

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 14 – 19 MAY 1979

The Hampton Council of Churches has decided this year to donate the money raised during Christian Aid Week to a specific project, "HELPING THE PEOPLE OF THE SAHEL REGION OF WEST AFRICA". Their target is a minimum of £1000.

The six SAHEL countries cover MAURITANIA, SENEGAL, MALI, UPPER VOLTA, MEER and CHAD, an arid belt some 2500 miles long and lying between the SAHARA desert and the savanna land to the south. The monsoon rainy season, if it does not fail, brings an annual rainfall of 4-12 inches.

Following the failure of the rains seven years ago the natural economy of of the region has suffered disastrously. The drought destroyed the grazing lands of a nomadic people, their cattle died or had to be sold, palm groves were abandoned, crops failed.

Christian Aid has been able to provide the help needed to enable these people to survive and rebuild their economy. A small team of specialists is teaching these people many basic skills, how to manufacture simple ploughs, crop farming, building small dams to retain the precious water when it comes, cooking a meal with adequate protein. The medical assistance that can be given is like a drop in the ocean.

All this work in development and self-help for the Region needs money over the next decade. Our donations will help to make the difference between standing still and real progress.

The Rev. Morris W. Munns, Area Secretary for Greater London West, Christian Aid the British Council of Churches, spoke at our meeting on 4 April on this project and showed a colour film lasting 22 minutes on the Christian Aid work in the SAHEL region.

The films will be shown at 7.45 pm on Sunday May 13 in the Methodist Church, Percy Road, Hampton, following the Christian Aid service there starting at 6.45 pm.

A. Loyd

WORLD CONFERENCE OF RELIGIONS FOR PEACE

I have recently been asked to take on the Secretaryship of the U.K. and Ireland branch of the World Conference of Religions for Peace. I would like to write a word or two about it, as I wonder if there are any readers of The Spire who would like to join it, or come to our meetings.

What is it? An International Inter-Faith grouping of all the major churches and religious traditions with the aim of working for true peace in the community and in the world.

Our Chairman is the Rev. Gordon Wilson (Anglican), of Crewe, and our Vice-Chairman is Professor Harminder Singh (a Sikh). On our Executive are Bishop Casey (Roman Catholic Bishop of Galway), the Rev. Jack Austin (Buddhist), Dr. Frank Chandra (a Hindu), Rabbi Albert Friedlander, Dr. Syed Pasha (a Muslim), A.S. Chaatwal (a Sikh). Other inter-faith groups exist, but not specifically for the promotion of peace and the justice on which true peace must be built. We work in closely with them.

Internationally there have been two large conferences, at Kyoto in Japan in 1970 and at Louvain in Belgium in 1974. These brought together hundreds of people from all parts of the world united in their work for a more peaceful human family. WCRP III is being held in Princeton, New Jersey, USA, in August 1979.

Recently we all met to honour one of our WCRP Co-Chairmen, the Rev. Nikkyo Niwano, who has gained international recognition as a peace-maker, and who was awarded the Templeton Foundation Prize for a major contribution to religion. He was received in Windsor by the Duke of Edinburgh and at a crowded Guildhall in London. We gave a small party for him in Westminster. His photograph was on the front page of the Church Times.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday, June 12, at the Islamic Cultural Centre, 146 Park Road, Regents Park, at 5.30 pm. Dr. Syed Pasha is going to talk on "The World of Islam To-day, and its relationship with Peace". All are welcome.

Hannah Stanton

ADMISSION OF CHILDREN TO COMMUNION

For the past two years the Staff, in consultation with the P.C.C. and the Bishop of Kensington, have been considering the implication of confirmation of young people and how this may be made more meaningful and to try and ensure that the commitment, once made, was made in a mature, unpressurised and personal manner. This was considered necessary as the greater proportion of children confirmed fall away very quickly from any real connection with their local Christian Community. The policy of not confirming children until they were about 16 years old was introduced and generally accepted. But with our worship now centred on the Parish Communion it is necessary to ensure that children in the ten plus age group, who have been baptised and are regularly involved in our worship, should be made to feel part of the Christian Family and take part totally in the worship and fellowship and be able to receive the bread and wine at the Eucharist on a regular basis.

Accordingly we responded to the Bishop with some firm proposals for introducing this development in our worship. The children should have a firm connection with the church and attend church more than once a month, and be willing to continue to participate in a group where Christian teaching was given. Additionally there should be amongst the children a disposition and eagerness to follow the Christian Way and before admission they should make some appropriate affirmation of faith and of a desire to become a communicant.

More about all this in the next issue.

THE LEAVES OF LIFE

Our church was indeed fortunate on Palm Sunday to have a musical presentation of the Passion, called "The Leaves of Life". This was a first performance of a work by William Godfree, a gifted composer. The words are taken from a medieval carol, 'The crown He wears upon His head

Is woven of leaves of light',

and this was used, with additional verses by Joanna Robertson.

The programme consisted of four sections — Palm Sunday, The Trial of Jesus, The Crucifixion and The Resurrection. The narrator was Margery Orton, who gave a feeling and dignified liaison to the excellent choir, which was

accompanied by Kenneth Sharpe at the organ, with Malcolm Smith on the trumpet, besides three recorder players. The soloists were Jack Gostling, Helen Taylor and David Taylor, with Ruth and Emma as Junior sweet singers: we heard every word. We shall not readily forget David Pailthorpe's 'Jesus' nor Alwyn Loyd's 'Pilate'. The dramatic direction was reverent, ably carried out by Janet Robinson. The composer himself was at the piano.

The congregation joined in the hymn 'Were you there when they crucified my Lord?'. The atmosphere was one of quiet beauty and solemnity, but not in any way dull! It was rewarding to be present and share in this, whether in the choir or the congregation.

D.M.

THIS JOYFUL EASTERTIDE

1. Holy Saturday evening found a group of about twenty of us gathered in St. James's church in order to meditate on Christ's Passion, and to prepare ourselves for Easter Day.

There was, I felt, an extraordinary feeling of fellowship, as together we sang, prayed and heard appropriate readings for this solemn occasion.

For me personally though the most memorable and helpful area of this informal gathering was the moment when, in complete darkness, we sat together and using the darkness as an aid, meditated upon the utter desolation which our Lord must have experienced during this separation from God for our sakes.

Little as one can humanly comprehend this separation, and the mental torture which it must have presented to our Lord – I found myself deeply moved, and more vividly than ever before was I able to enter in to those sufferings.

After the darkness came the light – our Paschal Candle was lit, and by its light readings – including a passage from the book of Revelation – were given. We were prompted to consider what progress had been made in our Christian lives during the past year; what Christ and His death and resurrection meant to us now and what growth we might hope to achieve in the coming year.

The gathering was concluded as we greeted each other with the Peace.

For Christians, what other time of the Church's year can possibly hold such joy as this? "I am the Resurrection and the Life . . ." what splendid Good News it is!

I found this gathering with its warmth of fellowship extremely helpful, and somehow, the most pleasant meeting together afterwards at Helen and Alan Taylor's home, seemed merely to be continuation and a cementing of all the experiences which had gone before!

How lovingly we were entertained, and how graciously Ruth and Huw looked after their guests!

The experience of this evening seemed to blend so wonderfully with another spiritual experience which was taking place for me at the time – but that is another story!

Bea Page

2. I would like to record an appreciation of the thought and work that went into the planning and carrying out of the Easter Eve Quiet Hour arranged by the Saturday night Lent study group and friends. We did not sit dispersed in the

pews but were all grouped together in a friendly semicircle on chairs in front of the Chancel steps. Each one of us had an individual warm and loving greeting and so as to familiarize us with the singing required of us Helen Taylor led us in a short practice. Then we settled down to an hour of quiet worship. I found all the readings inspiring and very moving as they were accompanied by the readers' reflections on them. I have never heard the 'dry bones' reading delivered more meaningfully and the memory of the moment and the continuing inspiration of New Life coming from the Word of the Lord will remain with me — thank you Ron Bridges. Shalom — we have great cause for joy and praise that there is such a growing spiritual insight amongst us and that it is shared so simply and convincingly with others.

After the service of worship we were all invited to the Taylors' to a magnificent and joyful "spread", again a combined operation. It was a great joy to be part of it all and I am grateful.

Margery Orton

3. On a glorious, hot, sunny morning, more reminiscent of August than April, the children's Easter service was held. From infants-in-arms to teenagers, they came into the flower-filled church, and even the youngest members of the congregation had no doubt that Easter is an occasion of joy.

The Sunday School play was performed with obvious delight by the young actors and actresses, and Miss Stewart's tale of "The Empty Egg" conveyed an easily understood message to the youngsters.

What a pleasure it was to hear them shouting the responses with the enthusiasm of a football crowd and to hear them singing rousing hymns to tunes they knew. Most children in past days saw Easter worship as a duty involving sitting still through a lengthy adult service. I felt that this delightful children's service, so well suited to their needs, made Easter worship a very real pleasure for all who attended.

Anne Jones

4. The three celebrations held by the catechumenate over the Holy Week and Easter period were well attended, and generally found to be very meaningful.

On Wednesday night the ceremony commemorating the washing of the disciples' feet by Jesus was held in the vestry. Thought in advance to be perhaps the most difficult part of the celebrations, it was found to be the perfect preparation for Friday and Saturday nights.

Friday night's celebration was held in church, and was centred around the Cross, and the recognition of one's own cross to be taken up. I think I can say that it was found by all to be very moving. After the service, those who wanted to, began fasting until after the Vigil.

The culmination of the Easter celebrations, the Vigil, began in church at 11.00 pm on Saturday and ended with an Agape at Marjorie McDonnell's house sometime after dawn on Sunday. Although one or two pairs of eyes were drooping as the dawn approached, people found that the readings and admonitions made staying awake while the Lord passed over, easier than might have been imagined. At the Agape, a marvellous spread was laid on, with a main course of lamb chops. Many thanks and congratulations to those who prepared it.

All in all, everyone seems glad to have taken part and to have gained by the experience.

A.P.H.

SPRING FETE AT LAUREL DENE

THE 3rd HAMPTON HILL SCOUT GROUP are holding their Annual Fete in the beautiful grounds of Laurel Dene on SATURDAY, MAY 26.

Entertainment will be provided by THE RICHMOND TOWN YOUTH BRASS BAND (as seen on T.V.) and there will be dancing by THE ASH SCHOOL OF BALLET. Also our Cub-Scouts are putting on a Pageant. "The Signing of the Magna Carta" which they hope to perform at "Twickere" in June.

There will be plenty of stalls and side-shows and afternoon teas will be served — so come along and spend an enjoyable afternoon, and at the same time support your own Scout Group.

D.C.

VIEW FROM THE PEW

I am grateful to two little boys who added to the the joy of Easter for me on Palm Sunday. The Sunday School children were waving their paper palm trees to the singing and one small friend who just had his palm cross to wave, turned round and beamed at me and waved his cross in a little private wave to me and I picked up mine and waved it privately back to him and we beamed at each other — it was a lovely, warming moment.

The second small boy was a tiny fairhaired toddler who toddled up the nave and stood filled with wonder at it all — the full congregation, the singing, the music, the waving children and the universal smiles his innocent presence evoked. Rupert smiled down lovingly at this little soul and Lesley caught him up in her arms in the procession to the Vestry — in which he had joined — there to be claimed by his mother. Toddler, mother, staff and congregation seemed enchanted by the incident. I know I was.

M.O.

AROUND THE SPIRE

Sincere congratulations to Coryn, Ian, Duncan and James Robinson on the birth of Kaitlyn Vivienne who arrived safely on Friday, April 6.

Our congratulations also to Richard and Ruth Melville on the joy of their first born, a son, to be called Christopher Russell ; he was born on March 19.

The amount given in memory of Lionel Mills to Clarendon Special School has now passed the £200 mark. The money will be used by the School for much needed improvements to its stage, on which the children have presented so many delightful dramatic items in the past few years.

As we go to press, we are sad that so many well-known and well-loved parishioners are in hospital, but glad that they are all now doing well. John Thompson is in one hospital, his wife Henrietta in another; Pat Young is a long way off in New Cross Hospital, Violet Clark and Gladys Parr not far from one another on the same floor of the Medical Centre at West Middlesex.

After months of anxiety about Gwen Champriss, we are glad that she is now progressing so well, and she has asked us to publish this note:

"Now back on the road to recovery I wish to thank everyone who spiritually, morally and physically offered their encouragement for my return to good health.

Doctors, nurses, medicines and operations are very important but equally so are friends and acquaintances — especially in worrying times.

The letters, cards, messages and visits not only brightened my days, kept me in touch with the world outside St. Thomas's Hospital but ensured that I was not living in limbo.

Since coming home I have found the same warm and generous spirit which has helped me make a marvellous advance on the road back to an everyday life.

Please accept my most sincere thanks in which my husband joins."

A MEDAL RECALLING THE PAST

We have just been promised for our archives a medal for regular attendance presented by the vicar to a pupil at the Church School in School Road. The possessor of this medal treasured it all his long life until his death recently at the age of 90. He was very much impressed that he received this from the vicar, though he himself was a strict Baptist, and his father was the fervent pastor of Zion Strict Baptist Church in Kingston. His father did not know whether or not to forbid his accepting this medal, and he was also worried because the boy attended services in the parish church on Holy Days. On Sundays the boy and his brother used to walk through Bushy Park from Ivy Dene where they lived to the church in Kingston carrying a hamper between them and then between services they had a picnic lunch. When he was older the boy rebelled against the stark view of Christianity exemplified by his father — the culminating point came when he was excommunicated from his church for marrying a girl from another less strict Baptist Church where the girls were actually allowed to wear light dresses! He did not return to the Church until late in life, and was baptised in a more moderate Baptist Church at the age of 63.

REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

As we told you in The Spire we asked the P.C.C. and a few older and younger members of St. James's three questions, the answers to which would be published for the Annual Church Meeting. The answers we actually received are set out below.

These were the questions:

1. In as few words as possible — what do you personally see as the main function of the Christian community?
2. Have we in St. James's discharged our responsibility in the best possible manner during the past year?
3. Is there anything we must do better during the coming year?

It soon became obvious that the second question was the least useful if the whole exercise was to stimulate productive thought and to help us see more clearly what we must do in the future. There were those who answered yes and those who answered no, and one must probably realise that there is no best possible way in which to go about our business anyway. One must never be complacent. Apart from that, the same ground is covered by questions two and three. We are only printing those answers to no. 2 that introduce a separate idea.

The answers for no. 3 can be grouped into those that make specific suggestions and those that say we must do what we do better. Here we give you all the answers.

Likewise, for question 1. where there are again two basic ideas. We must provide a service in the community in practical terms, and we must spread the faith. It soon became obvious that the two go hand in hand. It is certainly not a question of either/or. Faith inevitably brings us to live a life of love and care for others and such a life must raise questions in the minds of those we live with. A possible danger one can see is that people become so busy doing that they themselves lose sight of the moving force behind their lives, and their business fails to point to God.

To end the introduction we give you one answer which covered all three questions:

I have not been in the parish long enough to know very much about how St. James's fits in with the rest of the community, nor have I been a Christian long enough to know how it ought to fit in.

I do know that since I first came to parish communion one Sunday last summer, I have encountered not the stony faces I expected, but smiles, friendliness and — yes — even love.

If I, an outsider, can experience this — then what a prospect for the future. Everyone loving everyone else just as Jesus did — and still does — but then that's not possible is it . . . or is it?

ANSWERS TO QUESTION 1.

1. I see the main function of the Christian community to love and care for others and through this to serve one another whether it be a fellow Christian or an atheist neighbour.

2. To be a body of people, with common ideals and outlook, who can offer support to all within their community and yet maintain interest and concern with others, not necessarily Christians, both at local and worldwide level.

3. To provide a less selfish and more stable community, that will appreciate and acknowledge every member of that community.

4. To provide a secure, working fellowship.

5. To be community of Christians sharing Christian love and fellowship with one another, attracting others into the community by the example of their lives and welcoming others into it. It seems to me to be inherent in a Christian community that its members are outward looking and that the strength and joy they obtain from their fellowship is put to good use in the wider world (large and small) outside.

6. To help people, all people, to achieve a proper relationship with each other, with the natural world around us, and with God. The way it can do this is to give clear insights into our condition, and to give guidance based on doctrine and insight into how to get our relationship right.

7. To be a witness of love to all people.

8. To witness both as individuals and as a community to the love of God.

9. Following the teachings of Jesus Christ in our everyday lives we must of course love the Lord our God and our neighbours as ourselves. As witnesses to the Good News of the Kingdom of God we should not keep this to ourselves but try to tell others. We should provide and maintain the facilities to enable people to worship and learn.

10. To bring more people, inside and outside the Church, to realise that the Gospel of Jesus Christ means good news to every individual.

11. By allowing the Lord Jesus Christ into our hearts we will be able to show the signs of love towards each other. This will attract others to follow Christ — so spreading the Christian message "to love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself"; with a love which is able to overcome the many slights and insults, the petty hurts which we inflict on others and are in turn inflicted on

us — causing resentment, anger and jealousy. To be able truly to love in the dimension of the Cross.

12. a) To get to know Jesus better ourselves and through Him to come to a closer understanding of God, His Power and His will for men.

b) Earnestly applying ourselves to this, to go out in the power of the Holy Spirit both literally into the community around us and spiritually in disciplined prayer, and thus

c) to bring the Good News of salvation to our small part of the world which has been given to us as our responsibility.

ANSWERS TO QUESTION 2.

1. We can be quite proud of what we did last year. The Open Day and the Stewardship Campaign meant our reaching a lot of people to explain what our church really stands for.

2. We have tried, but our example does not shine clearly enough in the community to make people anxious to join us!

3. We must spend less time and energy caring for the flock supposedly in the fold and go out to the lost sheep.

4. Let us ask ourselves whether we have caused many people to hammer at the door asking one to show them the way to let Christ into their lives.

5. If we had "discharged our responsibility in the best possible manner" our community church would be filled to overflowing, our parish Heaven on Earth with everyone believing in and praising God — so obviously we have fallen short.

ANSWERS TO QUESTION 3.

1. Difficult question — perhaps not possible for me to answer without looking at individual problems, but overall I am most satisfied with the church of St. James in general.

2. I think we could try to amalgamate all the churches in the area, particularly with youth groups. In this way tomorrow's Church can be better united than the Church of today.

3. I think we all learned what true co-operation can produce with the Open Day. Possibly it might be nice to involve the community further in entertainments such as the concert of three years ago and the Easter concert.

4. We must try to be more patient with the young children at the services; after all, if the children don't come, the parents can't come. It is a great pity that people do not support Evensong.

5. Yes. We must try and involve more young people in the life of the church. We must make them feel welcome and needed. I am constantly aware of the increasing load carried by the older members of the congregation and sometimes wonder how I with my seemingly never-ending family responsibilities could help out and share the work load.

6. A major problem is the low number of people on the Electoral Roll and indeed the relatively small number who regularly come to church. We should try to find out why people, particularly young and/or working-class people, do not come in larger numbers. Do we use our talents as efficiently as we might? Do we really know **who** is talented at what — have we got people in our community who could handle certain jobs in the future and make the selection of officers easier?

7. a) Yes. To live with the conviction that we have a responsibility, each one of us. Let there be more study and prayer groups — one in each road if possible! Thus more sharing of, and praise for, both individual and group experience and the achievement of more awareness and sensitivity to the living presence of God in our lives.

b) more evangelical work; e.g. road by road visiting, one road at a time, not considering the magnitude of the task but accomplishing it patiently bit by bit.

c) Mission to Chambery and Bishops Grove estates. Monthly or more services at Rectory School. The setting up of a prayer and study group there to promote fellowship.

An increasing awareness of responsibility for spreading the work of God and willingness to offer ourselves individually and collectively for this work.

8. Increase our personal contact as Christians between ourselves and our other neighbours and friends.

9. The good news of the Gospel must be proclaimed. Christ came to save sinners.

10. Witness by our lives that our way of life works, and works better than humanism or any alternative. The test of a real belief is that it works, and goes on working. If we are people who bring harmony and peace to ourselves and others, we have a working religion. If we are not such people we must do better.

11. We must certainly try harder to make other people take notice of our message, that Jesus Christ spells Good News. For this we first have to realise ourselves that we have a message for them. And we must learn better how to live our faith so that people begin to wonder why we act the way we do.

12. We can pray sincerely to the Lord for faith, understanding and courage, so that as many people as possible may receive the Good News of Christ – that he died for us so that we might be saved – so that we no longer need fear loneliness, rejection or death.

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS – YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1978

<u>1977</u>	GENERAL FUND – RECEIPTS	
4,792	Pledged Giving	4,985
1,025	Other Giving and Donations	1,270
1,285	Refund of tax on Deeds of Covenant	1,429
316	Other Income	426
<u>7,418</u>		<u>£8,110</u>
	PAYMENTS	
92	Repairs & Maintenance	530
1,221	Heat, Light and Insurance	1,232
1,046	Vicar, Asst. Curate, Organist, Choir, Etc.	1,118
2,450	Diocesan Contribution	3,217
1,017	Donations to Charities	863
	Magazine Subsidy, Churchyard, Stewardship and Miscellaneous expenses	1,484
<u>782</u>		<u>1,484</u>
<u>6,608</u>		<u>£8,444</u>
	PARISH HALL	
2,296	Income from letting and sundry receipts	2,420
1,719	Less running expenses	1,617
<u>577</u>		<u>£ 803</u>
	WAYSIDE	
532	Rent of flat, donations and sundries	527
-	Refund of maintenance premium	364
<u>532</u>		<u>891</u>
398	Less running expenses	795
<u>134</u>		<u>£ 96</u>
	PARISH MAGAZINE	
500	Income from advertisements	464
100	Subsidy from General Fund	350
<u>400</u>	Production costs (including special edition in July)	<u>£ 814</u>

A copy of the full Accounts can be obtained from
The Treasurer. Mr. G.I. Robinson.

CHEMISTS' ADDITIONAL DUTY ROTA

May

- 13 D.R. Thomas, 113 Stanley Road, Teddington.
- 20 H. Hall, 62 High Street, Hampton Hill.
- 27 E. Moss, 14 Broad Street, Teddington.
- 28(Bank Holiday) Boots, 66 Broad Street, Teddington.

June

- 3 F.G. Martin, 28B Priory Road, Hampton.
- 10 D.G. Manley, 122 High Street, Teddington.
- 17 F.G. Martin, 3 Station Approach, Hampton.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- 13-19 CHRISTIAN AID WEEK: House-to-house collections organised by the Hampton Council of Churches throughout the area.
 - 13 No Welcome Service here on this Sunday because we shall be joining in the UNITED CHRISTIAN AID SERVICE at 18.45 in the Methodist Church, Percy Road, Hampton.
 - 14 10.30 Editorial Board (75 St. James's Avenue)
 - 16 Community Care Group AGM; 19.15 Holy Communion
 - 17 10.30 Young Families' Group – 'Open University' (W)
 - 19 10.00 Annual Stewardship Conference (London Diocesan House)
 - 20 17.15 Members of St. James's lead the service at Laurel Dene
 - 22 20.00 Prayer Meeting (3 Shewood Road); Tuesday Club (W)
 - 24 ASCENSION DAY: 19.15 Holy Communion
 - 26 14.30 Scout Group Spring Fair (Laurel Dene)
 - 29 Young Families' Group: Outing
 - 30 19.15 Holy Communion
- June
- 3 WHITSUNDAY
 - 4 19.15 Holy Communion
 - 5 Tuesday Club: Mystery Coach Tour; 20.00 Deanery Synod; Prayer Meeting (75 Burton's Road)
 - 6 Mothers' Union: Branch visit to Mary Sumner House
 - 7 10.30 Young Families' Group: 'Safety in the Home' (W); 20.00 Liturgical Committee (63 Park Road)
 - 10 TRINITY SUNDAY
 - 11 ST BARNABAS: 19.15 Holy Communion
 - 14 CORPUS CHRISTI: 19.15 Holy Communion

MARRIAGE

March

- 31 Robert Alan Firman to Lorna Jean Howells

INTERMENT

April

- 26 Lionel Mills, 3 Elmfield Avenue, Teddington aged 69 years
(interment of ashes in Garden of Rest)