

FAREWELL TO RUPERT AND CONNIE

As this issue of the Magazine goes to press a few days before our farewell to Rupert and Connie, reports of the events connected with that departure will be fully reported in the January issue of the 'The Spire'. At the farewell reception given in honour of Rupert and Connie on Saturday 29th November in the church hall there were two main speakers, Margery Orton and Alan Taylor.

Margery had had the original idea of soliciting various items about Rupert and his ministry over the years as the basis for her tribute. She began by saying that to talk of a lasting goodbye would be too painful, especially after nearly thirty years, but she thanked God for them both and for their guidance and hoped that we should see them back among us from time to time. The tributes she had collected were many and varied but they all emphasized Rupert's deep faith, humility and love. She concluded with these words "Rupert and Connie" — "well done, good and faithful servants" — words which we would all like to echo — "God bless you both".

Alan then spoke and quoted some words from St. Mark's Gospel "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God" and in this seeking, he said, there had always been great encouragement from Rupert for everyone to go forward at their own pace without any pressure. People may be commemorated by brass plates on church walls or in stone edifices but our best tribute to Rupert and Connie's ministry will be to carry on in the way that they have shown us, or as Paul put it:-

'Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise; think on these things.' Phil. Chap.4.

Alan said a special 'Thank You' to Connie for her unflinching words of praise and encouragement on many and varied occasions.

It was a sad occasion in many ways, said Alan, but the future held new challenges for St. James's Church and its people as well as for Rupert and Connie in their new life, and he voiced the wishes of everyone for happiness in their retirement and they knew that our prayers and blessings went with them.

CONFIRMATION

"And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch". This was the text of the Bishop of Hereford's (retired) address at the recent confirmation at St. Mary's Hampton on November 23rd. "Well you may ask" continued the Bishop "What were they called before?" The answer was "Followers of the way". The people being confirmed, some forty-five in number and a good proportion of them adults, had already begun along 'The Way' by being baptised. This was a further stage along the road. When going to some new place, said the Bishop, it was as well to have a guide book so that we should know what treasures to see and what the possible pitfalls might be. God had provided us with the Holy Scriptures to be just such a book. A daily study of the Bible and a quiet time alone with God had proved its worth in his life and he was sure it would in his hearers.

As a Bishop he had to attend many confirmations in parts of London totally unknown to him and early on a Sunday morning it was not always possible to find someone to ask the way. On one occasion a man and his small dog got into the Bishop's car in order to act as guide. A guide and companion to go with us and show us the way was given to us by God in the Holy Spirit.

An expedition setting out to cross unknown territory or climbing a high peak gives a good deal of thought to what rations it should take, and we should do likewise. Our food was to be found in the bread and wine, eaten and drunk at the eucharist each Sunday. God has given us the essentials for life's journey, it is up to us to use them, the Bishop concluded.

After the Confirmation, communion was administered to the whole congregation and at the end of the service the Bishop greeted each candidate to the applause of the rest of the people gathered in the church. It was a truly joyful occasion and I am sure that the four people confirmed from our own church will surely remember the day all their lives.

Helen Taylor

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY WELCOME SERVICE

At first sight Moses and Martin Luther King would seem not to have very much in common, but on further reflection in fact they do.

Both men were brought up in fairly privileged positions, both later identified themselves with their own down-trodden people, both received a very definite call from God and then they tried to fulfil that call as best they were able.

But I suppose both men are best remembered by their achievement of leading their people out of a situation of subjection to one of comparative freedom.

Moses heard God's voice on many occasions, first in the bush, burning in the desert. At God's insistence he went to Pharaoh to ask him to free the Children of Israel from slavery and to let them go to another land promised to them by God; but it took a long time and a good deal of intervention by God before Pharaoh finally agreed, and Moses was able to lead the people out of Egypt.

Similarly it took Martin Luther King and his people a long time to persuade the authorities in the United States that the black people there had a right to certain fundamental freedoms, the most publicised of which was to have non-segregated public transport. Following an incident on a bus in Alabama when a black woman refused to give up her seat to a white, the Blacks boycotted the buses for nearly a year before finally achieving their aim.

But you may say what has all this to do with remembering the dead of two world wars? Simply this, God may call a man to be a leader, but what about the followers, are they called too? Mostly of course they are not; their's is the greater sacrifice therefore. They gave their lives for a cause many did not understand, and often gave it unnecessarily.

Let us remember too, that lives are still being lost daily in wars all over the world, Ireland, Iran, Afghanistan, and many other places. Leaders are needed now, but for peace to lead people to freedom as Moses and Martin Luther King did.

Helen Taylor

PS: The Welcome Service finished with some very moving quotations from

Martin Luther King's own writings. They dealt with his belief in the power of non-violence, and the necessity to love one's fellow men even when they are one's enemies. It felt good to listen to these words, and at the time one felt full of admiration for a man of such Christian convictions. Yes, they were sentiments one fully subscribed to.

But does one really? Have you thought what it must feel like to be a non-violent demonstrator and actually get beaten up? To know you are going to suffer bodily assault, and not determine to let them have it if they try anything? Would our Christian ideals stand up to that? Or would we more prudently stay away in the first place?

Martin Luther King did not receive full support from "the Churches". Is "the Church of England" quite free from colour prejudice? Are we as individual Christians? Fine sentiments experienced during a church service want to be taken "out into the world" and aired in everyday life.

Hilde Bucknell

STEWARDSHIP ANNUAL REVIEW

We were all here once again, announced by Bill Robinson and greeted by Rupert and Connie. Once in the convivial atmosphere of our own church hall there was a splendid repast laid out on a long table in the centre — for which our thanks to Margaret Leatherdale, Eila and their team of helpers. Having greeted our friends and been introduced to the guest speaker, Mr. John Wheeler, we were invited to help ourselves to the good things prepared for us. At about 8.30 pm we were called to order and everyone turned to face the platform on which sat Rupert Brunt, Len Rockcliffe, Dick Wilde and Mr. Wheeler.

Dick Wilde chaired the meeting in place of Len Melville and called on Mr. Brunt for the first speech. Rupert said that as he had only been given five minutes it could scarcely be called a speech but he gained our attention immediately by telling us of the financial difficulties when he first came to St. James. Something had to be done and so the idea of Stewardship was started and gathered momentum. He amused us by comparing it to a ride downhill on his bicycle on a wet day when his brakes failed and only responded at the critical moment before entering a main road. This was momentum but control was also necessary if that momentum was to flourish. We were fortunate to be self-sufficient now but doubts were expressed about the future with continued rising costs.

Dick then called on Mr. Rockcliffe to give us the financial facts. This he did simply and directly, driving home the advantages of covenanting donations, giving actual figures to prove his point.

After this, Dick introduced the guest speaker, Rev. John Wheeler, of St. Saviour's Church, Cobbold Road, Shepherds Bush. His talk was entitled "Life in an Inner City Parish" and was listened to in absolute silence, no one wishing to miss a single word. There was no doubt of his sincerity as he told us of his personal experiences in a divided community, divided by suspicion and mistrust where there should be love. His parish is roughly 50% black and 50% white people, there is discrimination in the area against the coloureds, but in the church, conditions were better and he had great hope for the future.

Questions were called for but most of us were still struggling round Shepherds Bush which would certainly be a different environment from Hampton Hill.

Rupert, Dick and Alan Taylor came to the rescue with questions which gave us still more of interest to listen to and I gathered, I trust correctly, that it was not money that was needed so much but opportunities for people to live full and happy lives.

The evening finished with coffee and groups of people chatting happily.

Alison Thomson

CHRISTMAS WITH THE BABIES

I am lucky enough to work at University College Hospital London, in one of only three specialized Neo-natal Units of its kind in the world. The unit receives very premature and sick babies from not only London but the whole of the country and often abroad. Most of the babies weigh under three pounds — a large percentage under two pounds so they are very small indeed; it is not unknown to admit babies who are fourteen weeks premature, of only twenty-six weeks gestation — even of twenty-four weeks but these never survive.

Nurses still work very long unsocial hours and the work is physically draining but very rewarding. In the Unit the 'hot nursery' where most of my work takes place is 90° and it is a full time job dealing with up to half a dozen babies who all need at least hourly checks and hourly feeds. Visitors to the Unit have said that it is more like a physics laboratory than a hospital ward — all the babies are in machines with wires and tubes attached to them monitoring heart, respiration and oxygen etc. Most are fed by a fine tube and drip for the first few weeks and gradually weaned onto bottles.

It is a fascinating place where miracle and tragedy go hand-in-hand. This Christmas, as usual, we shall be preparing 'stockings' for all the babies, each receives an orange and a soft toy, we also knit miniscule booties from dolls patterns. All the clothes the babies wear are supplied by a dolls clothes firm — the babygowns are only six inches long and we make bonnets from stretch thumb bandages.

On St. Valentine's Day, I made every baby a card and stuck it on their incubators; the mothers were delighted and said they would all go into their baby books as their 'first Valentine' — no doubt they will all receive Christmas cards too. The mothers and fathers are all encouraged to handle the babies however sick they might be.

We will be praying that there will be no tragedies over the Christmas period; we have many, but 'happy endings' too; only recently a 'Birthday Girl' returned with a cake for the staff — on it was written "Thank you for my First Birthday", lets hope there will be many First Christmases too!

Sue Lawrance

A QUIET DAY

In the stillness of St. James's church we were addressed on three separate occasions by Rupert and given after each one a period of reflection. I remember some thoughts about the mysterious workings of the Holy Spirit, after which we dispersed into the recesses of the church as if to seek Him out. There is a need these days for silence, in order to hear the still small voice in which God speaks to us; one of my treasured memories is a holiday in Devon when I could listen and hear absolutely no sound. The church does have this silence to a degree, an atmosphere of peace which speaks volumes, and of holiness which inspires reverence. That is the spirit in which we should approach a quiet day and I look forward to others in the future.

David Parry

REMEMBER, REMEMBER

November 5th couldn't have been much colder than this year, but a lot of children would have been very disappointed had their noble Mums and Dads not turned out with them to enjoy the annual, traditional display of fireworks.

This year, St. James's Young Families' Group undertook to organise a fireworks party for the youngest members of our parish. The usual display at Laurel Dene will be sadly missed and no doubt many older children and their parents will have been sorry not to have seen some of the showier, noisy fireworks in evidence. This informal gathering in the gardens of Wayside was a very happy alternative for those who perhaps did not appreciate those parts of a big display. After the visually welcoming appeal of a well fenced off bonfire and display of fireworks, let off by some of the Dads, we were given a very much appreciated mug of hot soup with a hot baked potato and a sausage.

Most of the children were by this time quite weary and some, no doubt, were also getting chilled so within the hour most of them had returned home to their warm beds, tucked up with another Bonfire Night safely behind them.

P.S. Any chance of sparklers next year? We did miss them in an otherwise very pleasant event!

Corinne Robinson

The Young Families' Group would like to take this opportunity to thank the Dads, Tony Hennessy, John Nunn and Graeme Urwin, and to say a special Thank You to Bill Robinson and Ron Bridges without whose kind help the evening could not have been so successful.

MOTHERS' UNION

November 5th was both a sad, and a happy day for all of us. Sad because the M.U. were saying goodbye to Con and Rupert – happy because the whole occasion turned out to be so very enjoyable.

With the aid of Dennis Leatherdale trestles were carried over to Wayside from the church, and we were just able to seat all members, with not a fraction of space to spare! The tables were set with white cloths, and blue napkins – many of us had saved the last few blue flowers in our gardens to complete the M.U. colour scheme – and someone even managed to produce a Mary Sumner rose for Con to wear for the occasion. The food was excellent, and plentiful, and enjoyed by all, and after the meal a presentation was made to Con and Rupert.

A very brief A.G.M. followed – our Enrolling Member remarking that never before had we had such a good attendance for an A.G.M.

At the end of the afternoon, tea was served – with a cake beautifully decorated by an M.U. member – inscribed to Con and Rupert – it was really meant for them – but sharing it proved to be the final touch to a most pleasant day.

Our M.U. has been so fortunate in having Con and Rupert – Con has taken on the arduous task of E.M. for more than one term of office, and Rupert has given unstintingly his time, advice and support; our love and prayers go with them for a long and happy retirement.

Pat Young

MOTHERS' UNION DEANERY DAY

On October 29th, about 15 - 20 members of our M.U. attended a Deanery Service at All Saint's Church, Hampton. The service was conducted by the Area Dean, the Rev. J. Cotgrove, and all branches paraded their banners.

As we left the Church, the Banner Bearers formed a guard of honour, so we were all able to see them closely as we filed out, which was most impressive.

We had our packed lunches in the church hall, coffee being served by husbands of the host M.U. members.

After lunch we had a very interesting talk by Mollie Nicholls, on our Overseas Branches. It made us all realise what wonderful work our workers are doing abroad. As usual, Mollie gave us a very informative talk, and plenty to think about. I think it made us all realise that we ought never to grumble about the conditions in this country, when we hear about the hardships in other countries, especially in Africa.

A Bring and Buy stall raised over £20 for our Overseas Fund, and at the end of the afternoon tea and cakes were served, again with the help of husbands. A very happy day was enjoyed by all.

Vivienne Prentice

AUSTRALIAN IMPRESSIONS

Whilst in Australia in September and October this year, I attended my son's local Anglican church in O'Halloran Hill, about two miles from Happy Valley where Michael and Carol live. It is an old church by their standards – about 130 years old! It is strange to think that prior to Major O'Halloran and his settlers arriving from England in about 1838 there was nothing there but wattle bushes (mimosa), red gum trees, black peppermint and the river Onkaparinga, where the aborigines camped.

Having introduced ourselves we received a welcome, especially from their small, newly formed M.U. branch, which was warm indeed. We were really most impressed. If there were ever any need, I know we have a link out there, and they would give my family in Australia the support I cannot give them from here.

I have a feeling there is quite an upsurge in Christianity out there. Certainly Christ Church has expanded since we were there three years ago. In this church they place a strong emphasis on the membership of young families and especially on their children.

This seems to be a general trend in South Australia. One new approach I have not seen before is the broadcasting of special Christian "jingles" during the commercial breaks of children's television.

The Australian approach was also evident in the slogans on their car stickers, one of which particularly amused me: *"God said it, I believe it, so that's that"*.

Eila Severn

HELP – A – MEAL

As you sit and read this article you may be in the middle of your Christmas preparations and thinking of what you will be doing and eating on Christmas Day. Could I ask you to spare a thought for all those who will be on their own this year. The lonely, the housebound and the handicapped.

The season of good cheer is often one of the loneliest times of the year for these people.

We run a voluntary meals-on-wheels at weekends and Bank Holidays service which at the time of going to press is catering for 15 people Saturday and Sunday. So what we are asking you to do is share your Christmas Fare with someone who is old and alone and may be handicapped and whose family are unable to be with them.

You can either take a meal to them or even offer to have someone home with you. If you can help (I know that the recipient will be very grateful) please phone the office – 979.9662 or my home – 979.7268 now while you can and help spread the Christmas feeling and give the real spirit of Christmas.

Marie Martin, Meals Organiser
Community Care Group

THE QUESTERS YOUTH CLUB

The Questers have now started meeting again. The meetings take place every Sunday Evening at Wayside and begin at 7.45pm. Although the programme is very flexible, we have tried to alternate the meetings between games evenings and more serious discussions. Ages of the present members vary from 12 to 16 and if you fall into this category, or have sons and/or daughters of this age, you/they will be most welcome.

The programme guarantees (yes, folks, guarantees! ! !) to be more interesting than the repeated TV films shown on Sunday evenings, and you will be home in time to see Eddy Tieclip, sorry Shoestring! ! If this fails to whet your appetite, and you would like further information, please ring Jo Brownlee on 943.2597.

TULIP TIME

I have been on a visit to Lincolnshire which recalled a time of convalescence that I spent there about 4 years ago. That was in Tulip Time – many of you may know all about Spalding as a centre for the Festival but I was quite ignorant of it then. I wasn't fit enough to go into the streets of Spalding on that special Saturday in May, so I didn't see the procession but on the Monday I was taken to the large field where the 14 or more floats were on view to the public. The first flower freshness was over but it was still a wonderful sight.

Each large trailer carried a different high model consisting of hundreds of tulips. There was an enormous swan, a boat, a carriage, etc., all made up of metal shapes covered by straw into which tulip heads were secured by metal pins giving a final effect of massed tulip heads. The large flat fields in this area are the centre of tulip growing in England and the heads have to be nipped off when prime to allow the strength to remain in the bulb – I was appalled at first by the destruction of so many flowers but was told it had to be so.

The next day my friend said she was on duty at the refreshment bar – tea, coffee, home-made cakes and sandwiches served from a private garage across the little green from Moulton church. Every year this is open for about 2 weeks and the proceeds help in restoration of the lovely All Saints church of Moulton founded in 1180. It has an interesting crocketed spire of 165 feet which was built in the 14th century. In the tower hang 6 bells the earliest cast in 1558. The church which is very large and lofty for a small village is beautiful and has many interesting features and a splendid East window.

The service that I attended this time was a Remembrance Sunday and the names of the Fallen of the two wars were read out during the service. I have never come across this before and it certainly drove home the sacrifice that so small a village has made.

It is the custom at Tulip Time for all churches in this and surrounding villages to be lavishly decorated by floral arrangements and the coach loads and cars of people come from many distant places to see the floats in Spalding and/or visit the churches and give donations to help this part of our heritage.

Many many of these visitors come to the volunteer tea bar in Moulton after remembering last years delicious cakes. I walked down there with my hostess and asked if I could help a little, not feeling too strong. In no time at all I was drying cups, cutting sandwiches, slicing cake and even taking money. It was a happy afternoon of good companionship and the financial takings surprised me, even rising to £130 on one day.

Alison Thompson

THE CHRISTINGLE SERVICE – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21st at 4.30pm

As the festival of Christmas draws near we look forward once again to The Church of England Children's Society Christingle Service, a moving and joyous act of Family Worship. Christingle is a very old N. European service going back more than 500 years. The name means Christ-Light. This year we are looking forward to hearing more about the Society and its work as we have coming to speak to us The Rev. Frank Winderbank, Clerical Organising Secretary for Greater London.

Please keep your Christingle and light it on Christmas Day as a reminder of its meaning:

The World
The Light of the World
The Fruits of the Earth
The Life of Jesus.

Doris Childs

CHEMISTS ADDITIONAL DUTY ROTA

December

- 14 G.E. Martin, 28B Priory Road, Hampton
21 D.G. Manley, 122 High Street, Teddington
25 E. Moss, 14 Broad Street, Teddington
26 F.G. Martin, 3 Station Approach, Hampton

BAPTISM

October

- 26 Katherine Anne Robert, 30 Bushy Park Gardens
(at the Parish Communion)

November

- 9 Matthew John Stratford Bournsnell, 30 Windmill Road
Victoria Margaret Grant, 34 Links View Road
Nicholas Henry William Woodall, 11 Edward Road

MARRIAGES

November

- 1 Keith Ian Thompson to Frances Sophia Sindall
22 Christopher Anthony Jones to Sharon Elizabeth Hayes

BURIAL IN CHURCHYARD

November

- 17 Rose Maud Cusworth, 5 Somerset Road, Teddington, aged 79 years

CREMATIONS AT THE SOUTH-WEST MIDDLESEX CREMATORIUM

November

- 13 John Herbert Ferrers Tallent, U.C.B. Nautical Club, Majorca, and
formerly of 70 Park Road, aged 59 years
14 Alice Mildred Ward, Laurel Dene, and formerly of 11 Cranmer Road,
aged 87 years
18 Beatrice Minnie Smith, 51 Wolsey Road, aged 84 years
24 Walter Ernest Lawrence, 69 Myrtle Road, aged 91 years

SOME DATES TO NOTE

December

- 11 19.15 Holy Communion (in church or vestry)
20.00 Koinonia (concluding meeting for the present)
- 14 ADVENT 3 – DEDICATION FESTIVAL
No Evensong
16.30 WELCOME SERVICE of which the theme will be "ISAIAH AND FITZWYGRAM!"
- 15 14.30 Ladies' Choir (in vestry)
- 16 20.00 Prayer Meeting and Study Group (75 Burton's Road)
- 18 19.15 Holy Communion (in church or vestry)
- 20 Parish Carol Singing – meet outside 'Quality Fare' at 3.30pm with lantern if possible
- 21 ADVENT 4
No Evensong
16.30 CHRISTINGLE SERVICE – an address will be given by the Rev. F. Winderbank of the Church of England Children's Society
- 22 14.30 Ladies' Choir (in vestry)
- 24 CHRISTMAS EVE
18.30 CHRISTMAS EVE DEVOTION (in church)
23.45 MIDNIGHT EUCHARIST
- 25 08.00 HOLY COMMUNION
09.30 PARISH COMMUNION
- 26 ST. STEPHEN'S DAY
10.00 Holy Communion (in church or vestry)
- 27 ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST
10.00 Holy Communion (in church or vestry)
- 28 SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY
09.30 PARISH COMMUNION with a SUNDAY SCHOOL PRESENTATION instead of a sermon
No Evensong
16.30 FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS
- 29 14.30 Ladies' Choir (in vestry)
- 30 20.00 Prayer Meeting and Study Group (75 Burton's Road)

January

- 1 THE NAMING OF JESUS OR CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST
19.15 Holy Communion (in church or vestry)
- 4 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
To-day services are as usual
- 5 14.30 Ladies' Choir (in vestry)
- 6 EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD
19.15 Holy Communion (in church or vestry)

NB. All non-pledged offerings at Christmas will be given to Christian Aid