

MARCH 2010

# The Spire

## INSIDE:

A mother's muse

One family, four generations

Always prepared

3rd Hampton Hill Scouts

## Palm Sunday

Reflect, refresh, renew - prepare for Easter



# The Spire

St James's Church  
Registered Charity No 1129286

This Spire is produced nine times a year on behalf of the PCC of St James's Church.

We make no charge for this magazine but hope that you will contribute towards the production costs, enabling us to expand our important outreach across the parish.

If you are a regular reader please consider making an annual donation. Cheques should be made payable to 'The PCC of St James' and sent to Spire Appeal c/o the Parish Office.

Thank you.

## GET IN TOUCH

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### NEXT ISSUE/COPY DEADLINE

The full colour April/May Easter issue is published on Sunday 28 March. All copy must be with us by **Monday 8 March**.

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When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

# WELCOME

## March 2010



As I walked through the churchyard after a recent Spire meeting my spirits were lifted by the carpets of snowdrops, a few crocuses and hellebores in bloom, and even a *Peace* rose near the vestry. Spring is definitely on the way and we are looking forward to the preparations for Easter.

This month we feature our Scout troop, and a thoughtful account of family life through the ages for Mothering Sunday

Last year we reviewed the distribution of *The Spire* and as a result you may have noticed our presence in the High Street. Copies fly off the shelves at the Post Office and library and the response has been fantastic — outreach at its best.

This year we have been asked by the Bishop of London to 'shrink our carbon footprint' by reducing energy consumption by 10%. This is a tall order, especially after the recent very cold weather, but this month's Eco tip is one way to help.

Best wishes

*Janet*

Janet Nunn, editor

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For the latest news: [www.stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk](http://www.stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk)

## Easter at St James's

### Sundays

8am: Holy Communion

9.30am: Parish Communion

### Mondays-Fridays (but not Tuesdays)

9.15am Morning Prayer

### Tuesdays

9.30am Holy Communion

### 1st Wednesday in Month

3 March

7am Commuter Communion

### 1st Thursday in Month

4 March

2pm Holy Communion

### 7 March — Third Sunday of Lent

9.30am All-age Communion

Isaiah 55.1-9; 1 Corinthians 10.1-13; Luke 13.1-9

8pm Compline

### 14 March — Fourth Sunday of Lent

Mothering Sunday

8am: Joshua 5.9-12; 2 Corinthians 5.16-end;

Luke 15.1-3, 11b-end

10am: Colossians 3.12-17

John 19.25b-27

8pm: Compline

### 21 March — Fifth Sunday of Lent

Isaiah 43.16-21; Philippians 3.4b-14;

John 12.1-8

8pm: Compline

### 28 March — Palm Sunday

9.30am: The Procession of Palms

and Parish Communion

Isaiah 50.4-9a; Philippians 2.5-11;

Luke 23.1-49

8pm: Compline

### 29 March — Monday in Holy Week

8pm Healing Eucharist

### 30 March — Tuesday in Holy Week

8pm Way of the Cross

### 31 March — Wednesday in Holy Week

7am Holy Communion

8pm Compline

### 1 April — Maundy Thursday

10.30am: Blessing of Oils and Renewal of

Ordination Vows with the Bishop of London at

St. Paul's Cathedral

8pm: Liturgy of the Lord's Supper, followed by

*Watch of Prayer* for one hour

### 2 April — Good Friday

10.30am: All-age service, followed by

hot cross buns

2pm: Good Friday Liturgy at 2pm

### 3 April — Holy Saturday

8pm Easter Liturgy

### 4 April — Easter Day

8am: Holy Communion

9.30am: Parish Communion



BST begins

## OUR CLERGY



### VICAR

**Revd Peter Vannozi**

Peter was born in Hanwell in 1962, but owes his surname to his Italian great-grandfather who came from Florence to the UK in the late 19th century.

☎ 020 8979 2069

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### CURATE

**Revd Debbie Oades**

Debbie was born in Hull in 1963 and is a self-supporting minister.

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### BAPTISM AND WEDDING ENQUIRIES

These should be made in person in church on a Saturday morning from 10-10.30am.

## PARISH OFFICE



### PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

**Kirstie Hird**

For all enquiries and hall bookings.

The office is open on Monday,

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• **Deanery Synod** Lesley Mortimer 020 8941 2345

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• **St James's Players**

• Martin Hinckley 020 8979 0528

• **Treasurer** Don Barrett 020 8979 3331

• **Theatre Club** Maria Beaumont 020 8943 4336

• **Weekly Notices/Pew Sheet**

• Kirstie Hird 020 8941 6003

### CONTACTS

• We have room only for selected contacts this issue. The full list is available online and will return in the June issue of *The Spire*.

## It's right to be a pilgrim



Lent is often described as a pilgrimage time, and this year the turn of phrase seems very appropriate for our church. In February I took members of our parish and that of Staines on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, which you will hear about from a fellow pilgrim, Jacky Cammidge, in the April/May issue of *The Spire*.

But what is a pilgrimage? Is it just a holiday to exotic places that have a religious connection, or something more? Well, a holiday for me is to go somewhere to rest and be refreshed, possibly to explore new places, to taste new foods, experience the culture and to spend time together as a family.

Holidays are such a recent thing in relation to time. Travel was strictly for the wealthy until well into the 19th century. Then, in 1841, Thomas Cook started a travel company, offering a one-day rail excursion from Leicester to Loughborough for a shilling. Cheaper, yes, but still out of reach for many. For the majority, the blessing of Sunday, the Lord's Day, was something to be very thankful for.

In contrast, the act of pilgrimage has a long history and within the Christian tradition dates back to the 2nd and 3rd centuries when Christians visited the 'Bible lands' to learn about them and to meet the small Christian communities still living there. With the conversion of Emperor Constantine to Christianity in the 4th century, the concept of holy places came to the fore. Constantine's mother, Helena, oversaw the recovery of places of Christian significance and instituted the building of large churches on these sites, in effect giving birth to the 'Holy Land'.

Unlike pilgrims in the past, for whom a pilgrimage could have taken months or even years, we have it relatively easy in that we can make use of travel companies specialising in pilgrimages. Even so, this trip has taken a year to plan and required effort and commitment by all involved. Once there, the timetable and environment are challenging.



Debbie Oades

It is possible to do the same trip as a holiday, so what makes a pilgrimage? Well, to go on a pilgrimage is to go on a journey with God. There is an intention to place God in the centre of the journey, for you and God to make this journey of discovery together. By doing so, we have to let go of our possible wants and expectations and to be prepared to give, receive and be challenged by ourselves and God in ways we may not expect. To make a pilgrimage is to submit to a journey that may take you where you do not want to go and requires trust in the God who loves us.

Such a journey will have echoes of the Israelites' journey through the wilderness, a journey which stripped away illusions and forced them to see themselves as they really were (Ex. 16.3), and that of the Via Dolorosa, Christ's path to the cross. There is a melding between the physical and inner journey and many pilgrims are surprised by what rises to the surface. Although initially this may be difficult, there is often a strong desire to give thanks. In travelling beyond our familiar surroundings, there is an element of exile, a loss of familiarity, of sufficiency, of confidence in our surroundings into a figurative, or literal, foreign soil of insufficiency. However, it is within our insufficiency that we come to see God as our sufficiency.

To make such a physical and inner pilgrimage is not dependent on the ability to travel far and wide, but it does help if we can take ourselves away from the familiar. Perhaps consider the parish Quiet Day at Alton Abbey on 13 March (see page seven) as part of a Lenten pilgrimage, or maybe go to a service you may not have experienced before, for example Morning Prayer, the Stations of the Cross or Compline, and see where they may lead. Or how about volunteering for a day at a local community initiative or charity, asking God to accompany you? If all this seems impossible, put the phone away, turn off the radio, television and computer, close the door and make a pilgrimage to time alone with God, wherever that may be for you.

## IN THOUGHT AND PRAYER

Passiflora

### A Meditation on the Passion of Christ

When I was ordained a friend of mine made for me as a gift a purple stole on which was an embroidered passion flower design.

This had clearly taken time, effort and thought. I had vague recollections about there being some linking of the flower to our Lord's Passion, but I had never really looked into it.

However, on receiving such a gift I researched into some of the meanings that have become associated with it, and which have since become a means of Lenten prayer and reflection.



The purple at the central base – Christ's sorrow at our sinfulness, and the colour of the mocking robe.

The pure white petals surrounding the bloom – Christ's purity and obedience.

The five petals and five sepals – the ten apostles (no Judas for his betrayal and no Peter for his denial).

The curling tendrils which cling to its support – the curling of the whip cords and His binding to the cross.

The leaf – the sword which pierced His side.

The violet corona – the crown of thorns which tore and bruised his head and face.

The five anthers – the five wounds of Christ: the hammers for the nails

The three stigmas – the nails to impale Christ to the Cross.

Its spiced perfume – the anointing of His body.

From Good Friday to Easter Sunday, burial to resurrection, the life span of the flower.

The subsequent fruit – the earth, the flower's death, Earth's salvation.



MAKE IT A FAIR EASTER; SUPPORT THE LENT APPEAL

### Criticism as Synod delays issue of women bishops



Dr Rowan Williams

**DEBATE** A key Church of England debate on female bishops has been delayed because of the number of submissions received. The Church of England voted in favour of female bishops two years ago, but has yet to work out how the legislation will be implemented.

The subject was dropped from the Church's ruling general synod last month and will now be debated at York in July. The debate in 2008 centred on what concessions to make to traditionalists unwilling to serve under a woman, but the committee set up to try to find a compromise has still not finished its work, prompting criticism from liberals

impatient to see women admitted to leadership.

The Archbishop of Canterbury called on all sides to give consideration to the views of other Christians. Dr Rowan Williams said 'megaphone tones' were being used over issues such as women bishops and gays in the Church.

■ **EASTER** Fairtrade Easter eggs and chocolates will be on sale in the church hall from 10.30-11.30am on Sunday 7 March and Sunday 14 March. Do support Fairtrade when buying Easter gifts!

### Diocese's Lent appeal to help young people



**ALMA** The Diocese of London Lent Appeal 2010 is called *Transforming Lives*. ALMA's Children fund enables London's partner dioceses in

Angola, Lembobo and Niassa (in Mozambique) to respond to one of the greatest challenges they face: ministry to young people, when over 50% of the population is under the age of 18. Do reflect on the colourful appeal card and use a Lent Appeal envelope for your cash or cheque donation, filling in the Gift Aid declaration if you can to increase the value of your gift. Cheques should be made payable to the PCC of St. James's Church as we are processing them in-house. For online giving, go to [www.justgiving.com/almalent10](http://www.justgiving.com/almalent10)

■ **FILM** Thank you to everyone who attended the showing of the film *The Age of Stupid* and made the evening such a success. If you missed the showing, or would like to see it again, contact Catherine Gash, who has a DVD to borrow. Tel 020 8783 0563.

### Your knitting can help charity

**TWAM** Tools With A Mission's area co-ordinator, Janet Nunn, reports another way to help the charity, which refurbishes old tools before sending them to Africa. When the tools are shipped abroad they use knitted goods to pad the crates. This is cost-effective and provides welcome clothing for cold nights.



Janet has suggested patterns. If you would like to help or have spare wool telephone her on 020 8979 6325.

**LIGHTS OUT** Turn out the lights every time you leave a room. Fluorescent tubes use practically no extra electricity when re-starting, so it is worth turning them off even for a few minutes. Incidentally, electronic starters give a gentler, flicker-free start and prolong the life of fluorescent tubes. Compact-fluorescent energy-saving bulbs contain their own starters, they last five to ten times longer than conventional filament bulbs, and use 75% of the power for the same illumination. They are more expensive initially, but they will give greater savings in your most used rooms.



ECO TIP

## REGISTERS FOR JANUARY

### Baptisms

3 Neena Nayyor, Hampton Hill

3 Sushma Kande, Hampton Hill

# Prepared for anything

## Richard Moody gives a snapshot of our Scout Group

**N**ow over 60 years old, 3<sup>rd</sup> Hampton Hill Scout Group continues to thrive. Current membership is 160, comprising two each of Beaver Scout Colonies, Cub Scout Packs and Scout Troops, with 30 adults. Our fantastic leadership team is motivated and enthusiastic. Our Leaders are supported by Section Assistants, Young Leaders and a Group Executive Committee. We rely fully on volunteers, many of whom are parents. Volunteers receive training to hold specific roles. All adult helpers have to be CRB-cleared, an important step in



Home sweet home: team-building skills

safeguarding the young people in our care Here's what some of the members, young and old, value:

■ 'Beavers is really fun. We made bird feeders from thread and popcorn. We play games and we were "pirates" on a sleepover in the summer. We made treasure boxes and searched for treasure as well!'

■ 'Scouts is one of the greatest opportunities a child can take. You learn how to survive in the wilderness, and loads of life skills. We do great stuff, especially things outdoors like camping. I have made lots of new friends: nothing is better than Scouts.'

■ 'Being a Scout is a good hobby. If people think it's boring, it's not! Sure, there's knot-tying, putting up tents, and uniform, but there's so much more. I'm training with one of the Scouts' National squads, all because I tried something new at a meeting! If you are looking for a hobby, Scouts should be top of the list!'

■ 'We go everywhere: the St George's Day Parade in Richmond in April, and the Hampton Hill High Street Lighting Up Parade in November. As part of St James's Church, we have a Colour Party on Remembrance Sunday. We camp in all weathers, and we walk a lot, on Night Hikes, Day Prowls, and Expedition Camps. Last year we carried huge boxes all round London to help promote Shelterbox, who send emergency equipment all over the world after disasters. Less than a year later we would see these boxes on the TV news, going out to Haiti - wow!'

■ 'I stay involved with Scouting as a Young Leader, helping with the Beaver Colonies. I enjoy giving something back, and developing all the life skills that I've acquired through Scouting. It's also fun and challenging working with the youngest age group in Scouting. Paul (Scout Leader) taught me to shoot air rifles, and now I'm in the National Scout Squad which trains at Bisley, the National Shooting Centre.'

■ 'I have been Treasurer for 3HH for over five years: all stemming from a quick conversation in a school corridor! Both my children are now Scouts, and I am always amazed at the breadth and depth of opportunities and experiences supplied for them, and by the supreme efforts put in by the leadership, all of whom are volunteers! Seeing the time leaders

give, it is gratifying to give something back to help ensure these adventures continue.'

■ 'I have been with the group for 23 years. There have been many challenges and much fun, great experiences and many happy memories. I continue to get a real buzz and sense of achievement out of Scouting. It really is great to see all the young people enjoying everything they do. We have a brilliant adult team that continues to deliver a fantastic and challenging programme with lots of extra events: there is something for everyone. The group notches up over 100 nights a year away at camps and sleepovers. This is what Scouting is all about. I am really looking forward to our first international trip to Switzerland in Summer 2011.'

■ 'Joining 3HH has given our son so many wonderful adventures. Scouts have no boundaries of race, colour, gender, or imagination! Under close but relaxed supervision, youngsters gain confidence to try new things: pot-holing, rock-climbing, raft-building and zip-wire sliding, orienteering, crafts, cookery... Goals are important, and everyone is expected to achieve them, and is recognised for doing so. Children learn independence, self-reliance, discipline and respect.'

■ 'The 3HH leaders, are an incredibly strong team. They're always positive and obviously enjoy and take pride in the development of their youngsters. Any amount of time I find to share with this fantastic group of people is always rewarded by the sense of being valued for my contribution. I can't think of a more worthwhile way to give something back to our community, this Lent or any time, than by offering whatever time or skills you have in any capacity. You'll always be made welcome, and always be found a job!'

If you would like to join us, please contact us via the Web Enquiry Page. Take a look at [www.3hhscouts.org.uk](http://www.3hhscouts.org.uk) to see the exciting and engaging activities on offer. Come and join the adventure!





# Haiti crisis

## First despair

## Now hope



© Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance

It's just over a month since the earthquake hit Haiti and the death toll now stands at 230,000 with some 300,000 injured. Thousands more have been left homeless. This small country is one of the poorest places on earth, and the disaster will create untold suffering and hardship to already vulnerable communities.

Christian Aid has responded by sending money raised from the emergency appeal to help its partners deliver aid to vulnerable communities. So far, £300,000 has been sent to pay for food, tents, hygiene kits, blankets, medical supplies and clothes.

The earthquake struck 15km southwest of the capital, Port-au-Prince, on 12 January. It is thought to have been the

strongest earthquake in Haiti for more than 100 years. The Christian Aid office building collapsed, and three people had to be rescued from the rubble.

Eighty per cent of Haiti's population live below the poverty line and hunger was widespread even before the earthquake struck.

The infrastructure was already fragile, and there has been widespread destruction of homes and schools, as well as major damage to water and electricity supplies and road systems. Thousands of people have been left homeless and are in urgent need of shelter, clean water, food and medicines.

Raymond Prospery, Christian Aid's manager in Haiti, said there has been devastation on a tremendous scale. In the area of Port-au-Prince, where he has his office, 97% of the housing and flats have collapsed. Bearing in mind the very flimsy state of much of the housing in the poorer areas of the city, the overall damage to infrastructure is likely to be very severe.

'For one kilometre around the office' he said, 'only two homes were still standing. What is really terrible is hearing people crying. There are people kneeling

### Haiti needs our help. Please support our church appeal

in the streets praying and hoping for support.

'I do not have words to describe what I have seen in the street, I have never seen so many dead bodies. There are too many bodies around and they are starting to smell.

'I am alive and really happy to be alive, I got the right help at the right time and I am grateful to those who helped me. Now I am trying to do the same for others.'

We can help him by giving to the appeal. Just £7 could buy a tarpaulin to provide shelter; £13.50 could buy baby kits including food for two weeks; £18 could provide canned food, flour, rice, sugar and cooking oil for two weeks for a family of four.

Haiti is the poorest country in the Americas, ranking only one place above Sudan in the United Nation's human development index – an international ranking system that compares living standards worldwide.

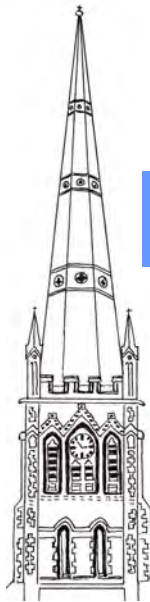
Any country would be struggling to cope with death and destruction on this scale in and around its capital city. But Haiti is particularly vulnerable.

Even before this disaster, Haiti was facing a huge range of complex social, economic and developmental challenges. It will need long-term support to recover from the worst disaster in its history.

**Any donation will make a difference. Please make cheques payable to The PCC of St James and send them to Parish Office, 46 St James's Road, Hampton Hill TW12 1DQ.**



In the capital, 97% of the houses have collapsed



## AROUND THE SPIRE

### NEWS FROM HAMPTON HILL AND BEYOND

#### Celebration party for golden wedding couple

Congratulations to Margaret and David Taylor who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on 13 February with a party for family and friends at the Greenwood Centre. They were married on a snowy day in Watch-on-Deerne, South Yorkshire. Their best man and bridesmaids were among the guests at the Hampton Hill anniversary celebration.



Michael William Neville Morrell, "Mick", who died on 17 January, was a well-known figure locally. Brought up in Melksham in Wiltshire, Mick moved to Hampton Hill with his wife Ann and ran the post office on the High Street for many years. We send our condolences to Ann and to their children Ian and Karen.



We were delighted to welcome Bishop John Simalenga, left, from the diocese of West Tanganyika to St. James's on Sunday 14 February.

He shared his vision for the diocese and brought news of St. Luke's Hospital in Milo which Ann Peterken wrote about in last month's Spire.

Thank you to all who returned their Christingle candles. Just over £100 has been sent to the Children's Society.

#### Félicitations pour vos fiançailles à Paris!



Amy Cammidge, daughter of Jacky and Alan, has become engaged to Elliott Blazewicz.

Elliott proposed at 10pm on 22 January in Paris, in view of its most famous landmark, the Eiffel Tower. Amy said 'yes' shortly afterwards. We send our best wishes to them both.



The Christian Year is made up of five seasons: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and Easter. The rest of the year is referred to as 'Ordinary Time' as there is no special celebration. The year also includes Saints Days, Festivals and Holy Days. These seasons and days make up the Christian calendar.

Lent is the time each year when we think about what it really means to be a follower of Jesus. Lent is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning 'lengthen' and happens in Spring when the days begin to get longer.

The season of Lent begins during late February or early March and lasts for forty days before Easter, from Ash Wednesday to Holy Week. Although Lent is a serious time, Sundays are always a day of celebration in the Christian church and so they are not included in the forty days of Lent.

**Lent** is a serious and thoughtful festival, a season for praying and thinking about the things we have done wrong and what we should do better in the future. We remember the time in Jesus' life when, after giving up his work as a carpenter, he began to teach people about God. Jesus prepared for this by spending forty days and nights alone in the desert, being tempted by the Devil. Jesus used this time to prepare for his work by fasting and praying. Nowadays many people still use Lent as a time for fasting (they avoid eating certain foods, particularly things they enjoy, like chocolate).

In the early years of Christianity, Lent was when new Christians who were to be baptised on Easter Eve were taught about the Christian faith and life. Those who had already been baptised thought again about the promises they had previously made and renewed their will to be true to them. The colour purple is used in churches during Lent. The altar is covered with a purple cloth, the pulpit has a purple 'fall' and the vicar's garments are purple. As purple was the most expensive dye in Roman times being made from Murex shells, it became a sign of wealth, power, and royalty and so it celebrates Christ's coming as a King.



Answer the following questions using the above to help:

- When is Lent?
- What day is the first day of Lent?
- How many days are in Lent?
- Why are Sundays not counted in Lent?
- Why did Jesus spend time in the desert?
- What happened to Jesus in the desert?
- What do many people do during Lent and why?

Jesus was alone in the wilderness being tempted by the Devil. He used this time to prepare for his work by fasting and praying. How many days did Jesus stay in the wilderness? Colour the squares with the numbers 6, 8 and 10. What number is left?

6	10	8	6
10	4	0	8
6	10	8	6

**Mothering Sunday** is the fourth Sunday in Lent. It was originally a day when children who had gone to work as domestic servants were given time off to visit their mother. They often took a simnel cake as a present. Simnel cake is especially associated with Mothering Sunday.

G	Y	B	W	L	T	L	S	M	R	Q	G	X	V	J
E	R	A	Q	I	U	U	O	Q	V	F	Z	B	W	R
N	H	G	B	X	O	F	F	V	T	Y	G	I	D	G
T	W	N	U	R	E	O	T	F	I	Q	G	B	C	N
L	B	W	E	S	Z	I	S	H	M	N	R	M	V	I
E	Q	N	G	V	R	M	Q	E	G	F	G	K	J	V
P	E	M	J	M	K	V	I	Y	K	U	I	I	C	I
G	B	B	K	M	G	T	T	I	N	E	O	D	K	G
E	U	V	D	B	B	K	N	F	O	R	N	H	D	R
D	A	P	X	Y	K	D	E	I	R	R	F	Q	T	O
N	Z	Z	N	Q	S	W	C	Q	U	P	J	M	E	F
T	A	N	T	M	Y	T	P	R	E	C	I	O	U	S
D	H	U	O	C	N	A	K	B	N	V	Y	T	M	U
L	J	N	E	E	U	P	F	L	A	E	W	M	B	W
Q	X	V	K	Q	I	O	U	E	Y	D	U	F	Z	A

It is a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste. On top there are eleven balls of marzipan, one for each faithful disciple, Judas not being included as he betrayed Jesus.

Nowadays, on this day children often give their mothers gifts and cards as a way of saying thank you for their hard work. In church, prayers are said for mothers at a special service.

- The following words describe mothers. Can you find them in this puzzle?  
*Precious, kind, loving, generous, thoughtful, gentle, forgiving*

The Christian Year		
Season	Colour	Dates
Advent	Purple	Nov 29 - Dec 24 2009
Christmas	White	Dec 25 - Jan 5 2010
Epiphany	White	Jan 6 - Jan 31 2010
Ordinary Time	Green	Feb 1 - Feb 16 2010
<b>Lent</b>	Purple	Feb 17 - Apr 3 2010
Easter	White	Apr 4 - May 23 2010
Ordinary Time	Green	May 24 - Nov 28 2010





## The generation game



**Happy families. Back row, left to right: my father Hal, my younger brother Roger. Middle row: me, my mother Eila, Roger's wife Ann, my husband Ian. Front row, left to right: my daughter Caitlyn and sons Duncan (now in Singapore) and James.**

*This photograph was taken in 1989*



**W**ith so much interest in researching family history, television programmes like *Who Do You Think You Are?* and seemingly endless websites to help, I have begun to realise how fortunate our family is. I have always been fascinated by history so I suppose it was natural for me from quite a young age to ask questions and listen to older family members who willingly shared their snippets of information.

Then it also dawned on me that, as a child, I was really lucky to have an extended family who were easily available to both visit and answer these questions. Of course, it wasn't just family history that interested me, but also family values, morals, beliefs and just general chatter.

My grandmother (Vivienne Prentice) lived just on the other side of Bushy Park in Teddington, and from a relatively young age I was able to walk – on my own – to visit her. She lived into her late nineties and I still treasure her memory – her influence continues to this day.

My granny had moved from her family home in Southsea to Teddington when she married my grandfather in the 1920s, and they stayed there for the rest of their lives. My parents (Hal and Eila Severn) were both born, and continue to live, locally, so it was no surprise that my husband, Ian, and I soon settled in Hampton and have lived there for many years.

St James's Church has played an important part in all of our lives. Indeed, Hal and Eila married there in August 1948, Ian and I in April 1971, and our daughter Caitlyn and Rory in July 2007. However, life has changed and my own three children have moved further away; two relatively close

by and one across the world in Singapore, yet the bond and closeness is just as strong despite the distance. If I have too long without contact with any of my children I feel a need to be in touch – usually a visit, but with worldwide distance this is obviously not always possible. Modern technology has come to the rescue, enabling me to 'chat' via web cams. This is exciting and makes links more comforting.

My granny did not have this facility, yet I know that she was in regular contact, via letter-writing and telephone, with both her mother and later one of her sons who moved to Scotland. My mother, too, now has one of her sons, my brother, living in Australia.

The strong family bond is not dependent on physical closeness. Of course it is wonderful to be able to have regular contact with local children and grandchildren, but the fact that part of a family is living at a distance makes it even more noticeable that familial love is more dependent on an early foundation of unconditional and continuing love, than anything else.

Our family is growing and the world is 'getting smaller' – technology and transport are improving rapidly. With all the excitement of living in this fascinating world, family values have remained consistent and important in ours and many other families we know.

**G**athering together, chatting on the web cam or by phone will be an essential part of our Mothering Sunday expectations, and as this important festival approaches we too will be thinking of those who maybe haven't been as fortunate as we have but hope that the love we have for our family members can be shared with them.

There is an old Jewish saying: *God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.* Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods - our human mothers - all of them have been part of the celebration of *Mothering Sunday* as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church. During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were

allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families - which is how *Mothering Sunday* got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day because of the sweet cakes traditionally eaten that day.



## Songs of Praise

### *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

#### The story behind the hymn

This well-known hymn will be sung at St. James's on **Sunday 28 March, Palm Sunday**. There is a change of gear in the season of Lent on the Fifth Sunday of the season as the focus of worship shifts towards the cross. This hymn reflects that change.

The writer of the words of the hymn, **Isaac Watts** (1674-1748), was born in Southampton, and was a 'dissenter,' his father having been imprisoned for not submitting to restrictions on religious liberty, current at the time. By conviction Watts was a Congregationalist and he became Pastor of the Independent (or 'Congregationalist') Church at Mark Lane in London. Watts was an independently-minded minister from a tradition emphasising the autonomy of the local church from any external church authority.

Watts was a prolific writer of hymns and poetry. No less than 19 hymns by him are in our principal hymn book, *Hymns Ancient and Modern (New Standard edition)*. He is credited with having written around 750 in all. They reflect a concern to emphasise different aspects of the Christian faith.

**When I survey the wondrous cross,  
on which the Prince of glory died,  
my richest gain I count but loss,  
and pour contempt on all my pride.**

**Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast  
save in the death of Christ my God;  
all the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.**

**See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
sorrow and love flow mingled down;  
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
or thorns compose so rich a crown?**

**His dying crimson like a robe,  
spreads o'er his body on the tree;  
then am I dead to all the globe,  
and all the globe is dead to me.**

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were a present far too small;  
love so amazing, so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all.**

*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* is a hymn of deep devotion to the cross and to the crucified Christ. Within a part of the Christian Church that would decry devotion using physical images, Watts paints a word picture of the cross and of Christ with expressions such as 'His dying crimson like a robe spreads o'er his body on the tree.' He was a poet and not just merely a writer of lyrics. The words tell of the mysterious beauty of sacrifice. They tell a story of pain and suffering woven together with joy and love. Who would have ever thought that these polar opposites could come together and form a paradoxical statement that on the face of it sounds ridiculous. However, when pondered it makes so much sense.

The hymn was published in Watts' *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* in 1707 as part of a section entitled *For the Lord's Supper*. Isaac Watts was buried in Bunhill Fields, Islington, in the same cemetery as John Bunyan and William Blake.