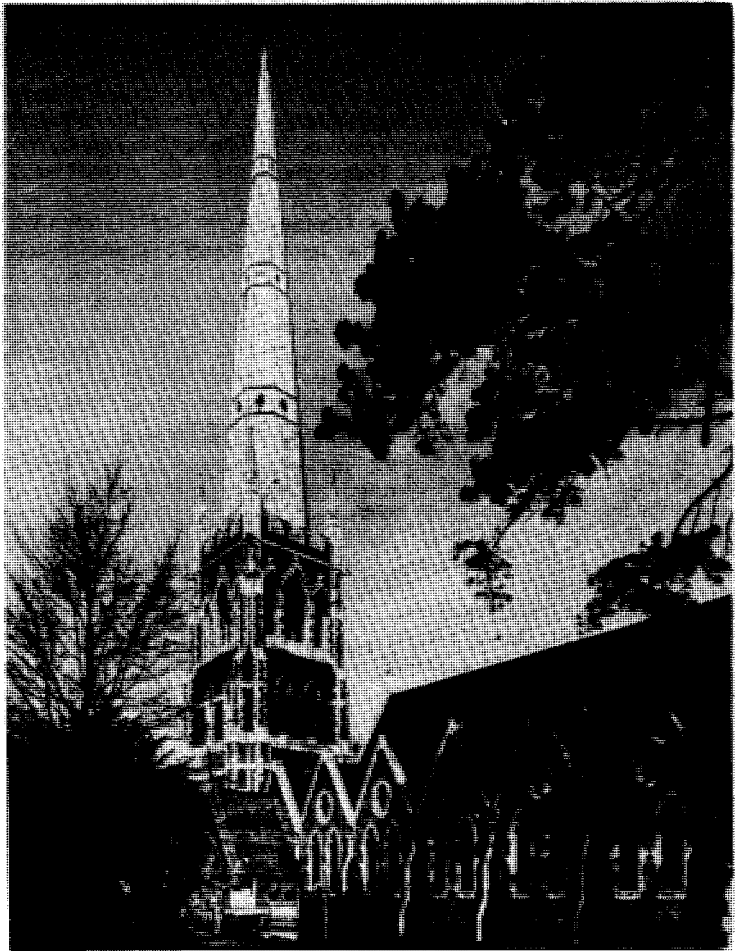


THE SPIRE



JAN. 1977

THE MAGAZINE OF ST. JAMES'S CHURCH
HAMPTON HILL, MIDDLESEX

CHURCH OFFICERS

VICAR

The Rev. R.H. Brunt, B.A., A.K.C., The Vicarage, 46 St. James's Road.
979 2069

ASSISTANT CURATE

The Rev. S.D. Harris, M.P.S., Dip. R.S., 69 St. James's Avenue. 979 3163

READERS

Mr. D.A.F. Rawlins, 75 Burton's Road. 979 3720
Miss H.M. Stanton, M.A., 63 Park Road. 979 5821

CHURCHWARDENS

Mr. G.I. Robinson, O.B.E., 36 St. James's Road. 979 2426
Mr. L. Rockcliffe, 40 Gloucester Road, Teddington. 977 4909

ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER

Mr. R.J.C. Dafforne, 7 Blandford Road, Teddington. 977 3439

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Secretary: Mr. A.E. Loyd, 17 King's Road, Teddington. 977 1823

Treasurer: Mr. G.I. Robinson, O.B.E., 36 St. James's Road. 979 2426

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP RECORDER

Mr. L. Rockcliffe, 40 Gloucester Road, Teddington. 977 4909

SOCIAL COMMITTEE INFORMATION OFFICER

Mr. R.L. Bucknell, 75 St. James's Avenue. 979 3529

OFFICER FOR BOOKINGS OF PARISH HALL

Mrs. E.V. Severn, 4 Ormond Drive, Hampton. 979 1954

SUPERVISOR AND OFFICER FOR BOOKINGS OF WAYSIDE

Mrs. R.A. Bridges, 19 St. James's Road. 979 6865

THE MAGAZINE

Chairman of the Editorial Board: The Vicar.

Treasurer: Mr. H.E. Severn, 4 Ormond Drive, Hampton. 979 1954

PRESS AND PUBLICITY OFFICER

Mrs. D.E. Warwick, 52 Park Road. 979 7004

ORGANISER FOR CHURCH FLOWERS

Mrs. R.A. Bridges, 19 St. James's Road. 979 6865

BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE RECORDER

Mrs. D. Childs, 2B Seymour Road. 979 9054

SUNDAY SERVICES AND MEETINGS

Holy Communion	Every Sunday	8.00 a.m.
Holy Communion	First Sunday in month and Festivals	12.10 p.m.
PARISH COMMUNION	Every Sunday	9.30 a.m.
	On most Fourth Sundays also Family and Parade Service	9.30 a.m.
Parish Breakfast	Every Sunday in Wayside or Church	10.40 a.m.
SUNDAY SCHOOLS	(except in holiday periods):	
Infants'	Every Sunday except Fourth in Wayside	11.20 a.m.
Junior	Every Sunday except Fourth in Wayside	9.20 a.m.
Rectory	Every Sunday in Rectory School	2.30 p.m.
Infant Baptism	After due notice, at Parish Communion	9.30 a.m.
	or on Fourth Sundays	4.00 p.m.
WELCOME SERVICE	Every Second Sunday	4.30 p.m.
EVENSONG	Every Sunday except Second Sunday	6.30 p.m.
Young People's Fellowship	Every Sunday in Wayside	8.00 p.m.

WEEKDAY SERVICES AND MEETINGS

As announced: See under 'Dates to Note'

MANPOWER AND MONEY

A recent article in the Church Times began : "The Church of England has two continuing problems. One is the question of manpower. The other is the matter of money. Both of them have been rising in intensity over the past decade, and both are likely to become considerably more vital in the near future."

By 'manpower' the writer meant not the great number of devoted men and women who give such stirring service and sit in the nave Sunday by Sunday, but those who are on the pay-roll of the Church. If we want things in this sphere to continue as they are, then we are shortly going to be up against great difficulties. For instance, according to the most reliable forecasts, there will be 1500 fewer priests serving the Church by 1980, and unless there is a radical change the numbers will go on steadily declining, so that by the end of the century the only way of keeping the institution functioning in anything like the present manner will be to have a very large staff of non-stipendiary, 'non-professional' priests. We see the beginnings of this process in the slow growth in the number of men who, while retaining their secular jobs, are doing valuable service in the auxillary ministry. The Church, like many other bodies, tends to let itself be overtaken by events, and it is time that careful thought was given to long-term planning instead of rushing through panic-measures to meet every fresh crisis as it arises.

In the meantime, it will not be easy to maintain the number of full-time clergymen at present available. Many people still have firmly fixed in their minds the erroneous impression that the Church is enormously wealthy. This came out in a recent 'Any Questions?', when one member of the panel said that Mr. Healey ought to go and ask - or demand - that some of these superfluous riches should be transferred to the Exchequer. The Archbishop of York, another panellist, said after this that he was speechless - but it was a pity that he did not use this opportunity to make the position clear. But the Church Commissioners have done this in their recent leaflet 'The Gnomes of Millbank?', of which there are some spare copies on the information-table in church. They say that the most they can now do is to provide two-thirds of an incumbent's standard stipend of £2400. The rest must come from Church people in the parishes. It would cost nearly £750,000 to give each clergyman £1 a week more. And just as the clergy are about to become employees, the new Government surcharge on employers' N.I. contributions doubles the £350,000 that this change has been estimated to cost.

To go some slight way towards meeting these financial commitments, the statutory fees for banns, weddings, funerals, and so on (N.B. there are **no** fees for Baptism, despite the constant reference to them by the media!) are all about to be doubled. This has caused most parish priests great concern. We don't want to have to ask people to pay these large sums, especially at times of grief, but as they will be credited to us and taxed whether we receive them or not - as part of our standard income, and not as in times past usually an addition to it - it seems that we shall be forced to do so.

But the encouraging thing is that, despite much that might otherwise cause gloom and despondency, many parishes, like ours, are in very good heart, full of determination and generosity, able to look the facts in the face and plan for the future with confidence and conviction.

The Churches Housing Trust and CCG Housing Association

(Based in part on an article by Rachel Kinchin Smith in the Mortlake Parish Magazine)

The present time of financial stringency is not a happy one for Housing Associations. A year or two ago very substantial sums of money were being made available to encourage the growth of these associations and to assist them in providing accommodation, mainly by the sub-division of large old properties into flats, for letting at reasonable rents. At the time an association was formed under the auspices of the Hampton and Hampton Hill Community Care Group, and its members did view a number of local properties with conversion in mind. It was felt that the local community needed more transport workers, for example, and more young professional people such as teachers and social workers, and that one way of attracting such people would be to provide suitable accommodation for them, whether single or married, at rents which they could afford. Unfortunately, as the association reached the point of making offers on property, the Government housing programme generally was severely cut back and it became apparent that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to obtain loans and operating funds. Consequently, for much of this year, the association has been quiescent.

The local association received much encouragement and guidance from the Richmond-upon-Thames Churches Housing Trust. This Trust, which will shortly be ten years old, has put its emphasis more on individual needs than on the needs of the community. As a thriving Housing Association of some standing, it is able to continue its work through the present difficult times, although some of its plans have had to be curtailed.

The Trust was formed from a small band of people of expertise from Mortlake and Sheen, with help from the British Churches' Housing Trust, and was registered in May 1967. The group included a Catholic architect and a Catholic solicitor, an Anglican surveyor, a Congregationalist bank manager, and committee members of four denominations, including an Anglican representative from Barnes with long experience in professional house property management. Before long it also had Catholic representation from St. Margaret's, Twickenham, and links with the Richmond Christian Council - still perhaps "a little acorn", but a sound one, from which has grown a large and sheltering tree. Over 500 tenancies are now managed by the Trust (some for other local associations) and many more are in the pipeline. One of its larger properties, which is of local interest, is a 24-flat sheltered housing-scheme, with a warden and common rooms, in Wensleydale Road, Hampton.

It is perhaps surprising that there really are people, in this comfortable suburban area, in housing need. In addition to the groups that our local association has in mind, there are elderly people uncomfortably housed in properties too large and expensive to maintain and heat, the disabled, single-parent families and single people recovering from mental illness; and the vulnerability common to these groups has presented a continuing challenge to a caring Church. Apart from the fact that many are unable through age or disability to help themselves in the search for a place to live, they need supporting friendship as well as a roof over their heads. The Trust has set itself from the first to work in both dimensions, and is enormously

indebted to the caring approach of its professional staff. The great majority of its tenants are elderly people and there are also a number of young-mother-and-child families, but increasingly it is housing other disabled groups - for instance in collaboration with the local Association for Mental Health - and on the other wing beginning to make provision for housing young families and, for example, Local Health Authority staff.

The Trust has risen to the challenge. To meet the anxiety, loneliness and discomfort of people in housing need with practical help and personal concern is one kind of evangelism. It is an ecumenical witness, and it does seem sometimes to "get across", particularly when it is supplemented by visits, or neighbourly help when required, by clergy and lay people.

It is to be hoped that our own local association, when it is able to get to work, will be able to follow the example of the Trust and help, if only in a small way, in the great work the Trust is doing in the Borough.

R.E.B.

THE HAMPTON AND SUNBURY COUNCIL OF CHURCHES.

This year the United Service during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is being held at St. James's Church, on Sunday, January 23. at 6.45pm.

Our preacher is to be our friend and neighbour Father Joseph Meehan from the Church St. Francis de Sales, Wellington Road, Hampton Hill, and we hope that many people will come together at this service and make it a thoroughly ecumenical occasion.

The service will be followed by refreshments in church, and we hope all will stay, and, as Father Hamilton (Father Meehan's predecessor) went round saying on a previous occasion, "Mingle well! Mingle well!" - we did.

Writing of Christian Unity makes me think again of the understanding and the recognition of the reverence for God in all religions. There will be leaflets available to help us pray during the Week; let us think also of the wider brotherhood. Perhaps this prayer, a Jewish prayer from the Liberal Jewish Prayer Book, may help us.

We pray for all mankind,
Though divided into nations and races,
Yet are all men thy children,
Drawing from thee their life and being,
Commanded by thee to obey thy laws,
Each in accordance with the power to know and understand them.
Cause hatred and strife to vanish,
That abiding peace may fill the earth,
And humanity may everywhere be blessed with the fruit of peace.
So shall the spirit of brotherhood among men
Show forth their faith that
Thou art the Father of all.

H.M.S.

PAPER CHASE AT ST. JAMES'S

The paper collection outside Wayside on Saturday December 11 was quite a social occasion. After the wet, miserable weather of the last week or two we were glad to have a fine, dry day which made the job enjoyable. As the pleasant lorry-driver observed, this Community Care job showed real Community spirit and he was much impressed with what we were doing.

This comment from an outsider was encouraging.

In addition to our own collectors, (many of them from ST. JAMES'S), many people brought their own paper; cars kept arriving and departing leaving behind stacks of nicely bundled paper. Even an A.A. man drove up with a load, thus adding to the traffic jam! Helpers included those not able to handle heavy loads (but nevertheless useful) and children helped by tying up loose paper and handing bundles to the human chain of paper loaders.

At 11 a.m. we had a welcome break when Janet served coffee and biscuits with squash for the children. By that time we had a fully-loaded lorry and our target of 5 tons had been exceeded. We have about 1 ton extra for our next collection on February 5.

Proceeds from the sale go to Community Care Group and ST. JAMES'S is helping to provide a regular income for this local charity by giving its support to the scheme.

D E N

Parish Concert - 19 February 1977

Every few years the Parish of St. James's has a chance to display its dramatic talents, and on Saturday 19 February experienced performers of many years standing (the ones with stiff legs) will join with aspiring newcomers (those with beads of sweat) in presenting a grand variety concert. Every group connected with St. James's, from the Sunday school to the Mothers' Union, from the youth organisations to the Ladies' Choir, will be giving of their best for your entertainment.

As this is Jubilee Year all our events will have something special, and the Concert will be the centre piece of our social year. Some fifteen groups have been rehearsing their acts since last autumn and the programme will be a nicely balanced one with musical items, readings, skits, and others that are indescribable. We are also certain of surprises this time because all groups have had a free choice of what they want to do. Those of us with memories of earlier concerts will remember the pleasure of discovering real talent which otherwise would have remained unrecognised.

Was it not the Venerable Bede who said, "Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer through these sons and daughters of Hampton Hill"? Almost certainly not, but don't forget to buy your tickets early since numbers in the Hall have to be restricted.

The date to note again is Saturday 19 February. Don't miss what is going to be a great evening's entertainment.

R.L.B.

THE MOTHERS' UNION BOOKSTALL

In the quieter days after the festive season you may have some spare time when you would enjoy a little peaceful reading. May we draw your attention to the Mothers' Union bookstall in church? It contains Mothers' Union publications and some other literature concerned with the aim of the organisation - the family. Most items are quite small booklets which can be easily read in one go. They do, however, contain some very useful material, and you would find it really rewarding to study them. Have a browse. A few pennies will then buy you some very valuable literature. We would be pleased to order any leaflets not in stock.

H.B.

Ladies' Activities

After a short break for Christmas with undoubtedly a great deal of over eating etc., some of us started 1977 with new life and enthusiasm on Tuesday January 4 by doing keep fit in the parish hall at 2p.m; we are there every Tuesday so now is your chance - turn over a new leaf and come and join us.

The Ladies' Monday afternoon choir, having entertained in Hampton Wick and sung at a service in (church promotion) indeed will start meeting again on Monday January 10 at 2.30p.m. in the vestry. We would very much like to increase our members so do come along. We meet on alternative Mondays.

M.U. sewing afternoons start on Wednesday 12 January at 1.30 to 4p.m. in Wayside. We meet every Wednesday except the first in the month which, of course, is the normal M.U. meeting day. So here is another occasion when all are welcome.

All these activities are very good opportunities to meet each other, pass on helpful tips, give vent to our feelings at the same time as getting on with the task in hand. Don't hesitate, make 1977 the year to join at least one of these activities.

E.N.S.

AROUND THE SPIRE

Right in its shadow, in fact the M.U. with experienced help from Mr. Gloyns, have remade the rosebeds under the South wall and planted there fifteen polyanthus roses. They are of the new variety "Mary Sumner" specially named by McGredy's for the M.U. Centenary and originally meant for the New Zealand market but eagerly welcomed by the U.K when we heard about it. There seems some doubt among us as to what the roses will actually look like; they are described as beige-pink, which could go very nicely against the golden colour of the church brickwork. On the other hand! We shall just have to wait and see and hope for the best, and we are therefore grateful that the beds will certainly look good in the spring, for Mr. Gloyns has given us, and himself planted, daffodil bulbs among the roses.

I hope everyone using the church appreciates how regularly it is kept clean and polished. The main work of this is done by a rota of ladies-at most two and often only one at a time-who give a weekly dusting and sweeping; and by Mr. Peter Moorey who every week spends two mornings polishing the brasses. Early in 1976 there was also some helpful evening-work done by groups taking on the heavy jobs like vacuuming the pillar-tops and floor-scrubbing. These occasional programmes helped to reduce the weekly scatter of dust and now we would like to make a regular arrangement to spread out the special cleaning so that it all gets done without anyone having to do a heavy load. A schedule of work is being put up in the South porch and the hope is that offers will be made by small parties-say three people, one of whom will make him/herself responsible for knowing what wants doing-who will undertake a stint of an hour or an hour and a half perhaps twice a year. This has been envisaged as an evening work because some of it requires male muscle power but there is no reason why it should not take place at any suitable time.

Recently Radio London made an announcement to the effect that although Oxford Street had felt itself unable to "light up" this Christmas, Hampton Hill High Street had no such inhibitions and that very day was to receive a visit from Santa Claus who would switch on the lights. We are grateful to our neighbourhood shopkeepers for continuing to enliven our dark afternoons in these hard times.

CHILDREN AND CONFIRMATION

The Church of England has for as long as I have known it been in a state of utter confusion about the whole matter of Christian Initiation, and despite countless commissions and reports and endless discussions, has been quite unable to make up its mind, except in a negative way.

Some dioceses and parishes have tried to develop positive ways of their own, but it seems that all this must now cease because of the timidity and caution of the General Synod. One parish in the north-east had blazed a trail which seemed very hopeful, and many others were beginning to follow it: what will happen now after the Synod's veto is anybody's guess. Briefly the policy was as follows: first, open, general baptism: No rigoristic fencing of the font, but baptism free all, with no promises demanded from the parents, but the whole local church taking over the responsibility for the pastoral care of the whole family. The occasion of baptism was used to proclaim the gospel in no uncertain terms. Then as the children (with their parents or by themselves) began to respond to the love of God, they were given the right to which baptism entitled them of admission to communion. Then there followed an on-going process of teaching in fellowship, not with the sole aim of having the children 'done' at confirmation, but as part of a life-long growth towards Christian maturity. During this process, at an age never earlier than 16, some young people would be confirmed when they were willing to accept some responsibility within the fellowship and felt as certain as they could be that they would want to go on learning and growing within the fellowship for the rest of their lives.

Many of us hoped that such a 'welcoming-church' pattern as this would be generally accepted and authoritatively approved by the whole Church of England. But the General Synod has now gone back on its 1974 declaration that 'full sacramental participation within the Church can precede a mature profession of faith', and laid it down that all children **must** be confirmed before they can receive communion. The only concession offered is to encourage even younger children to be confirmed, and it says that this can be done if the bishops use the discretion given to them by Canon B27. But the Bishop of London says that the said Canon does not appear to allow this discretion, and so confusion becomes worse confounded! The Church no doubt will now go on for years trying to sort matters out, in its usual bumbling and ineffective way.

In the meantime a great pastoral problem remains. Confirmation as at present practised has been shown to result in a great mass of lapsed communicants, often burdened with an underlying sense of guilt because of vows broken, and any lowering of the age will increase this number still further. We would not ask a child to commit himself to a marriage partner for life - indeed, it would be illegal to do so - and neither should we try to thrust what is essentially the **adult** rite of confirmation upon him until he is old enough and certain enough to make a life-long commitment.

It is a very sad thing for priests who feel as I do to be forced to continue a system which we know by bitter experience to be unsatisfactory if not downright wrong. We are protesting and making our views known, and some no doubt will become rebels. At the moment we are trying here to make the best of a bad situation. We offer a process of learning in fellowship in our Sunday Schools, and for older children in the Questers and Young People's Fellowship. Much of the groundwork for confirmation as at present practised would be acquired here, and in the case of the YPF developed afterwards. For some children, as for adults young and old, other groupings will be needed, and we are hoping to form such groups at the end of January. If you are interested. please get in touch with of the staff.

BUT WHAT ABOUT ADULTS?

The previous article dealt with some of the problems of Christian Initiation as they apply particularly to children. But there are also problems connected with adults, many of whom did pass through a process of initiation as children or adolescents which perhaps did make a deep impression upon them at the time, but which they now see to have been both inadequate and premature, so that they would like to pass through it again with the new appreciation and insight which adult experience brings. At the moment this desire is often framed in the form of a request for a 'Confirmation refresher course'. When we are young we cannot appreciate the answers which the gospel gives because we are not asking the questions with which it is mainly concerned. That is one of the reasons why Professor Christopher Evans (our lecturer on March 9 -) - and he is far from being alone in this - is convinced that the New Testament should not be taught to children. When we try to do this we obscure the essentially adult nature of the gospel, and our efforts result in giving them a slight attack of Christianity which immunises them against the real thing.

An opportunity is now being offered to us to remedy the shortcomings and mistakes of our Christian education - or lack of it - in the past. We can now relive the process of initiation we passed through in childhood in an adult way. We are invited to become members of a **catechumenate** (as in the early days of the Church, when they took these things very seriously indeed, and the process of preparing for initiation went on for at least three years). In this fellowship we will be helped 'to bring our baptism to that maturity in which faith becomes good news for the world'.

Brother Giuseppe and his team are coming to us in January, and as I see it their call to us is something like this : If you are in any way dissatisfied with yourself and your present level of faith; if you feel that the gospel means little to you, perhaps because in the past you have been in large part immunised against it and you would now like to find an antidote to that immunity; if you are worried by the present appalling state of the world and would like to do something about it; if you have anxieties about your own life, or hidden fears and uncertainties from which you cannot break free; if you feel you would like to experience more fully the reality, power, peace, love and joy of the Christian way of life, and press on with other seekers towards that maturity and richness of personality which God intends for you - then come along and see if what is now offered is relevant, makes sense, gives hope, to you.

So then on **SUNDAY JANUARY 16**, at Parish Communion 9.30 a.m. and Evensong 6.30 p.m., the team will be telling more of what the carechumenate

to which they call us is all about, and inviting all who feel that this might be for them to go forward with them along this way.

EVENING COMMUNIONS

There have been requests from members of our congregation who find it difficult to be present in church at 7.30 a.m. on week-days for the holding of evening Communion on Saints' Days and Holy Days in addition to those which we normally have on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Ascension Day. The time suggested is 7.15 p.m., so that afterwards people can go on to meetings and committees which usually begin at 8.00 p.m.. We think that this is a good idea, if it really meets a need, and so we will begin on Tuesday January 25, the Festival of the Conversion of St. Paul, and this will be followed on Wednesday February 2 by the festival which ends the forty days of the Christmas season - Candlemas

SOME DATES TO NOTE

January	
16	Brother Giuseppe and his team will be present at the 09.30 & 18.30 Services.
17	10.30 Editorial Board (21, St. James's Road)
18 - 25	: WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY
18	20.00 Wyaside Monday Centre Management Group (1g, St. James's Road)
19	07.30 Holy Communion
20	10.30 Bib & Sucker : Talk on National Childbirth Trust (W); 20.00 Liturgical Committee (63, Park Road)
23	18.45 UNITED SERVICE in St. James's Church
25	CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL : 19.15 Holy Communion; 20.00 Parochial Church Council (W)
February	
1	19.15 Mothers' Union Christmas Party & Showing of Centenary Film (Hall - by invitation: if you would like one, please apply at Vicarage)
2	CANDLEMAS : 19.15 Holy Communion
3	10.30 Bib & Sucker : Safety in the Home (W)
5	08.30 - 10.30 Waste-Paper Collection
8	19.45 Wayside Project Training Session (41, Wellington Road); 20.00 Properties Committee (81, Park Road)
9	07.30 Holy Communion; 20.00 LECTURE : Does it make sense to follow Jesus? (Hampton Methodist Church)
16	20.00 Deanery Synod (Centenary Room, St. Stephen's)
19	19.30 PARISH CONCERT (Hall)

Meetings of uniformed groups, Questers, Junior Choir Club, Ladies' Choir, Tuesday Club, House Study Groups and Prayer Meetings all continue at regular intervals as arranged.

BAPTISMS

November 28	Angela Dawn Nottage, 8, Wellington Road, Bedford Neil John Wride, 12, Vincent Row
December 5	James Ian Stewart Robinson, 184, Buckingham Road (at the Parish Communion)