

This month we are delighted to welcome Julie Gittoes as our new curate in the parish at Hampton Hill. It is with real pleasure we welcome Julie to St. James' and to our wider community. Someone asked me recently why start a new job in June? It is a perfectly reasonable question and it deserves a reasonable answer. The answer is that the date for beginning ordained ministry is related to St. Peter's day which falls on 29<sup>th</sup> June. It has been a long tradition in the church that ordination happened around Peterstide. Julie will be ordained deacon on the Saturday following St. Peter's day, namely July 5<sup>th</sup> in St. Paul's Cathedral at 5p.m. Everyone is very welcome to attend that service. We shall, of course, be welcoming her into our own church community on the following day, Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July at 9.30a.m. and you will be most welcome at that service, too.

Some of you will know that in addition to being vicar in this parish, I am also director of ordinands for the Kensington Episcopal Area of our Diocese of London. That means, in effect, I am the Bishop of Kensington's officer to look after all those who feel they may have a vocation to ordained ministry in the Church of England, their discernment, selection, training and placement. The Church of England has three types of ordained ministry, bishops, priests and deacons. Once ordained to a particular order of ministry that can't be taken away. So it is that Julie, along with about 30 others, will be ordained as a deacon in the Church of God by the Bishop of London at that special service in St. Paul's.

So what is a deacon? Some would say a deacon is a dogsbody but whereas that might feel quite true, nevertheless it is far from the truth. The word deacon comes to us from the ancient Greek word meaning a servant and the ordinal of the Church of England describes a deacon thus:

*A deacon is called to serve the church of God and to work with its members in caring for the poor, the needy, the sick and all who are in trouble. A deacon is to strengthen the faithful, search out the careless and the indifferent and to preach the word of God in the place to which (s)he is licensed. A deacon assists the priest under whom (s)he serves in leading the worship of the people, especially in the administration of Holy Communion. (S)he may baptise when required to do so. It is her (his) general duty to do such pastoral work as is entrusted to her (him).*

So, there we have it. A deacon is a servant of the church or rather a servant of the people who make up the body of Christ. And once a deacon, always a deacon. So not only will Julie be a deacon, in the first year of her ministry, but I am also still a deacon and so is our bishop and so is the Archbishop. Every ordained minister in the Church of England is a deacon and even when later ordained priest or bishop being a deacon is not ever removed from us.

And that's a pretty good place to start, as a servant of the whole body of the church. And if that is the deacon's ministry and sphere of operation then it is also our duty to pray for, support, encourage and help Julie and all the church's deacons to fulfil their

ministry. I am totally confident that I can trust our parish and community to allow Julie to minister to us as a deacon and trust that we will be caring, compassionate and generous in ministering to her. I look forward, in a year's time, to writing about Julie being ordained priest. But that is another story. Do get to know Julie, invite her to your homes and welcome her into our midst. For we remember the words of Christ: 'I come among you, not as one to be served but as one who serves'.

*Brian Leathard*

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These are just a few words of introduction, so that you know a little about me before I arrive in July. I was born and brought up on the Welsh border. I love returning to that part of the world when I can to see family. I went to school in Hereford itself, and after taking my A-levels I trained to be secretary and worked locally for twelve months.

Then I went to Durham University to read theology on the advice of the curate, who thought I might enjoy the subject. He was right, because having completed my B.A., I stayed for a further year to do a Masters degree. I had a great affection for the city, which was quite a significant factor in my decision there. Going into the cathedral still gives me a "holy tingle".

I left Durham to begin my ordination training at Westcott House in Cambridge. I have been researching a Ph.D. as part of my formation. It is on memory and the Eucharist and focuses on contemporary Anglican theology - including Rowan Williams' contribution to that area. I have spent two of my four years in Cambridge living at Selwyn College, where I acted as a chaplain's assistant. I've also had the opportunity to spend two months working with children at a special school and on an adult psychiatric ward.

In my spare time I enjoy reading novels or poetry, cooking with friends and listening to a range of music. Being in Cambridge has also allowed me to pursue other interests from film and theatre to swimming as well as the delights of punting and croquet! I have just acquired a new bicycle, and am glad to know that I'll be able to carry on using that in Hampton Hill.

I am very much looking forward to beginning my curacy at St. James', and to having the opportunity to learn and work with you. Obviously, that sense of anticipation is bound up with feelings of trepidation and uncertainty. That's only natural at a point of transition. Starting my ministry with you and Brian is indeed a new beginning for me, but it is also the culmination of seeking to discern God's will over several years. As I prepare to leave Cambridge to join you, the verse from 1 Thessalonians 5 which is inscribed upon the chapel bell at Westcott is foremost in my mind: 'The one who calls is faithful'. I hope that the next few weeks and months we will know something of that assurance.

*Julie Gittoes*

## **G. S. KEATES, High Street, Hampton Hill**

Benjamin Franklin was surely right in his claim that "In this world nothing can be said to be certain except death and taxes". That was way back in 1789. And it still remains true today, although taxes are perhaps less certain. G. S. Keates, funeral directors, has been in our High Street for well over 100 years. It is the only and longest established family-owned funeral director in the Borough of Richmond. The original family firm served our community for over 50 years until it was sold to another local firm, Lock's which continued with the name and with the buildings including the workshops and stables at the back of the High Street. Lodge Brothers supplied coffins to Lock's and when Lock's looked to sell the firm, some 30 years ago, Lodge Brothers were happy to establish a presence in Hampton Hill and so it has remained. The horses and the workshops have gone, but that same family-run site, with funeral directors living and working on the site, is an important part of the personal and professional service which Quentin and Caroline Edgington offer on behalf of the Lodge Brothers. Quentin and Caroline with their children, Sam and Lucy, have lived literally "over the shop" for the last five years and they both hold the diploma from the Institute of Funeral Directors.

Talking with Quentin and Caroline it is immediately obvious that they hugely enjoy their jobs. Caroline is largely based in the office and is involved with the first and ongoing contact with bereaved families, while Quentin conducts funeral services at a variety of crematoriums and cemeteries in our area and beyond. About 85% of funerals are now cremations but there is a wide range of alternatives available: burial at sea, woodland burials (the nearest opportunities being at Brighton, Gerards Cross and Oxford) to name but a few. When Quentin and Caroline moved to Hampton Hill they had separately had careers in accounts and as a music teacher but felt that funeral directing was something which was worthwhile, valuable and needed both personal and professional skills. They certainly offer empathy and great care as Quentin remarks: 'It is very rarely we get complaints - from the living!'. Many people think it is something of a conversation stopper to meet an undertaker, others seem to be excited by the more goulish and perverse aspects of the work but for Mr. and Mrs. Edgington the important thing is to remember that "You only have one chance: from a hymn tune to the colour of some flowers, you can't do it again" and while they clearly carry the can they are dependent upon so many other people and uncontrollable factors such as the weather.

Caroline says how rewarding and fulfilling her work is if you accept that the skill is in dealing with people at a time of great confusion, turbulence and pain. Both Quentin and Caroline agree that it can be very fulfilling to be involved with the end of a life for someone who has lived for, say, 80 years or more but dealing with untimely death can be very distressing and traumatising, as recent local events have shown. Equally, customers have their own ideas about what they want to happen at funerals. Again, Caroline says: 'You'd be surprised how often people say something like 'You'll think I'm crazy but', while in fact I have come to learn there is no such thing as 'crazy'.

People are just individuals and the smallest thing can make their day. Recently a mourner asked me if it would be all right to place a cream cake in the coffin and they were ecstatic when we consented to put a cream horn alongside the deceased'. Both Quentin and Caroline, as well as their children, hugely enjoy living in Hampton Hill although they do, like other traders in our High Street, report that trade has been severely hit by out-of-town shopping.

As to the future, given the fact that Benjamin Franklin was undoubtedly correct, what do the professionals see as the developments in caring for the dead? Certainly more choice think Quentin and Caroline. A funeral supermarket has opened in Lewisham where you can literally go to the shelves to pick and choose your own variety but most people probably don't want to get that involved. Certainly woodland burials, more environmentally friendly coffins and probably smaller funerals with more atomised families will be the order of the day. However, we do have to continue to care for the practical needs of the dead and the emotional needs of the living. One way in which this is increasingly happening is through pre-paid funerals where anyone can arrange their own funeral and pay for it and there is no further charge at the time of death. But with caring and dedicated professionals in the High Street we are well served in meeting both the needs of the dead and those who mourn.

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### ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD IN THE MAY SPIRE

*Across:*

- 1. Alleluia
- 7. Allah
- 8. Black Mass
- 9. Owl
- 10. Thee
- 11. Belief
- 13. Bestow
- 14. Statue
- 17. Bishop
- 18. Crop
- 20. Ova
- 22. Incarnate
- 23. Run Up
- 24. Psalmody

*Down:*

- 1. Abbot
- 2. Leaders
- 3. Luke
- 4. Images
- 5. Aloof
- 6. Chalice
- 7. Assists
- 12. Worship
- 13. Bigotry
- 15. Tornado
- 16. Voices
- 17. Banns
- 19. Piety
- 21. Oral

## PATRONAL FESTIVAL

SUNDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> MAY

Family Communion at 11a.m.  
Preacher: the Bishop of Kensington

followed by lunch and sponsored Beating the Bounds

# 'The love I carry inside me'

Like most people who live in Limete, an area in the centre of Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Therese Atatu has not had an easy life. Now 63, Therese has brought up 14 children, all of whom were born in military camps when her late husband was a serving soldier. Yet although she has reached an age where most of us would be looking forward to taking things more gently, Therese has turned her energies to bringing up an even greater number of grandchildren.

Among Therese's extended family is her daughter-in-law Josephine, who came to live with her after her husband died of AIDS five years ago. Josephine is herself HIV-positive as is her son Junior, who is 16 but looks about half that age. Although Josephine also comes from a different tribe, Therese refused to follow the usual custom of rejecting her son's widow. On the contrary, Therese decided she would take in all her grandchildren in Kinshasa who have lost one or both parents to AIDS. She reckons that she has brought up or is bringing up a total of 18 grandchildren! Besides that, she is involved in her local church, taking part in their work of distributing food to

the poorest people in the capital.

Josephine receives support from one of Christian Aid's partners in Kinshasa, Fondation Femme Plus, who offer help with health care, psychological counselling and income generation to women who are HIV-positive. They also organise seminars for people like Therese who are caring for family members living with HIV/AIDS.

Therese's grandchildren know that their grandmother is a very special person. Eleven-year-old Gloria explained: 'When we're naughty she scolds us but she never smacks us. She tells us we won't have anything to eat as a punishment but she soon calls us to come and eat after all. We love her very much'. Seven-year-old Dorcas said simply, 'I love her, she cuddles me'.

When Therese was asked what motivated her to devote herself so unstintingly to caring for her family she replied: 'It's the love that I carry inside me. I can't abandon the grandchildren or my daughter-in-law - where would they go? It's much better to have them with me. Since I was young, giving is all I've known how to do. My Christian faith helps me to live and builds up feelings of love within me.'



**Therese Atatu cares for her grandchildren and her daughter-in-law, Josephine, who is HIV-positive. Therese's faith and the prayers of those close to her give her comfort and support**

*This year Christian Aid Week focussed on ordinary people like Therese who are changing the lives of people around them, some of them from the UK, others from overseas. You can join them and help change the world through your gifts and your prayers.*

**'How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?' (1 John 3.17)**

**Christian  Aid**  
**We believe in life before death**

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*Many thanks to Margaret Taylor for once again organising our Christian Aid collection, to Brian and Ramani and their team for the supper and to all who helped with Christian Aid Week in any way. This year's total will be announced in the next edition of the Spire.*

## REVIEW OF CHURCH MUSIC

The Review of Parish Music conducted by Huw Williams on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2001 advised making use of all available musical talents and seeking to adopt a wide variety of musical styles. That review began to set our style of music, which then grew in accordance with our Parish Mission that was developed subsequently. It addressed two key aspects of the Parish Mission: outreach, to attract people towards the Word of God; and nurture, to help people to grow closer to God.



On 1<sup>st</sup> March 2003, we held a further review of our Parish music and its relationship to our mission. Thirty people spent their Saturday morning focussed on music in the life of the parish. The initial small group discussion was about what musical and what non-musical experience had been inspirational during the last year, and what is the purpose of music in worship.



Chris Hodges reviewed our musical activity in the last year, based on a paper that he has produced reviewing our music policy. It is very clear that there has been considerable growth and diversification in our music, nurtured by the considerable talents of a number of musicians who have worked very hard to stimulate the development of music in the parish as part of worship. The growth of the choir, the development of the children's choir, the blossoming of the Travellers, the performances of many styles of music in church, and the concerts and recitals, as well as the music as part of services, has greatly increased the breadth of music at St. James'. This process continues and has been supported strongly and sustained by the Music Committee's members, who have acted both as performers and leaders. Chris Hodges, Martin Hinckley and Christopher Cromar have all provided enormous musical talent and a spectrum of directions to the use of music in worship.



Christopher Cromar discussed the role of improvisation in worship, with illustrations, reflecting that this is a form of musicianship practised by all the great composers, and something that provides continuity linking the musical and spiritual themes of the service and joining up its parts to make it a seamless experience.



Martin Hinckley drew together the themes, ideas and musical principles that he had used in used in composing a new setting of the music for the Eucharist for St. James'.

He has written about these in more detail in the Spire in articles published from January to April 2003. It was very clear that these settings have considerable spiritual and symbolic depths as well as their musical beauty. We listened to excerpts and to Martin's explanation of their meaning, and then sang them.

The last part of the review was spent in group discussion of the questions of whether our music has met our aims in the Mission Action Plan and how can we meet them better. This was followed by asking how can we progress together in breadth of musical style in worship, and finally and more personally, how can music deepen our sense of worship. Discussion was lively and open. Though many of the participants are involved in music and enjoy it, many diverse opinions were expressed, yet there were many similar views occurring in the individual groups.



The main **conclusions** and the way ahead were seen to be:

1. For most people some music is an important part of worship, whether it be from just enjoying singing the hymns, to feeling that the music added greatly to the spirituality of worship.
2. There were some who thought that there was too little music and some too much, some valued silence, others found that music - in a style and volume to their taste - greatly enhanced their experience. There were some who liked the traditional old favourites and others who liked something new and different.
3. It was very clear that there was a great diversity of taste for style, quantity and prominence of music in worship and in the church generally.
4. There was also recognition that music does contribute to spirituality of worship and is furthering our Mission Action Plan.



It was accepted that we cannot please all of the people all of the time, but we can aim to please as many as possible as much of the time as we can, by taking the following **actions**:

- having as much diversity as possible in music, and therefore as much choice as possible for all the congregation and the parish,
- encouraging tolerance, sympathy and listening, in order to understand each other's tastes and styles as part of worship and of our mission, and how music can enhance faith,
- cultivating and using all the talents that are available to us, of every sort, whatever they are.

*Rodney Taylor*



## THE PERILS OF BEING A CHURCHWARDEN!

*We welcome Liz Butler as our new churchwarden but hope that she does not suffer the same problems as Meg Gale of Reading who wrote to the national press recently:*



Sir, Two weeks ago letters from British Gas to four different gentlemen, all unknown to me, arrived correctly addressed to my home. Two days later, another four letters arrived, correctly addressed, for a further four gentlemen.

Concerned for my reputation as churchwarden lest it appear that I am living with eight different

gentlemen, I contacted

British Gas. I was reassured that the problem in its database had been

identified and corrected. The conversation concluded

amicably with the suggestion from them that all that remained was for the parish to pray for its errant churchwarden.

Last Saturday, letters arrived for another 12 gentlemen.

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## FROM THE APRIL REGISTERS

### Funerals

2	Winifred Hoare, John Collin House, Suttong Lane	83
3	Olive Mabel Aplin, 13 Bayleaf Close, Hampton Hill	79
7	Evelyn Payne, 6 Queens House, Little Queens Road, Teddington	78
25	Iris Stewart, 120A High Street, Hampton Hill	82

### Wedding

5	Paul Shenton and Anne Herod
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We would like to thank Brian for all his hard work over the Easter period and in particular for the 3-hour service. The meditations gave us much to think about.

At the time of writing, Megan Parry and David Nunn are still in hospital. Please remember them and their families in your prayers. Please remember also all our young people who are taking exams.

Congratulations to Caroline and Martin Young on the birth of

Erin, a sister for Aneurin, Morgan and Stella.

Christopher Cromar has been appointed organist at a church in Aldgate. We thank him for his time with us and welcome our new organist, Gavin Milmer. We shall also shortly be welcoming Julie Gittoes as our deacon. Julie has written introducing herself elsewhere in this edition of the Spire.

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## DATES TO NOTE IN JUNE

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| 1  | <b>7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter</b> (Sunday after Ascension Day)   |
| 3  | The Martyrs of Uganda 1886 and 1978   |
| 5  | Bonnyface, Bishop and Martyr, Apostle to Germany, 754   |
| 6  | Ini Kopuria, founder of the Melanesium brotherhood, 1945  |
| 7  | 5p.m. Church Choir sings choral evensong at Charterhouse, City of London  |
| 8  | <b>Pentecost</b> (Whitsunday)   |
| 9  | Columba, Abbott of Iona, 597  |
| 11 | Barnabas, the Apostle   |
| 14 | Richard Baxter, Puritan, 1691   |
| 15 | <b>Trinity Sunday</b>   |
| 16 | Richard Bishop of Chichester, 1253  |
| 17 | Annual visitation at St. James' (this is the service at which churchwardens are sworn into their office. All welcome) |
| 18 | Bernard Mizeki, Apostle of the Shona, Martyr, 1896  |
| 19 | Day of Thanksgiving for Holy Communion (Corpus Christi)   |
| 22 | <b>First Sunday after Trinity</b>   |
| 23 | Etheldreda, abbess of Ely, 678  |
| 24 | The birth of John the Baptist   |
| 28 | Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, Teacher, 200   |
| 29 | <b>Peter and Paul</b> , Apostles  |

**COPY DATE FOR JULY MAGAZINE: 10<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**