

HAVE YOU BEEN STRUCK BY LIGHTNING?

Some of you will know that recently four sycamore trees were felled in the Vicarage garden. Not anything very interesting in that, you may well say! Perhaps not. But we can learn quite a lot from the incident.

Firstly, you might like to know that one tree crashed of its own accord one evening hitting the house but mercifully doing no damage to the roof or the windows. It fell not during the height of a storm as one might expect, but in comparatively light winds at the start of a night during which there was widespread damage elsewhere. It caused us to bring in some experts to look at the others. They thought that the trees had some years previously been struck by lightning. They were right. When the trees were all safely down and sawn up we discovered that about one third of the bole of the each tree was dead. No wonder one of them fell and how lucky we were that the others did not fall earlier. It had been so deceptive. The trees were shooting from the top and putting out new branches; they were surrounded by other growing things and we had missed the telltale signs.

Very often people are like those trees, looking alright to the outsider but really at least a third dead inside. And so often too people collapse in real life to the astonishment of those around. We have all missed the signs that something is amiss. Which is where Jesus was so different. Immediately he met a person he knew them thoroughly, completely. So he was able to help them in the way that they needed. Each person was an individual to him; no-one was a "case". What was His remedy? To spot the weakness and make the subject aware of the weakness. The effect was like cutting out the dead wood before the whole tree collapsed. So He would be likely to spot a person's *dependence* on wealth (not the wealth itself), or their *lack* of faith, or their *inability* to recognise their faults and suggest that they rebuilt their lives with a new dimension which was the opposite of weakness. Matthew and Zacchaeus learnt to do without leaning on riches, Peter learnt to trust in God in various unexpected situations (as at the storm at sea), Mary Magdalene and many others learnt to confess their guilt and were able to start a new life without a burden. Those who responded to his call 'Follow me' were rewarded beyond their expectations.

One final point: people discovered it was never too late to follow Jesus. The older we get the more difficult it is to acknowledge that we have a serious weakness or having discovered that we have one to do anything about it. Perhaps for some the time approaching Christmas is the time to start (or to start again) following Jesus and if we don't know how, just come to the worship of the Parish Church and let the Spirit of God flow through us and show us the right way. Let Him take over our lives and problems.

Nicholas Chubb

N.B. The Vicar is very willing to visit the sick at home or in hospital. You do not have to 'qualify' by being a regular worshipper; the only 'qualification' is being ill and a parishioner.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

"All good giving, every perfect gift, comes from above". This was the New Testament reading for the day and how apt for our Harvest Thanksgiving Festival. As I looked around the crowded church I thought "All are safely gathered in". It was an innovation to have the Scouts and Guides at the 4.30 p.m. service and make it our main celebration of Harvest, which everyone seemed to enjoy from Nicholas Chubb downwards.

I am sure the church was as full as at Christmas services, — the main difference being the high proportion of children to adults. It was partly due to the resulting lively enthusiasm that unfortunately much of the spoken part of the service was inaudible to me as we were latecomers and had to sit in the side aisle. However, we were still able to partake in the spirit of this service which was one of gratitude for our many gifts of food, using bread as a basic symbol on this occasion. The gifts were taken to the Chancel steps during the first two hymns. A choir from Rectory School sang to us, accompanied by some recorders, and were loudly clapped. Roma Bridges and her helpers had made the church look even more beautiful with their many skilful floral arrangements and the repast in the South Aisle afterwards was enjoyed by all. The Social Committee and the Scouts had done a wonderful job with tents in the garden for the younger and hardier members of the congregation. Unfortunately a little drizzle started, but with the tents for protection and the attraction of amply laden food tables inside I think this scarcely mattered.

Excerpts from articles by Coryn Robinson and Alison Thompson

The old adage "Charity begins at home" has always held true at Harvest time, but this year it was decided that in addition to giving to our own needy and old people it would be a good idea if we could also do something for the poor and starving overseas at this fruitful season of the year.

The Harvest Festival Service on Sunday afternoon produced a bumper crop of gifts, many of them beautifully arranged and packaged and including the bread and rolls made by the Guides themselves, some of which was sampled during the excellent tea following the service.

Come Monday morning and here was "Harassed Hannah" with a "little list" carefully compiled after many consultations with various other churches and schools to prevent overlapping. The fresh produce was split up and distributed by a band of volunteers and the bulk of the tinned goods was reserved for the next day.

Come Tuesday morning and here was "Hopeful Hilde" and her two helpers June Boan and Pat Scowen, Christian Aid Organiser for this area. A flurry of activity at Wayside followed until after about half an hour one table was laid out with all the tin produce neatly numbered for a tombola, another table for coffee, another for the sale of tea, coffee (see July issue of the Spire) and honey and a smaller table in the hall for leaflets and books about Christian Aid and the Third World. These latter were displayed by Rev Morris Munns who works for Christian Aid and covers the region of Greater London West.

The number of people who came to support this effort was perhaps a little disappointing but many were new faces, playground recruits, and the tombola gradually got under way. The tea and coffee also began to sell and after all the tins left over at the end of the morning were disposed of at the Mothers Union meeting the following day, a total of approximately £60 had changed hands.

During the course of the morning a short film showed in a very humorous way how dependent we all are on each other; even an early morning cup of tea would be impossible without imported goods from the third world countries; other examples were coffee, cotton and rubber.

As a first effort in this direction I thought the experiment well worthwhile, if we repeat it next year I hope it will be better supported.

Helen Taylor

P.S. I would like to use this opportunity to thank Helen herself and the other anonymous helpers who worked very hard to make this first Christian Aid coffee morning run smoothly.

Christian Aid Tea and Coffee will from time to time be on sale in church after the 9.30 a.m. service.

Hilde Bucknell

THE HAMPTON COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The representatives of the churches belonging to the Hampton Council of Churches met on two consecutive evenings.

The first gathering on March 12th, in the Methodist Hall, was to meet our MP Mr Toby Jessel, and to ask him to answer some questions which had previously been sent to him. There was a very poor turn-out from St. James's, which was sad; it is on these occasions that there may be some indication from the public, in this case from members of the Christian congregations of the area, of concern over how our affairs, both nationally and internationally, are being carried on in Parliament. There was, however, quite a fair-sized audience, and the questions ranged from asking Mr Jessel questions on his own religious faith and how it helped him in his attitudes to public affairs and a blunt question about "how with these long over-night sessions do our MPs stop themselves from going quite mad!", to questions of deep concern on nuclear weapons and the desperate poverty of the Third World. Mr Jessel maintained his firmness to the party line, but was obviously prepared to listen to varying views. It was a very worthwhile evening. The second meeting on March 13th at All Saints Church was the Annual General Meeting of the Council, chaired by Frank Sharpe of the Methodist Church. The events of the last year were surveyed by our secretary, Michael Peake, with appreciative mention of the outstanding course of lectures on Prayer arranged throughout the early spring fortnightly at the Methodist Church. The excellent speakers were from all denominations. Special thanks were expressed to the Rev Martin Nathanael and his committee for arranging these. Also mentioned was the Week of Prayer for World Peace Special United Service in October 1980 when Rabbi Albert Friedlander spoke to a full congregation at St. Mary's, Hampton, and the visit of the Epiphany Dancers to James's, in January 1981.

Reports were made: from the Treasurer, David Dore; on the work of Christian Aid in this area, by Pat Scowan, who may shortly have to resign this work as she told us to our great sorrow. Hannah Stanton also reported on the Hampton and Hampton Hill Community Care Group, and its continued good work since being called into being by the Council of Churches in 1974.

The Council expressed their most sincere thanks to Michael and Joan Peake who have so willingly shouldered the Secretaryship for the last 7 years. Mrs Beryl Bolsover volunteered to be Secretary for this next year, and the Council was grateful. At the finish of the meeting we drank to the health of Michael and Joan, and wished them well in the future. A copy of the Book of the Thames was presented to them.

We are appealing for more representatives on the Council from the congregation of St. James. They do not have to be members of the PCC. It is very worthwhile and most interesting to join in with plans and projects with our local fellow Christians.

Hannah Stanton

THE CYC MEETS DAVID BONNER

On the evening of Sunday 27th September the CYC met at Wayside as usual. On this evening David Bonner had been invited to come to talk to us about his job.

David is a 'worker priest', which means that although he is a fully ordained clergyman, he only carries out his parochial duties three or four days out of seven. He is effectively a part time priest, but his duties are sometimes extended while he is in his office in the city.

David's parochial job takes him to all parts of the area, when he fills in on a Sunday or when the regular vicar may be ill or otherwise engaged, or helps out over a longer period of time when there may be no vicar, as in St. James' own interim period.

The discussion then centered itself around the lack of 'youth involvement in the church', and what was wrong with the way the church was run, that made it unpopular for older teenagers. A lot of interesting comments were made and it was decided that the youth should be more involved in the church and also in the taking part and even running of services specially for the youth of the community.

All in all it was a very interesting, successful and useful talk and discussion, and I would like to thank David Bonner on behalf of the CYC for coming along and talking to us.

David Friswell

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The Social Committee will present a private film show in the Parish Hall at 6.00 p.m. on Saturday, November 21. We hope that the selected films will provide an enjoyable evening for all the family. Admission to this event will be by numbered ticket which will include a raffle.

David Dore

GOD'S MESSENGER

As advertised in the last issue, Sunday 15th November will see the production of this new work about John the Baptist at 6.30 p.m. in our church. So far the work has only been performed in Derbyshire by the choir for which it was originally written. A recording of that production is now available. Whereas, unlike our own, that first production was slightly dramatised, the St. James's version will contain a dance. We are fortunate enough to have a Liturgical Dance Group who were able to produce this for the work. This is different from their first two Liturgical Dances which we have seen in our church and which were abstract interpretations of modern hymns. But like the music and readings which it supplements, it will be performed in a spirit of worship to our Lord whose servant and messenger John the Baptist was.

We have once again been in the fortunate position of receiving more material than we could publish this month. The editor wishes to thank all contributors. Do keep writing. Your efforts ensure that we can produce a parish magazine with the widest possible appeal.

THE BELLS OF ST. JAMES HAMPTON HILL

The bells form a chime of six, as follows:-

	<i>Diam.</i>	<i>Approx. Wt.</i>	<i>Approx. Note.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Founder</i>
Tenor	3'7"	14cwt	F	1893	John Warner
5th	2'11"	8¼cwt	B ^b	"	& Sons
4th	2'9¼"	7¼cwt	C	"	London
3rd	2'7 ³ / ₈ "	6½cwt	D	"	
2nd	2'5"	5cwt	E	"	
Treble	2'4¾"	4¾cwt	F	"	

From the notes, it will be observed that they comprise an octave less the 7th and 6th or G and A.

All the bells appear to be sound and are fair for tone and tune although there is no doubt that a reasonable improvement could be effected by careful treatment under the tuning machine; also they are rather corroded which tends to dull their tone.

The bells hang stationary from timber beams; the four largest hang from a heavy beam along the East wall and the two smallest from two lighter beams along the North wall.

Ellacombe type chime hammers are fitted to strike an upward blow inside the bells and roped down over pulleys to an oak chime bracket on the North wall in the clock room on the first floor; all of which seems to be operating well. Outside the clock hammers are fitted to the four largest for striking the hours and Westminster quarters; three hammers are fitted to the tenor, two for the quarters and one for the hour strike.

In 1970, we carried out a general overhaul which consisted of:-

Replacing the supporting bolts,

Overhauling five chime hammers and replacing one,

Overhauling the clock hammers,

Fitting a ratchet and pawl adjustment apparatus to the chime bracket and new pulleys with all new ropes and rubber hand grips.

The installation generally is much the same as when we left it in 1970, except that all iron and steel is beginning to show signs of rust and cleaning and painting would be advisable in the not too distant future for the sake of preservation.

The belfry is very dirty, with some of it overflowing down into the clock room; a very thorough cleaning up is really necessary to prevent the situation getting out of hand.

I would welcome anyone offering to help with the recommendations made.

G.I. Robinson (Churchwarden)

REPORT ON SHARED MINISTRY (concluded)

Question Four IS MINISTRY BEST EXERCISED LOCALLY? IF NOT, DO CERTAIN AREAS OF MINISTRY DEMAND A WIDER CONCERN AND CLEARER LEADERSHIP?
a) WHAT SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF THE ARCH-BISHOP? THE BISHOP? THE AREA DEAN?
b) WHAT SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF AN AREA SYNOD IN THE EXERCISE OF MINISTRY?

Many parishes did not attempt this question and we thought that those who did so felt a bit hesitant. However, the one theme that ran through most of the responses was that the Area Bishop needed to be experienced as a pastor and shepherd both by the clergy and by the parishes. Our concern about this issue led us to write a letter to the new Bishop.

Question Five WHAT AREAS OF MINISTRY, IF ANY, CAN MOST EFFECTIVELY BE DONE ECUMENICALLY AND HOW CAN THIS BE BROUGHT ABOUT?

Parishes did no more than give local instances of co-operation.

Question Six WHAT KIND OF STRUCTURE AT A PARISH LEVEL WOULD YOUR VIEW OF "SHARED MINISTRY" PRODUCE

With one or two notable exceptions, it seemed that the idea that a structure could reflect a view of shared ministry was unfamiliar to the parishes who got this far with the questionnaire. In other words, "shared ministry" tended to be conceived in terms of people being more engaged in the various areas of the church's ministry but not, as yet, conceived in terms of shared responsibility in the decision-making processes.

PASSING BY ON THE OTHER SIDE

The story of the Good Samaritan is familiar to all of us. And we approve wholeheartedly of the way in which he took care of the sick man. In fact we admire him for going out of his way to be of assistance.

"Going out of his way" — that is the point which struck me the other day when we heard the parable again. To help somebody else, so often we need to go out of our way, or in other words interrupt what we are just doing — and that is why it is so much easier to "pass by on the other side".

On the motorway we are well past that chap with his bonnet open before his plight registers. Far too awkward to reverse all the way back — and dangerous too — and he is probably all right anyway — just an overheated engine, he'll soon be able to carry on. And apart from that we cannot afford to be late. Or we meet an elderly neighbour just when we are on our way to the station for an appointment in town. We know that neighbour lives alone, and she seems desperate to talk — but of course we cannot stop just now. We cannot afford to miss that train — our appointment is really important.

I am sure we can think of other examples, cases where somebody's need is quite obvious and urgent — but we cannot go to meet that need because we feel it is impossible to break our own schedule. The path we are proceeding along seems to us of vital importance, and we cannot leave that way which we have planned for ourselves. We can do the right thing when we choose to do it in the first place, but that unforeseen call for help *always* comes when we are not ready for it and then we cannot respond.

Now to make ourselves more available to those people who need us for a neighbour when we least expect it, I think it helps to realise that ultimately what we do is not entirely our own business. At any one moment we can choose what we do, and our choice should be guided by what we think God would want us to do. Each single situation is in his hands: time, place, the other people concerned, and we ourselves were created by Him and are subject to Him. The schedule we have planned for ourselves might have to be overthrown because God has presented us with a need that we must meet if we obey his command to love our neighbour. The consequences of such a "going out of our way" are in God's hands as well.

Hilde Bucknell

ECUMENICAL THOUGHTS

The Ecumenical Movement, what is it all about? There is not only the institution at Geneva, not only an awareness of the Third World. We are Ecumenical every time we glance across the fence, every time we are aware that there are also Christians living in other places, sometimes only a few hours travelling away from our own parish. Precisely because the way they run their services and parish life differs in many ways from what we are used to, you can learn from them. For in their searching for answers they look to the same Lord as you. Therefore: unless you are one of those who knows everything or who has tried everything before now, do look across the fence. It is worth while, you'll return home all the richer. That in any case is what has happened to me once again — on my third brief visit to this parish. You have many things here that I would wish for in my parish in Wuppertal (West Germany).

For instance your Sunday morning service. It has many elements which also feature in our own Lutheran service. Other elements hardly occur in our services, but I was very impressed with them. A few examples: the little informal greeting at the beginning; the fact that the service was prepared and executed by many people, not just the vicar; the prayers of intercession formulated by various members of the congregation; the way you celebrate communion — the fact that everybody participates (in the Lutheran church communion is not always celebrated every Sunday, and often the communion part of the service is felt to be an additional element after the end of the ordinary service, with an opportunity for people to leave beforehand. Ed.); the Peace; and the fact that children come with their parents to the Lord's table and receive a blessing, which means they really take part. — The question of whether children should receive communion is currently being discussed a great deal. We tend to feel we don't want to exclude them, but on the other hand a certain maturity and preparation is expected. — The arrangement here seems to me to be a good compromise; and finally the fact that there is some time for talking to friends after the service. I am told there is some discussion about the form of service in the Church of England just now. I feel that this particular version is a very good one, which contains traditional elements in a setting that is appropriate to modern times, and which combines solemnity with fellowship. My wife and I would like to thank you all for the friendly reception in this congregation and for all the ideas we take home. I wish you God's blessing and Auf Wiedersehen.

Wolfgang Klosterkötter (Pastor)

AROUND THE SPIRE

A Diamond Wedding is a fairly rare event and among members of our own congregation even rarer, so it is with many congratulations that we remember John and Henrietta Thompson, who although not now regularly seen in Church, nevertheless celebrate Holy Communion every week in their own home with the Vicar and who are always interested in everything that goes on.

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Congratulations also to Trevor and Pam Atkinson on the birth of their bouncing baby daughter Hannah Louise. Both Mother and Baby are very well and we wish them all, including Jeremy, all the very best for the future.

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We have mixed feelings about leaving Teddington (and Hampton Hill!) and are sure that it will be very difficult to find as friendly a church as St. James's where we have been happy to worship, visitors and weekends with the family permitting! If anyone is in the Romsey area at any time we would be happy to see you. Our new address is 58, The Thicket, Five Elms, Whitenap, Romsey. (to be found about 1½ miles from Romsey Town centre off the main Winchester Road and very near to the Mountbatten School).

David and Elizabeth Sharman

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Dear Vicar and kind friends of St. James's, I extend to each and every one of you my warmest love and thanks for your kindly thoughts on my 90th Birthday, and for all the good wishes conveyed to me in the beautiful card with all your signatures.

It made my day, which was very happily spent. The card will be treasured. I've had my 'ups and downs' in my long life, but thank the dear Lord for my many blessings.

Many thanks again and God Bless you all.

Coral McCarthy

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Mr. J. McIsaac (known to some people as 'Jim') wishes to express his sincere appreciation of the thought and care which went into the choice and distribution of Harvest Festival gifts so kindly sent to him from St. James's Church, I, too, would express my heartfelt thanks to those from this Church and to neighbours and local friends for their great help so unstintingly given to my Father.

Without this help my life would be a great deal more full of anxiety — and I know that my Father deeply appreciates the love and care which he receives from so many of you.

Thank you to the donors of the Harvest fare! This was just a tangible symbol of all the love which emanates from St. James's.

Bea Page

BAPTISMS

October 11th Marc Tudor Davies, 18 Doyle Gardens, Yately
Clare Alexandra Bradley, 13, Edward Road
Paul David Whitman, 166, Wordsworth Road
Laura Ann Whitman, 166, Wordsworth Road
Sarah Elizabeth Cutbush, 30, Seymour Road

FUNERALS

October 16th Albert Joseph Rivers, 34, Myrtle Road aged 74
October 20th Simon David Norfolk, 69, St. James's Avenue aged 6 months
Alfred Leonard Back, 16, Lindsay Road aged 83

CHEMISTS ADDITIONAL DUTY ROTA

November 8 Moss E. Ltd., 14, Broad Street, Teddington
15 Martin, F.G. (Chemists) Ltd., 28b, Priory Road, Hampton
22 Manley, D.G., 122, High Street, Teddington
29 Martin, F.G. (Chemists) Ltd., 3, Station Approach, Hampton
December 6 Kirby, E. & R., 53, High Street, Teddington
13 Boots the Chemists, 59, Broad Street, Teddington

Stop Press:

I was so grateful and touched by the many letters, gifts and prayers I received while I was in hospital. I am now walking around on 'woolly' legs and feeling much better. In fact I should be fit to make the coffee for the workers decorating the church for Christmas.

My love to you all at caring St. James.

Mary Harper

DATES TO NOTE

November 17	20.00 Tuesday Club, Wayside, Rev. A.H. Joad "Mrs. Beeton, Her Life"
18	20.00 Deanery Synod Discusses and Votes on the Covenant for Unity
22	FIFTH SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS Services as usual, Evensong now at 16.30
25	20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burton's Road
28	14.30 Scouts Christmas Bazaar in the Hall
29	FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT Services as usual
30	ST ANDREW'S DAY
December 1	20.00 Tuesday Club, Wayside, Mr. N. Abbott – Cine Film and Talk on "Climbing Everest"
6	SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT Services as usual
8	10.30 Editorial Board, 75, St. James's Avenue
9	18.30 Rectory School Carol Service 20.00 Good News Group, 75, Burton's Road
13	THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT Services as usual
15	20.00 Tuesday Club, Wayside, Christmas Party
20	FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT Morning services as usual 16.30 Christingle Service

Regular Weekday Events:

Wednesdays	20.00 Catechumenate
Thursdays	10.30 Young Families Group, Wayside 19.15 Holy Communion 20.00 Koinonia
Saturdays	19.00 Catechumenate