

MRA's work in India, with which he was engaged during winter months.

My own dream of opening the batting for Yorkshire was never fulfilled! Yet through engaging in a bigger "battle" along with such friends as Dickie and later, as we both were, with the late Conrad Hunte, former West Indies Vice-Captain, in his campaign to "help create a multi-racial society in Britain which the whole world could copy" I feel a finer outcome has ensued - one for which at 80 I give most grateful thanks to God.

John Rainbow

St. James's Church Website

The new address (URL) is:

www.stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

To move about the site

- The St. James's Church website is entered through the Home Page. From there you can click on any of the 8 sections to go to that particular section's home page. These home pages also double as site indexes to help you find your way around.
- If you click on 'Site Map', you can see the whole of the site broken down into sections with every page of each section. Clicking on the appropriate button will take you to that particular page.
- On every page within each section, there is a navigation bar along the top of the page. This will enable you to go from page to page within that section without having to return to the home page. Also on every page there is a navigation bar along the bottom of the page. This will enable you to go from section to section without having to return to the home page.

Ways you can help to update the website:

- All pages on the site can now be updated by Prill as needed please let her know if any information on the site becomes out-of-date or incorrect.
- Could committees and groups please send Prill a short article about anything interesting arising from their meetings and activities. For example, this could include information about past or future events, money raised, etc.
- Individuals, including Young Church members, could provide interesting information about their own activities (to extend 'Around the Spire').
- There are no deadlines for providing material. Short entries, dates, etc. can be written or phoned in but lengthy text needs to be presented in electronic form, either in Word (PC not Mac) or rich text format, to save typing. E-mail is the preferred method of communication wherever possible. Photographs and other graphic material can be included to provide visual interest.
- If anyone has ideas for material, or has any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Prill on 020 8979 0528, at p.m.hinckley@blueyonder.co.uk or at 115 Burton's Road, Hampton Hill, TW12 IDL.

WHAT'S MUSIC FOR?

What's music for? Entertainment and recreation? Expressing a wide range of emotions about life and the human condition, such as joy, sorrow, grief, love? So what's music for in church? What is its role?

Well, forget the entertainment and recreation bit. But keep the rest. Music in services should help us express praise and worship. It should never be an end in itself, but support us in our worship, devotion and meditation. Music is an incredibly powerful tool. Properly handled, it can indeed communicate language, intellectual concepts (revelation and the multiplicity of creation) and emotion. Well done, it can support, deepen and uplift our experience of God. It must be as inclusive as possible.

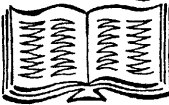
A parish's music should be an integrated part of the parish's mission action policy, in the same way as all other aspects of its activities, such as on outreach and growth/nurture. A parish needs to take a look at its activities every now and again and ask itself whether they are succeeding in, for example, attracting people into the church and giving those who are already in the church the spiritual growth that they need.

There's nothing new in any of this: all of the above has been expressed, for example, eloquently and in greater detail by successive Directors of the Royal School of Church Music in their stimulating articles in the RSCM magazine over many years. The RSCM can offer help and support to affiliated churches (such as St. James's) through advice, training (courses in the area and at RSCM HQ at Dorking), music supplies, and so on.

There is another important factor, which is to safeguard music in the church. There was so much concern that church music and the supply of organists and singers in the country (indeed the "English choral tradition") had collapsed at parish level that the Archbishop set up a Commission to see what could be done. The Commission's 1992 Report "In Tune with Heaven" makes depressing reading but made a number of useful suggestions that the RSCM has been busily implementing and developing, such as training for young aspiring organists and supporting initiatives to encourage more children and young people into church through music.

We are fortunate at St. James's that we have many advantages in our music. We have a fine organ, a number of competent singers and instrumentalists, a band and several potential leaders. We can provide a range of musical support to worship. We also have two buildings (church and hall) that are attractive and used as concert venues, bringing people into church. Can we do more? Should we be doing some things differently? A number of exciting ideas for how we might use music have come out of this summer's mission review. We are holding a Music Review on Saturday 24th November lead by Huw Williams, Assistant Organist at St. Paul's Cathedral. This is open to all in our congregation who are interested in music as part of mission: do come along.

Christopher Hodges

BOOKS of

the BIBLE
REVELATION

"... a white stone, and in the stone a new name is written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it..." (Revelation 2, 17)

This quotation which accompanied a simple white stone given to me as a present from Taizé inspired me to re-read the Book of Revelation. Revelation has the reputation of being a very difficult and obscure book which has troubled numerous scholars over the ages, let alone the ordinary reader. Consequently, my first attempt was to read it with a mind devoid of any preconceptions, to come to it like a child, let the words wash over me and not let myself worry about strange things, things I did not understand.

Reading it this way, I was confronted with amazing visions of angels, creatures and beasts, both mythical and real, some extremely fearsome, and also with very many numbers, frequently repeated, particularly the number 'seven', "... and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads..." (Revelation 12, 3). I felt I was reading poetry rather than prose. Time in any particular sequence was irrelevant.

I really could have left it with that first read and come away with a sense of mystery beyond and outside of me, immense, scary and wondrous, feelings of the incomprehensible, the infinite and the greatness beyond the scope and understanding of my mortal being. But I didn't stop there. I felt the need to try and find out more. So, I read some background material. Below are a few of the ideas that emerged.

Revelation takes the form of letters of encouragement, inspiration and prophecy to the seven churches of the Roman province of Asia (western Turkey today). The letters are thought to have been written at the end of the 1st century, a time when the readers would have been persecuted for their beliefs and when many were finding it difficult to stand firm. Worship of the Roman Emperor was obligatory and to comply with this was in conflict with the Christian faith. The veiled references and vivid symbols in the letters would have been understood by those reading them but would not have aroused the suspicion of the authorities.

The numbers which occur so frequently have special significance, '7' usually meaning 'perfection' or 'completeness', '6' consequently signifying 'falling short of perfection'; '4' normally refers to 'the earth' whilst '12' and its multiples to 'God's people'. The images, symbols and visions, many of which have been used in literature, film and song (for example the silent film 'The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse', Ingmar Bergman's film 'The Seventh Seal', the song 'Babylon is fallen') were not intended to be obscure to the reader but rather to evoke imaginative insight. Their meaning frequently alludes to the Old Testament or to the world in which the first readers lived. The 'beasts' are references to evil, Satan and the Devil; the 'Lamb' and the 'Lion' to 'Jesus Christ'. Some see the Book of the Revelation as giving a view of the world from God's perspective, where it is not through violent power that ultimate victory is achieved, but rather by bearing witness to love and justice.

The interpretations I read contained many parallels with the world we live in today. Although I can still only guess at the meaning of the words accompanying my simple white stone I am pleased that it led me on such a journey...

Val Butterfield



The Baptismal Tea Party on 7th October was very much enjoyed by about 70 people - children and their families. Thank you to Debbie Nunn and the people who provided refreshments and help for this delightful party.

We need one or two more "visitors" who will call on families where a child is to be baptised, to talk about Christening and it's meaning, and to take them through the service which will then be much more meaningful and enjoyable.

We said 'adieu' but not 'goodbye' to Geoffrey on 30th September after 9.30a.m., Eucharist when Brian thanked him for his years of splendid music always played with his usual artistry. Geoffrey, who is now our Organist Emeritus demonstrated the delights of his new keyboard - our farewell gifts; he promised that we would certainly hear him play in church in the future.

Have you noticed that the children and teachers of the Sunday School now come into church at the beginning of the 9.30a.m. Eucharist and then go together into the Church Hall carrying their own small cross? They return later in the service and walk up the aisle and offer their cross at the altar, before sitting in their usual seats at the front of the congregation. We hope that this will help them and us to feel members of the same family sharing the service together.

If you would like someone commemorated by name at the service on All Souls Day 4th November please contact Brian or Freda.

Please come to All Age Eucharist on November 4th at 9.30a.m.. We shall enjoy drumming with a Christian Aid visitor from the Dalit community in India. Bring your own drum!

Voices of Exile

Gala concert at the Royal Festival Hall Monday 19th November 2001 at 7.30p.m. in aid of the Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture and Prisoners of Conscience.

Box Office- +44(0)20 7960 4242 or www.rfh.org.uk.

More information from Sarah Butterfield 020 7450 2303.

R.N.L.I. Christmas Music on Friday 30th November at Teddington Baptist Church, Church Road, Teddington commencing at 7.30p.m. Refreshments will be served in the Church Hall afterwards and Christmas cards, gifts etc. will be on sale. All welcome, Coffee morning at Elleray Hall, Teddington on November 24th 10a.m. - noon.

Jill Goddard
020 8287 7438

FROM THE SEPTEMBER REGISTERS

Baptisms

- 9 Harry Butcher, 67 Admiralty Way, Teddington.
16 Michael Husher, 277 Longford House, Uxbridge Road.
Zoe and Tyla Thorpe, 7 Loxley Road, Hampton.

Weddings

- 8 Richard Shapcott and Katie Hourigan.
22 Guy Record and Catherine Steele.

DATES TO NOTE IN NOVEMBER

- 1 All Saints Day.
4 9.30a.m. All Age Worship with Surish, a Dalit drummer.
6.30p.m. All Souls. Commemoration of the faithful departed.
7 8.00p.m. Churches Together Around Hampton Autumn Lecture 2001.
Steve Beck: Faith at Work. Hampton Methodist Church.
11 Remembrance Sunday. We pray together at the Churchyard War Memorial after Parish Communion (approx 10.45a.m.).
24 Parish Review of Music - Details in Church. All Welcome.

Memorandum from the Organist Emeritus

I would like to thank the kind parishioners for their handsome gift of a Casio WK 1600 Electronic keyboard. This splendid instrument has already been used to accompany entertainment at Teddington Choral Society's 50th Anniversary Dinner on 29th September and will again be heard at Cantanti Camerati's Concert 'English Poetry in Song' at Hampton Hill Playhouse on Saturday 3rd November. It's a remarkable machine, able to stimulate organ/harpsichord/piano etc. sounds at the touch of a button.

May I also thank Liz Butler for her entertaining article 'In appreciation of Geoffrey' in the October edition of The Spire. Liz writes that it is time for me "to move on". I think she must be referring to the Freedom Pass recently acquired! As I write my small house is being extended, which would imply that I will be residing in Twickenham for the foreseeable future and I look forward to accompanying Sunday Services in St. James's Church and elsewhere for many years to come.

I will retire as a musician when I find my musical skills fading away. Happily, there is no sign of that at present. In the meantime I will continue to play and teach - in spite of the arrival of my State Pension.

Geoffrey Bowyer

COPY DATE FOR DECEMBER MAGAZINE: 10TH NOVEMBER