

I have just read *Miss Garnet's Angel*, a wonderfully evocative novel by Salley Vickers, which is a rich and complex exploration of faith. The death of a close friend leaves Julia Garnet with 'a hole in the fabric of things'. She goes to Venice where her values and assumptions are challenged. Her personal journey confronts her with love and loneliness, her own limitations and the ambiguities of human relationships. There are revelations, losses and reconciliation as Miss Garnet's story is woven together with angelic encounters. Her journey from cool, isolating certainties towards the mystery of faith begins with the feast of Epiphany. We too are moving on from that festival, to begin a time of challenge and transition in the Church's year.

On 2 February we celebrate Candlemas, which is the climax of the season of Christmas and Epiphany. It is a feast of light. Luke tells the story of Mary and Joseph presenting Christ in the Temple. The family meet Simeon and Anna, who have dedicated their lives to God and serve Him in that holy place. In the infant Christ they perceive God's revelation, their expectations and hopes have been fulfilled. Simeon declares: 'my eyes have seen your salvation . . . a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel'. Anna gives thanks for this revelation to all who sought redemption in Jerusalem. God's purpose in drawing all people to Himself comes to fulfilment. We are to rejoice with them as the love and light of Christ is revealed in the world.

Candlemas is also a turning point in the Christian year. There is a darker side to this episode, which directs our thoughts towards Christ's Passion. Mary was the first to hear the good news; she nurtures the Christ-child; she ponders the sayings of shepherds and wise men in her heart. When Simeon tells her that 'a sword will pierce your own soul too', Mary becomes the first to face the anguish and pain of the Incarnation. His words are a poignant indicator of the suffering that Christ will endure.

Ash Wednesday falls on 25 February, marking the beginning of Lent: a time for spiritual growth, reflection and preparation. The observance of the season of Lent originates in the preparation of candidates for Baptism, at a time when the sacrament of initiation was only administered at Easter. However, the Church realised that such a time of preparation for Holy Week and Easter, including fasting and almsgiving, was beneficial to all Christians. The Ash Wednesday liturgy confronts us with our own vulnerability and mortality: we receive the sign of the cross in ash; we hear the words, you are dust, to dust you shall return. We also reflect on Christ's time in the wilderness. The wilderness belongs to us too. It is part of our human experience of loss, isolation and self-doubt. It acknowledges the temptations that surround us: the ordinary feelings of being inattentive to those things that really matter, or being preoccupied with self, of being uncharitable.

The feast of Candlemas is a place of meeting. The light of Christ radiates out to us. Ash Wednesday is also a place of encounter. The humanity of Christ connects with our frailty. Together, these festivals offer us the consolation that even in the darkness

Christ's light reaches us. It transforms us, and gives us hope, as we contemplate those things that unsettle us, entrap us or hurt us. We are given permission to face those things honestly in the context of God's love, which will ultimately banish all darkness. It gives us courage to wrestle with the complexity of life so that we may, like Miss Garnet, become more fully the people God calls us to be.

Julie Gittoes

What now for 3rd Hampton Hill Brownies?

Last month you will remember I wrote about saying goodbye to Angela, my loyal and long serving Tawny Owl and of course this means we now have to consider her replacement. Having worked together for the last 18 years I feel that now would be a good time to hand over the reins to new blood and have decided to step down as Brown Owl at the end of this school year. In the meantime Ian, my husband, is going to act as my second registered adult along with the valuable assistance of the Brownie parents.

As you will have guessed by now the Brownies are looking for a new Brown Owl - could you be the person we are looking for? Although the meetings are only an hour and a quarter in length, the planning, organising and extra activities can add to this commitment but it is well worth it.

If you feel you might consider joining the Guiding movement and want to find out more. Please come along between 6.00 - 7.15 pm one Tuesday evening to meet the girls and see what we have to offer.

Please don't let 3rd Hampton Hill Brownies go the way of other packs in the area - it has been my life for so long I could not bear the thought of it closing - you wouldn't want that to happen either - WOULD YOU?

Lesley, Brown Owl

For more information, or to speak to Lesley personally please ring Brian or Julie.

Ash Wednesday - a gift from our cathedral

25 February 2004

from 10am at St Paul's Cathedral

Teaching from the London Bishops

Eucharist at 12.30pm and 5pm

**Perhaps a short visit during the working day
or a special "quiet" day out in London**

REVIEW

A Good Read - Till We Have Faces by C S Lewis

I must confess that I am not entirely comfortable with some of C S Lewis's books. He is a superb story teller, his gift for a gripping narrative whether in children's fiction or in his adult fantasies like *Perelandra* and the rest of the *Cosmic Trilogy* is wonderful. I can re-read them and still be caught up in the excitement even though I know the endings. But there is nearly always at least a tinge of evangelism in them, which sometimes I feel gets out of hand. One knows what to expect in the *Screwtape Letters* and *Mere Christianity*, and although the message may jar a bit, they are acceptable as honest Christian polemic. In his fiction, however, the message is sometimes obtrusive; Aslan's death, for instance, makes me cringe instead of cry.

With that said, I can praise "*Till We Have Faces*" on my own account with absolutely no reservations. I believe this short and exciting tale to be one of the most helpful books I have read. Like all C S Lewis's fiction, it is gripping and exciting. To give a summary of the plot, with its wonderful climax at the end, would spoil it for anyone who has not read it. But on the way Lewis illuminates gently and unobtrusively; one feels that instead of being force-fed with his dogma, as the narrative unfolds he is sharing his own insights into some of most intractable problems of belief. The classical conundrum of the problem of pain, if there is a loving, omnipotent God, is not solved; but there is a hint of understanding in so far as this is possible. There is also a very well-mannered but devastating put-down of the arrogance of science. The good manners are Lewis's, the devastation is in the mouth of a terrifying old pagan priest who is demanding a human sacrifice. Science is in the mouth of a very attractive character, a wise Greek slave who is desperate to save an innocent girl from a ghastly death. The Greek makes the mistake of trying some logic-chopping with the priest. The priest replies: "Holy places are dark places . . . Holy wisdom is not clear and thin like water, but thick and dark like blood". One wonders what the priest's comment would be on the diligent, clever people who try to solve the ultimate mystery of human consciousness by programming silicon chips. However, all the mysteries aside, even if you don't want to be bothered by such questions, the book is a splendid read, with a most satisfying ending.

Dick Wilde

PARISH QUIET DAY

Saturday 7 February 2004 - Brooke Place Chobham 10.30 - 3.30

To be led by The Revd. Dr. Christopher Cunliffe. Do take the opportunity to step back and take a quiet day for yourself. Bring a packed lunch. Refreshments will be provided. Transport can be shared. Do sign up on the list in church.



St. James's Chronicles

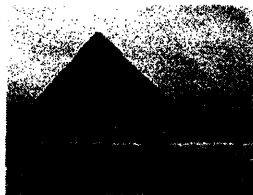
The Hampton Hill Parish Magazine 1904 Extracts from the February Issue

MY DEAR FRIENDS,



There are always many annual functions to refer to at this time of year. These have been following each other in rapid succession lately. In Christmas week we had the Mothers' Supper at the Schools. More than usual were present, and a very pleasant evening was spent. Many kind friends helped in dispensing the supper, and in the entertainment afterwards. Warm thanks were given to the ladies who conduct the meetings, viz: Mrs. FitzWygram, Miss Butler (who also kindly arranged the programme), - Miss Barnard and Miss Hemery.

The Sunday School prizes were distributed on Tuesday, the 12th ult. The School Room was quite full of children. Miss Kidner, Superintendent of the girls, handed the prizes to the girls, and Mrs. Griffiths those to the boys. Nearly all the teachers were present, which did much to secure the excellent behaviour of the children. A Magic Lantern Exhibition was given illustrating the marvellous buildings of Egypt. The usual oranges and buns concluded the proceedings.



A Temperance Meeting was held at the Mission Room on the 18th ult., when there was a very good attendance, and an earnest practical address was given by Mr. Gibb of Teddington. The next Meeting will be at the Schools on Monday, the 8th inst., when the editor of our magazine, Mr. Sherlock, will give an account of how a magazine is produced, illustrated with lantern pictures. Mr. Sherlock will also introduce some "purple patches" on temperance. The Meeting will be public and free.

Many of you are already aware that I hope very shortly to pay a visit to Palestine and Egypt. I have been asked by the Directors of the Orient Shipping Company to give a series of lectures on places in the Holy Land to be visited by the passengers on board the "Cuzco," which is to sail from London on February 9th. This unexpected opportunity to visit scenes more interesting than any others in the world I felt bound to embrace. I shall be sorry to be away in Lent, but I can leave the work in the hands of Mr. Phillips without misgiving, and I shall try to arrange for him to have as much help as possible on the Sundays. I hope to be back for Good Friday and Easter Sunday. As I shall have a further opportunity of addressing you before I go, I will not say more about this now.

I am, my dear friends, Yours very sincerely,

CHARLES R. JOB.

DEFINITIONS DESIRED *by an Insulted parishioner*

One reply:- I do not know why anyone should have difficulty with these words. The meanings are all pretty obvious I would have thought.

Faculty: Skill at finding the place in a new service book.

Terrier: Church abbreviations for "terrifier". A special instrument used in some churches to discipline the choirboys.

Epiclesis: Sometimes used after the terrier. From the Greek: "Epi", outside, and "clesis", with a clip round the ear.

Pyx: Specially consecrated instruments to open church collection boxes where the keys have been lost.

Chasuble: Not much used nowadays. A priest's hair shirt. Contraction of "chastity trouble".

DAC: Abbreviation of the French "d'accord": "We agree with absolutely everything you want and suggest!". A word very frequently used by visiting diocesan officers.

Curtilage: A special vestment for stout women priests which has a short skirt but is otherwise very big. See Scots "Cutty Sark".

Ecumenical: About chaps who are European Currency Union enthusiasts. I feel it is irreverent to include this secular word in this holy list.

Aumbrey or ambry: A yellow warning light that comes on at the lectern if the intercessions go on too long.

Corporal: A church officer who has a dispensation from the bishop to use the terrier. He may use epiclesis only if he has written authority from the organist.

I can't believe you magazine people should think we didn't know all this.

THE REAL DEFINITIONS - Faculty - A legal permission granted by the Chancellor of the diocese sitting in Consistory Court. This may be on any matter relating to the church or churchyard, building and contents. For example, the West Porch redevelopment awaits the grant of a Faculty before we can begin.

Terrier - A substantial document describing the church grounds, building and contents. From the french 'terre', a kind of index to everything 'on the ground' in the church. Kept by the churchwardens and available for anyone to consult.

Epiclesis - Part of the eucharistic prayer used at every service of Holy Communion in which we pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit. We usually hear the epiclesis in the words . . . send down O Lord, your Holy Spirit upon your people. . .

Pyx - A small metal container in which the consecrated hosts are taken to those receiving Holy Communion at home or in hospital.

Chasuble - The outer garment worn by the priest at Holy Communion. Chasubles come in all shapes, sizes and designs. Colours vary according to the church's year.

DAC - The Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches. This statutory body gives advice to parishes and makes recommendations to the Chancellor as to whether to grant a faculty for work to churches and consecrated ground.

Curtilage - The area of land surrounding a parish church. The land is consecrated and technically, along with the church, belongs to the incumbent.

Ecumenical - Nowadays taken to mean relations between churches of differing traditions. So the ecumenical body locally is Churches Together in Hampton. Its origins lie in a Greek word meaning the known world.

Aumbrey - The safe-like cupboard, often built into the wall of a church, where the reserved sacrament is kept.

Corporal - a white cloth upon which the elements of bread and wine are placed for consecration during Holy Communion. The word comes from the Latin meaning a body cloth. Thanks to those who launder and starch all our altar cloths week by week!

CUBA COAST TO COAST BIKEAWAY

Simon Webb of Holly Road, decided as a blind athlete, to accept the challenge of the recent Cuba Coast to Coast Bikeaway to raise funds for the disability charity Scope. Here are some highlights from his diary.

My former rowing coach Gus used to front ride the tandem with me and I thought he might just be mad enough to want to come with me. He jumped at the chance and as he knows bikes inside out I was able to leave all the mechanical stuff to him. So on Saturday 1st November at some unearthly hour of the morning I joined a group of forty odd strangers at the Iberia check in at Heathrow. We arrived in Havana on Saturday evening - our tandem did not. Sunday 2nd November - Cubans do things their way and at their own speed. When you are stuck at an airport waiting for them to find something there is no way they will be hurried. By the time the fluorescent orange bike bags appeared on the conveyer belt, we must have been the only people left in the airport.

As well as the riders there was the Tour Leader plus two staff members from Scope. There were also four Cuban guides riding with us, an English speaking doctor and bike mechanics armed with two way radios (no mobile phone signals outside Havana). We had support vehicles to carry our luggage, spare bikes, water and lunch. One guide was in the lead in front of the group, another in the rear behind the last cyclist. The doctor roamed in between the two keeping a professional eye on us all.

Monday Day 1 - The 68km ride was problem free until the final stage to Matanzas when fatigue started to kick in. I was in bed by quarter to nine.

Tuesday Day 2 - My legs were really hurting and I wasn't looking forward to the long stretch of 'off road' that faced us before lunch. This was a 12 km stretch of unmade road with more than enough potholes, fringed with pineapple plantations.

From lunchtime onwards the tandem really came into its own. Our party piece was put into action when we carved our way through a field in much the same way as would a Formula One driver to complete the 64kms of the days' ride. Tuesday's hotel at Santa Clara was the most unique of all those we stayed at. The major headache was the hot water lottery. There was no rhyme or reason to the hot water distribution and a cold shower at night didn't automatically mean things would be better in the morning. One night the water was so cold it was impossible to stand under it for more than a few seconds at a time. The following morning it was so hot it would burn you.

Wednesday Day 3 - This was to be make or break day. It was advertised as a long stretch of around 84 kms. Described as the Cuban Motorway it was the best surface we would find all week with considerable parts of it downhill. The speed-reader on the bike was averaging over 40 kms an hour, which is just under 30 miles per hour. That wasn't our record speed though. On Day One just before lunch we found a straight strip of tarmac going down hill and the speed-reader passed the 50 mark.

There is something immensely satisfying about flying past other cyclists, especially those more experienced than myself, which was most of them. We were up with the big boys at the front and the group was fairly bunched together, with our Cuban guide Nobby in the lead. We decided to put on a burst of speed to the next scheduled water stop and left most of them trailing behind us. From that moment on, the tandem was a force to reckon with. The total distance that day was about 103 kms. and we spent the night in a hotel at the entrance to the Bay of Clenfuegos. Thursday Day 4 - The riding was tough, much harder than before. The morning took us through landscape, which according to Gus looked like Cumbria apart from the palm trees and sugar cane. One of our water stops was on a road with grapefruit trees either side. I have never liked grapefruit, but eating one from a tree is a different story altogether and certainly beats juice from a carton. The sun was likely to prove the undoing of a good number of the pack when it came to the big hill climb, so there was relief when a thunderstorm began just as we started the climb.

The final day was exciting. Unfortunately the road was not of the same standard as the ones we had encountered earlier in the week. Having done about 40 km we were to cycle the final twenty in two stages. The first fifteen at our own pace, after which everyone was to reassemble for the final five so that we finished all together. It is a tradition on these trips that certain people are asked to lead the party into the final stop and what a surprise! The tandem is required to perform this role. One of the reasons I wanted to go on a trip like this, apart from the obvious, is that it is important that people with disabilities integrate with able bodied people at every possible opportunity, something that Scope is trying to achieve.

My personal target of £2,600 was exceeded. In fact the amount raised was not far short of £5,000, so thank you for helping me raise so much money for Scope and enabling me to have such fun in the process.

Simon

For more information on Scope go to scope.org.uk

Christian Aid
We believe in life before death

in South West London

**Saturday 6th March 2004 in the Church Hall
St James' Road, Hampton Hill**

Aid, Trade and Cambodia

Join us in exploring how our campaigning in the UK and our support for communities abroad can make the world a more sharing place for everyone

Speaker: Justin Macmullan, Campaigns Policy Officer

WINE AND CHEESE PARTY

St James' Church Hall

Friday 13th February 8 - 10 pm

Don't let the February blues get you down! Come to a wine and cheese party to meet your friends and celebrate the success of planned giving. Open to all. Please reply to Brian if possible or just turn up. If you need a babysitter or lift on the night let Griselda know.

RSVP bleathard@blueyonder.co.uk 020 8979 2069

LATEST ON "OPENING THE DOORS."

1 - The PCC has formerly accepted the revised tender from the contractor DNL Ltd. and has authorised the architects Carden & Godrey to draw up a contract based on this tender.

2 - We are just about to send in the application to the DAC for a faculty. This is permission to go ahead. Hopefully this should be with us by early February.

3 - This week (mid January) we are expecting the architect and the contractor to visit the site. A photograph will be taken so that we can have a record for the archive, something to show soon on a board in the church and put on our website.

All in all, it is exciting and gives a sense of really moving forward.

Liz Butler

THE UPPER ROOM

The Upper Room is a community project founded on the Christian imperative to love and support our neighbour. It seeks to meet the social needs of the local poor, needy and disadvantaged by providing practical help, supporting guests' personal development and enabling their voice to be heard.

The project is based at St Saviour's with St Mary's Church in Hammersmith, in our own Kensington Area of the London Diocese. It provides food, clothing, personal hygiene services, adult literacy education, counselling, hospitality and friendship. Grants from trusts and charitable funds are augmented by local fund-raising, which is why donations from churches are so important. For three years now, St James has given £1000 from Christmas service collections.

On **Sunday 15 February** you will have a chance to hear more about The Upper Room from Revd David Matthews. Do please come along to hear him preach and to talk with him after the service.

Ann Peterken



Lifeboats
Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Race Night (with jockeys and wooden horses not video) at NPL Sports and Social Club, Teddington on Saturday 28 February at 7.30. Tickets £10 to include basket meal and sweet. We are also looking for sponsorship for races and horses!



WHAT ARE YOUR INTENTIONS?

Our vicar recently enrolled in the new health club built on the former Fulwell Golf Club grounds. When he attended his "personal assessment session" he was rather surprised to be asked by a charming young fitness instructor "What are your intentions?". Not to be outdone he replied: "A little exercise and lots of gentle relaxation, preferably in that order". Actually the poor girl meant did

he intend to lose a stone or beefen up his biceps. While enjoying the surroundings of this very plush new establishment, our vicar also indulged in some swimming in the splendid pool and the even more splendid hydrotherapy suite. It was while changing back into his normal attire that he was having a conversation in the Gents changing room with a man in a locker close by. After a perfectly normal conversation while putting on socks and underwear the poor man's eyes opened ever wider when the vicar put on not only a black shirt but then slipped in a dog collar. BL: ". . . ." HE: "." "Father", explained the conversationalist, "You might at least have warned me and put a dog collar on your swimming trunks!".

We are still mindful of our older friends in Nursing Homes - Margaret Bramall and Louise Wilder. Margaret Leatherdale is at home, but frail.

A great 'thank you' to Annie Crawford and Mike House for organising the crib and the Christmas tree. They were ably assisted by their daughter Alix and we all enjoyed the results during the Christmas celebrations.

You may have noticed that the clock on the Spire, having had a thorough service is now showing exactly the right time!

At Christmas we were delighted to have the company of so many children in church. It is always a pleasure to see them at festivals and Sunday by Sunday during the year. They are welcome members of our St James family.

Don't forget to send to Brian, Susan Horner, or Margaret Taylor, a review of anything that you have enjoyed - book, theatre, or holiday. Or tell us about something you haven't enjoyed!

LENT 2004 - ASH WEDNESDAY, the beginning of Lent is on February 25th. There will be Morning Prayer at 0915 and Parish Communion with The Imposition of Ashes at 2000. We hope that the church will be open each weekday in Lent from 0900 until 1200 (Volunteers please).

We shall have Lent Groups meeting weekly during Lent using as a basis for thought and prayer the Lent Book 'Jesus Opening Our Hearts'. This book can be used equally by individuals at home each day and for weekly groups. All details available in church.

FROM THE DECEMBER REGISTERS

Baptisms

14 Lucy Nicole Morris, Teddington
Alexandra Rose Cook, Hampton

Funerals

2	William Smith, Teddington	81
8	Geraldine Hodgson, Hampton	86
15	Alan Gordon Walker, Hampton	74
17	Sheila Beatrice Burnell	65
18	John Edward Clifford Fisher, Hampton Hill	87

DATES TO NOTE FEBRUARY

1	The presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas tr)	
	09.30 All Age Communion	
	18.30 Choral Evensong with Concordia Voices	
5	14.00 Holy Communion	
7	10.00am to 3.30pm Parish Quiet Day at Brook Place, Chobham.	
	All welcome.	
8	Third Sunday before Lent	08.00 Holy Communion 09.30 Parish Communion
13	20.00 Stewardship Event in Church Hall	
15	Second Sunday before Lent	08.00 Holy Communion 09.30 Parish Communion
17	Janani Luwum, archbishop of Uganda and martyr 1977	
22	Sunday next before Lent	08.00 Holy Communion 09.30 Parish Communion
24	Shrove Tuesday	
25	Ash Wednesday	
	20.00 Parish Communion and imposition of ashes	