

DOES IT MAKE SENSE TO GO TO CHURCH

Father Michael Hollings spoke to the Hampton and Sunbury Council of Churches on Wednesday, May 11th in the "Does it make sense?" series. He stressed change and relevance. Jesus and His disciples attended the local Jewish synagogues, but there was an early change in the move to gatherings in homes where the early eucharists, the breaking of bread, were celebrated; change was an early feature of the Christian Church.

Too often in the intervening centuries the Church has been identified with the local church building. The Church is the local community of Christians, the people, and it is up to them to work out what is relevant to their development as the Church of Christ.

Father Hollings spoke of a whole new area of development in Brazil where there is a movement comprising 40,000 basic communities: these are small, composed of 10-12 members worshipping together in their own homes; their homes are their churches. Animators, possibly lay, possibly clerical, are needed as leaders, and he spoke of the catechumenate ideas of which we have some experience in St. James's. In free and easy surroundings there are important feelings of release and enjoyment which are not always found in the conventional church going with its Sunday best clothes and its rigid pews. He spoke of England being very "benchified". We and our forebearers have put religion into churches and confined it; whereas it needs to be freer and needs to be everywhere. Often this sort of best clothes, pew, reserved for Sundays, religion has been exported with the missions. But now Christians of other lands are working out their own ways of worshipping. We must learn from Christians abroad who are becoming much more spontaneous in their expression and in their response to the love of God. Father Hollings described the variety of Christians attitudes to worship in his parish in Southall, and his mixed congregation of Irish, West Indians and Asians; the West Indians who tend not to come to church when it rains, but when the sun shines on go the best hats and they come in crowds, with exuberance; the Asians quieter, but with a hospitality which in truth takes the church into their homes.

Does it make sense to go to church? It must be relevant to needs, and he talked in terms of release, power and challenge; new aspects must be worked on, new ideas tried. In answer to the question: "With all these new ideas, are we not losing the sense of wonder?" he told us of a group of ordinands in training for whom he was taking a retreat lately who were prepared to spend literally hours in prayer and adoration before the sacrament, and of members of the charismatic movement who think that 2-3 hours spent in prayer daily is normal or little. It is the young Christians who challenge the older members of the Christian Churches, and say "You are not giving up all and following Him. You are hypocrites". What is our reply to this? It was a stirring and challenging address

Hannah Stanton

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING - WHERE NEXT?

At the APCM in May between 50-60 people discussed 'St. James's Church - the next 25 years'. We were asked to reconsider our promises both personal and communal. The question did not imply any criticism of the past for "Never had so much been done by so few", and a pictorial guide showed how much had been achieved over the last 25 years since Connie and Rupert joined us. However, the problems of the future loomed ahead and we must decide on how God wants us to spend our time and talents.

We asked people to note down their priorities and promised to raise them in the Spire and at the PCC.

It has not proved possible to summarise all the matters raised nor indeed for us accurately to identify people's priorities. The following survey tries to bring out the salient points:-

Young People

17 of the 21 people who submitted comments specifically mentioned the need to encourage young people to take a more active part in church life.

- Suggestions include:
- a) encourage Scouts, Guides and Questers to take more active part in Church services.
 - b) Junior Choir to attend Family Service at 9.30 a.m. rather than Evensong, not least for their own benefit.
 - c) Provision of soft toys for children to reduce noise and chiefly to reassure parents that children are welcome.
 - d) Formation of Youth Orchestra.
 - e) Church members should attend Baptisms to lend spiritual support. Tea might be provided at these services to make young marrieds feel more welcome so that as a result they might become part of church community.
 - f) We were reminded of need for helpers for Rectory Sunday School which now has to close.

Choir

Feeling strong on this point. Sixteen people would like to see either all or part of the choir attend Family Service for the benefit of the service. As Senior or Junior Choir could not fairly be expected to attend both services, a choir at Evensong might comprise only "volunteers" from Senior Choir. Obvious problems here include the fact that Junior Choir has many Sunday School children and times clash.

Church Services

10 people suggested that the times of the services should vary with the time of year. Most suggestions were for Evensong, advancing it in winter to 4.00 p.m. or 4.30 p.m., having summer times of 6.30, 7.00, 7.30 or 8.00 p.m. Ideas varied enormously. Three people suggested the earlier time of 9.00 a.m. for the family service in summer. Two people recommended that Evensong should be abolished. It was realised that such changes would hurt some people.

The Spire

This was the only other subject to attract a sizeable number of comments:

- a) It should be noted in the Spire that the Church was forced to subsidise the magazine at the rate of £150 p.a. at present. Donations would be appreciated.
- b) A small charge should be made.
- c) It should contain a precis of the major matters discussed at PCC meetings.
- d) It should be substituted by a newsletter to every house in the parish.

Other Matters Raised

- 1) 4 people, one of whom very strongly, felt that the development/conversion of the church building should be discussed. Work had previously been started on plans but nothing had been decided.
- 2) Several people mentioned the need for stricter vetting of church readers. One suggestion was to involve the Royal School of Music.
- 3) Need for more house groups.
- 4) Notices to be typed out and handed to congregation.
- 5) Need of a team to serve the Dean Road area.

6) Maximum time limit for service on committees, which together with more co-options could promote greater understanding of problems and work involved.

I personally felt disappointed. At the meeting, several people spoke extremely ably against the need at this time for projects, financial targets or overt mission. They indicated that once fellowship and love within the Church was truly established all else would follow. However, only one person actually wrote making this point.

The above has been reported to the PCC who already propose to tackle many of these problems and they would very much value your opinions. So please let either myself or Pam know your views. We promise to pass them on.

T.L. Atkinson

JOYPRO

Quite early on 9th July, some of us began to re-construct the decorated float which had won for St. James's Church the first prize in our Parish Jubilee Celebration. That evening, somewhat weary and wind-blown we dismantled it after having "shown the flag" through the streets of Twickenham and Richmond.

The Occasion was a huge procession organised by the Borough and called "Joypro". Our float was one of about 60 and you can imagine the chaos as we all assembled around Twickenham Green at about 2.30 p.m. with buses and other Saturday afternoon traffic trying to get through. Apart from those taking part, few seemed to know about the event but, of course, there were many shoppers about, and many residents at their windows, for us to wave to cheerfully as we drove along. We hope that they realised that the centre-piece of our float - a structure covered with blue and white paper flowers, surmounted by a red cross - was a model of our church tower and spire. Only once did an emergency braking nearly topple the tower, not to mention the fifteen representatives of several generations of our congregation who were on board.

Eventually we reached Richmond Green where we were all inspected by the Mayor. Too late, we discovered there had been a sing-song for participants - owing to a lack of amplifying equipment, very few had realised that it was taking place.

Our thanks are due to Jack Gostling for the lone of one of his lorries, and to Ted Brown who drove it for us. Without this help, we would not possess the "Joypro" certificate that we brought home with us.

R.E.B.

JUBILEE VISITORS?

Perhaps it is because my garden has got over-grown with weeds! - Anyway my human Jubilee visitors came downstairs on the morning of June 9th saying "you've got an otter in the garden"! And so I had; I looked at it with interest. It found the remains of a bone which I had put out for the birds to peck at, and had a drink from the bird bath. It was darkish brown in colour, with an otter-like face, short legs, a humped back and quite a long tail; it was about 2½ feet long. I gave it some bread and milk as it seemed very hungry, but when I went out for the second time it caught sight of me and fled.

I phoned the police: "Has anyone reported the loss of an otter?" "A what?" said Teddington police. "There's an otter in my garden; has anyone lost one?". I also phoned the neighbouring vets. Our local ornithologist, Keith Betton, was contacted, and came along saying that it couldn't have been an

otter. He saw it later and at last said that it was an American Mink (Mustela Vison). I said that I thought minks were smaller.

Helen Taylor saw what we think might have been the same animal, at dusk on the same day; an animal which wasn't a squirrel, with short legs and a humped back, running into the churchyard. She described a smaller animal, and said that it got through the railings. I don't think "My Mink" could have done.

Gracious, we wondered have we a family of minks about?. David Bolt, who photographed "My Mink" said he wondered if it was pregnant. Panic! Panic! Does St. James's want to start raising funds with a mink farm? Anyway, I don't!

Susie, my cat, was very intrigued with the visitor, and insisted on going out and smelling around and viewing, wisely from a distance, the undergrowth into which it disappeared and reappeared in due course. I wasn't at all sure who would come off worst if they met, and after all it's Susie's garden.

Since the records on June 9th, however, neither mink has been seen again, so perhaps the family was up for the Jubilee celebrations.

The Mammal Society in Reading has been notified of this record, as a survey is being carried out on the British Mink Distribution. So St. James's will be kept informed!

Hannah Stanton.

Y.P.F. v. PARISH TENNIS TOURNAMENT

It was a warm sultry evening when the young hopefuls of the Y.P.F. joined battle with the Parish team in the steamy humid atmosphere of the L.E.H. Centre Courts. Y.P.F. entered the fray in a confident mood, but after the first few games it was obvious things were not going their way. The Parish, evidently upset by rumours of long practice sessions and the possibility of a sensational upset by the Y.P.F. team, had selected their players very carefully, relying on many many years of experience in Mr. and Mrs. Severn, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrance and Mr. and Mrs. Bridges, while using Anthony and Sue Rylands and Leslie and Jamie Robinson to destroy the Y.P.F. attack with their dazzling serves and fast returns!

As the light drew dimmer, my partner suggested we only use the older balls as the "maturer" members of the Parish might have difficulty in seeing them - a dastardly idea, but it worked! However, one-upmanship was not enough to bring the Y.P.F. victory and the final score finished at 85 - 145 games.

Congratulations must go to the Y.P.F. number one seeds Helen "Ginny" Lawrance and "Jimbo" Jesset (his mother wasn't there) for retaining their position, winning 3 out of 5 games. Also, if little Jo can match her boundless enthusiasm with a little more skill, then the Parish had better watch out next year.

After the tennis we all returned to the Bridges's where we were all provided with much needed drinks and food.

Finally I would like to thank all those who participated, and a special thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Bridges for opening their house to us all.

I.F.

A LAND-GIRL'S EXPERIENCE.

Watching a recent television serial "Backs to the Land" I was taken back to 1916 when I joined the "Land Army" and recalled many memories. Actually, at that time I was supposed to be getting a year's driving experience prior to going out to France as an ambulance driver.

I arrived at a training farm with a companion, one afternoon, and next morning we were up by 5 am with all the other girls and boys to start our first day - starting with milking. As the cows were driven in from the fields my friend and I ran for our lives, absolutely terrified. We had to practise milking on a dummy for two days, then on to the real thing. I was soon used to the cows, and in fact became quite fond of them. Whilst being milked they had a nasty habit of kicking and quite often one saw milk pouring down the dairy floor. This was considered a terrible crime, and we were told to hang on to the bucket at all costs - it didn't matter if we got a hefty kick for our troubles! After a while one could anticipate when a kick was coming and became practised at holding on to the bucket with one hand and the cow's leg with the other. At times we had to milk with the calf feeding simultaneously because somehow or other a cow can, if she chooses, hold back her milk. It was a fight then as to which teat to use, the calf always wanted the one that was being used, so we kept swapping. Sometimes, instead of milking, we had to clean out the bull pen and the "brute". I never liked bulls, and never will. Many a time I was chased round the yard, and in a quick escape, had to climb over a five barred gate. Getting the bull back into the pen was jolly tricky and we had to entice him with hay. Nasty, those bulls.

After breakfast we were each told our jobs for the day - some examples being potato hoeing, cabbage planting, road mending, thistle cutting, sheep dipping and hay making. At hay-making time we worked until 8 o'clock in the evening, and went to bed very tired.

One day I was allowed to hoe the turnips with the aid of a horse and plough. The first row I hoed was grand, I really enjoyed it, but when I looked round I found I had hoed up all the turnips, and left the weeds - well, how was I to know - they were very similar.

My brother lent me his motor bike, so I was able to go home to Southsea occasionally on a Sunday for the day, where I had a good meal. The food on the farm was very poor, no butter or margarine on our bread. For breakfast it was bread and marmalade, for tea bread and jam. I can't remember lunches, but they must have been adequate, otherwise we could never have been able to cope with the hard work and long hours.

Incidentally, none of us had any pay whatsoever, all the time we were at the training farm. What a difference now when one is paid quite well for learning a job.

I left before I had qualified for a paid job, because I was given orders to go to London for a driving test, prior to going to France as an ambulance driver, but that is another story.

Vivienne Prentice.

AROUND THE SPIRE

Polly Namo is an African schoolgirl who is staying in Hampton Hill for the school holidays, and everybody has made her very welcome; thank you. She is the daughter of an Anglican priest, the Rev. Jacob Namo, of Soweto, Johannesburg, South Africa, and her father has sent her to school here in England, to All Hallows Ditchingham, Suffolk, to do her O and A levels.

Polly generally spends most of her holidays in Hampton Hill, but is here only for a limited time this summer. She is going on to Oxford at the beginning of August. Her hobby is tennis which she enjoys very much.

The Rev. George Wood, an Anglican Priest, also from South Africa, and his wife and daughters, will be staying in Hampton Hill during the autumn; and

I know that everyone will make them very welcome too. Hampton Hill is getting a reputation for friendliness to people from overseas, and it means a great deal to know that when strangers come among us they are immediately made welcome.

Hazel Gubbins told us earlier of her engagement, and we were delighted to meet her fiance the Rev. John D. Reese, on Sunday July 17th, the day on which we had our Confirmation. The wedding is in Kidderminster on August 27, and we wish Hazel and John all possible happiness in their married life.

Bryan and Anne Kibble have moved to Warwick Close. We miss them from Burtons Road, but are most grateful that Bryan still comes back to cut the grass by the church. We hope that they will still remain part of St. James's family.

Jean Western has also moved from St. James's Avenue down to the far end of Broad Lane, Hampton. We are delighted to see her back every Sunday. Her phone number is as before.

And another move is that of Mr and Mrs Harries and Richard into The Wilderness. We are glad that they are still firmly in the parish.

ONE MORE STEP

I would like to draw your attention to a new addition to the Mothers' Union bookstall: a booklet called One More Step - Ideas about growing up in the Christian Life. It is written by Michael Hare Duke, Bishop of St. Andrews, and is about the things one does in Christian life, like being oneself, praying, seeing oneself as one of the great company of Christ's followers right through the ages, belonging to a Church congregation now, and thinking out what is right and wrong. As the author says, the booklet does not want to tell anybody what he ought to do, it is much rather an invitation to take One More Step in a journey which is the most important part in anybody's life. And although it is written specially for young people it is well worth reading for anybody who feels he would like to journey a little further.

(Published by the Mothers' Union, Price 40p)

THE MARRIAGE PARADOX - THE PARADOX OF LOVE

Last Sunday the Everyman Programme on TV dealt with what they called the Marriage Paradox. The situation where we all take vows at the time of marriage that are binding until death, and where at the same time more and more people feel that they are not really bound by this vow if their marriage "does not work out". It was suggested one might replace the wording "till death do us part" with something like "as long as our love abides".

At this point I was very forcefully reminded of a recent meeting of our Young Families Group where we reviewed a book by John Powell "Why am I afraid to love?" It does not deal with marriage alone but with love as such. However, what he says is I feel very relevant.

He makes the point that people are not able to love when they suffer some sort of pain. Pain isolates and centres the sufferer upon himself. A striking illustration: Whom did you think about when you last had a violent toothache? Answer: Nobody. When we are suffering we cannot forget ourselves and go out to others, caring about them, which is what love requires. John Powell then gives a psychological analysis of the human personality and shows in which ways people suffer, mentally. He shows A) the need for all of us to love the Other by accepting him as he is and helping him to self-acceptance - and self-fulfilment; because we all are very much what others make us. And B) the

need for real love to be able to give without wanting anything back. As long as we go out looking for love from others, even serving them in order to gain their love, we will go empty. The paradox of love is that we become loveable only if we love without looking for rewards.

Which brings me back to the marriage vows. A love that will abide is one that is an act of the will. Not a romantic feeling which may wear off in the difficult times we have to pass through. Real love itself is difficult, and the marriage relationship is a God-given framework that provides us with the best opportunity to practise it.

H.B.

SEX EDUCATION FOR TODDLERS

You can take things to extremes! If you thought that when you read this title, you were not alone. We did not quite know what to expect at our Young Families Group meeting on this subject, but we are now quite convinced that Sex Education can indeed not start early enough.

In fact it was pointed out to us that we were all practising it with our young pre-toddlers stage babies in that we were cuddling them on our laps while we listened. We were thus conveying the feeling to them that their bodies were loveable.

I am not going to give a resume of the talk, but just say that sensible potty training was considered to come under this heading and that the main message was: always answer your children's questions truthfully. They don't go beyond 'Where do babies come from' until a lot later. Do not tell them anything they don't enquire about, and above all give them the conviction that warmth and love govern all family relationships.

H.B.

NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

It is **not** the job of the Editorial Board to write the magazine! But frequently they find themselves doing just that.

Please don't wait for us to find out that you attended this or that lecture or function, that you have views on controversial subjects or know something of general interest to the Parish. Tell us and offer an article. We now have two extra pages permanently; do help us to use them to the best advantage.

With reference to the two additional pages now contained in The Spire, it may sometimes be possible to fit in one or two small ads. A moderate charge would be made for these. For details please get in touch with Mrs. Severn, 979 1954.

CONFIRMATION

We were glad to have our Bishop with us on July 17, when he presided at the Parish Communion, administered Confirmation, and spoke to many of us at the Parish Breakfast in church afterwards. From the many comments we have heard, the service itself made an unusually deep impression on many people. As on the last occasion, the laying-on of hands itself took place at the altar-rails, with the candidates kneeling until all had been confirmed. People who had not seen this procedure before said how much they were moved by it, and how

much they preferred it to the 'constant bobbing up and down' before the Bishop's chair. Nine of our young people were confirmed: they were Ann Creech, Keith Lambert, Johanna Lawrance, Fiona McLeod, Lisa Smeaton, Pia Smeaton, Sarah Watkins, Lucy Watkins, and Penelope Watson.

THE YOUNG FAMILIES GROUP

"BIB AND SUCKER"

Autumn Term 1977

We are now entering our second year, and we are pleased to say we shall be expanding our activities. As before, meetings will be held every first and third (and fifth) Thursday in the month from 10.30 to 12.00 at Wayside. But apart from that we hope to have occasional evening meetings, at the same address. These will be advertised separately.

The main reason for this innovation is the fact that our babies cannot easily be put into a creche. We can therefore not concentrate in the mornings as much as we would like for some of the subjects we like to discuss. And so we have decided to have very short talks in the mornings with a long chat over coffee afterwards, and the evening meetings can cover more thorough discussions on more difficult subjects.

The aim of all our meetings is still the same: to help us cope with our job of being a mother.

Programme

- SEPTEMBER 15 "The aims of nursery education"
Mrs. Zollo from St. James's Nursery School
- 29 "The history of Hampton Hill - with particular reference to the changing life of a young mum"
Marjory Orton
- OCTOBER 6 Flower arranging
Practical demonstration by Mrs. Saunders
- 20 "How to be a thrifty mum"
Mrs. Rockliffe
- NOVEMBER 3 "How a blind mother copes"
Mrs. Sheila Webb
- 17 "The family"
Discussion based on a preceding evening meeting
- DECEMBER 1 Making Christmas decorations
- 15 "Early learning"
Coryn and Frances

BIBLE PUZZLE No. 2

The following is a verse from the Gospels. Can you decipher the code and say from where it comes? Winner's name and solution next issue.

ABC DEFG HIJDCAB DBCKC EA IELACAB NFG ABJO BCNKCLA ABC
GUYFG ABCKCJP HOA QNFLA FJA ACII DBCFQC EA QJRCAB NFG
DBEABCK EA SJ CAB. LJ EL CTKU JFC ABNA EL HJKF JP ABC
LVEKEA.

BIBLE PUZZLE No. 1 Solution: Luke 18, v.17, Authorised Version.

The first correct entry received came from Mrs. E. Lloyd and Mrs. J. Lloyd. of 73, Burton's Road.

DEANERY INTERCESSIONS

August

- 14 Holy Trinity, Twickenham
- 21 St. Augustine of Caterbury, Whitton
- 28 Bishop Wand School

September

- 4 St. Mark, Teddington
- 11 Wel-Care
- 18 The Bishop, the Archdeacon, the Area Dean

SOME DATES TO NOTE

August

- 15 10.30 Editorial Board (63, Park Road)
- 17 07.30 Holy Communion
- 21 17.15 Senior members of congregation lead service at Laurel Dene.
- 24 ST, BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY: 19.15 Holy Communion
- 25 20.00 Prayer Meeting (69, St. James's Avenue)
- 28 17.15 Young People lead service at Laurel Dene
- 30 BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST: 19.15 Holy Communion; 20.00 Prayer Meeting (75, Burton's Road.)

September

- 1 20.00 Liturgical Committee (75, Burton's Road)
- 7 14.30 Mothers' Union Branch Meeting (W)
- 10 All-day cleaning of Hall by voluntary effort.
- 11 Sunday Schools reopen
- 14 18.45 The Questers begin meeting again.
- 27 20.00 Parochial Church Council (W)

October

- 9 HARVEST FESTIVAL
- 23 18.45 UNITED SERVICE (Sunbury Methodist Church)
- 30 Until beginning of Summer Time, all Sunday evening services to be at 16.30, starting today.

BAPTISMS

June

- 26 Joanne Lucy Rayner, 100, Rectory Grove
Benjamin John Routledge, 10, Bishop's Grove

July

- 24 Charlotte Marie Ellis, 15, Bushy Park Gardens
Kate Ellis, 15, Bushy Park Gardens
Nicholas Frank Ratcliff, 15, Deacon's Walk
Raciel Caroline Spencer, 99, Rectory Grove

MARRIAGES

July

- 9 Paul Michael Hodgson to Linda Ann Mabley
Peter Richard Makepeace to Jill Rosemary Eggleton
16 Raymond Leonard Daniels to Patricia Jane Offord

BURIALS AND CREMATIONS

June

- 23 Eva Victoria Bird, 111, Burton's Road, aged 75 years (at South-West Middlesex Crematorium)

July

- 8 Albert Martin, 14, Edward Road, aged 69 years (at South-West Middlesex Crematorium)
21 Jane Alice Luck, 25, Bishop's Grove, aged 65 years (in Teddington Cemetery)
25 Arthur Albert Joyce, Laurel Dene, aged 84 years
(interment of ashes in family grave in churchyard)