

NEW LIFE

As the country staggers back to life again after the abnormal weather most of us in London can be thankful we were not living in the West Country or Wales during the incredibly heavy snows and ice. How quickly we shall shed the memories of what we have endured. Perhaps the children will already unconsciously be making up the stories they will tell to their children about winters when *they* were little!

How amazingly fast the natural world springs back too. Underneath the blanket of snow bulbs and roots have begun to move and shoots are already showing and growing longer by the day.

The Christian season of Lent begins during February. The root of the word is "growing LONGER" and we can think of it referring to our Faith and use the weeks the church has put at our disposal for making our lives grow deeper and longer into the soil of Christ's Life so that when Easter comes we shall have experienced in some measure a New Life. We should be doing this all the time, of course, but most of us need the extra spur from time to time to make that special effort. Many of the older folk will have been taught to use the season of Lent as one of pruning, cutting back the twigs of selfishness which have grown thick in winter. It is a good idea provided we remember that the target is not just self-denial but a strengthening of our Faith.

Can we then make special efforts to attend worship regularly? Perhaps it is a time to join a new group or to contribute more to the life of our existing one. Watch the notices carefully and see if there is not some way in which you can grow this Lent and be in some way a "new" Christian at Easter.

Nicholas Chubb

CHRISTMAS 1981

Most of us in Hampton Hill are fortunate enough to lead rather comfortable lives where Christmas is a festive season in every respect. There are so many different ingredients to our traditional cocktail of celebrations — presents, music, decorations, food, fellowship with family and friends, church services — it is difficult to think which we would miss most.

As for the church services we are always very lucky to have a great number to choose from, and again it would be difficult to say which was the most impressive this year. Being Christmas, naturally all are happy occasions, stating in some way why we have every reason to feel joy about the Birth in Bethlehem; and why we have every reason to try and give pleasure to those around us by organising quite elaborate celebrations. I found it most enjoyable to experience their varying degrees of solemnity.

For the Christingle Service the church was packed, with a large proportion of children in the congregation. To make his point that without the light of Jesus you cannot see your way through life, the Vicar staggered about pretending to be blind and actually walked into the lectern.

Such escapades would have been unthinkable at the festive Midnight Eucharist when again the church was filled to capacity. This time the stately entry procession of the choir set the scene, the music swelling from a delicate soprano solo to the rich tones of the full choir. The vicar's golden cope vied with the shiny red satin bows in the beautiful flower arrangements to make this a worthy offering to our gracious God.

And back to the most simple informality when the little ones came with their assorted daddies and grannies to sing carols round our lovely crib. A delightful little celebration aimed at young children, which must nevertheless have pleased all the grown-ups who had come out to it after their Christmas pudding. It is a pity that not more parents brought their children to hear like this what Christmas is all about.

The same goes for the Epiphany Welcome Service on the 10th January, once again an informal service whose highlight was a procession of Three (choir boys) Kings, complete with golden crowns and beautifully dressed followers, whose slightly overawed little faces showed a keen sense of occasion. They were led by a brightly shining Star through an otherwise darkened church to the Crib carrying the traditional gifts of the three wise men. Even a little giggle by two of the kings during their solo singing, because the incense tickled their throats had not been too out of place at this happy service.

This somewhat theatrical celebration of the Epiphany contrasted sharply with the quiet evening communion on the 6th itself without music or visual aids. About 25 worshippers gathered in the chancel and this time it was the turn of at least some of the grown-ups to feel overawed as we passed the bread and wine from one to the other speaking those words which we usually hear from the priest and which are of such great comfort and promise: The Body and Blood of Christ keep you in Eternal Life.

And for the most solemn of all our Christmas services I go to the 27th December which saw the service of Lessons and Carols that tells the whole history of Man's fall and redemption in readings couched in stately old-fashioned language. The words were very moving, especially when they rang out into the silent church in the clear strong voice of a young choir boy. The Three Kings sang their solos, this time with great concentration and intensity, their lovely voices complementing perfectly the other beautiful renderings by the choir. The sound of the brilliant descant soaring over the last two verses of "Hark the Herald Angels Sing", with everybody in choir and congregation really putting their heart into singing, will long remain my favourite memory of this Christmas.

Hilde Bucknell

THE CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

This service was held shortly before Christmas and provided an opportunity for happy and informal fellowship at a time when, for different reasons, mothers and their children are at their most excitable!!!

Following a short address from the Vicar, the representatives of all the children's organisations associated with St. James' Church made offerings to the Church of England Children's Society and received their Christingle – a decorated orange bearing a candle to represent the coming of Christ, the light of the world, which had been the theme of Nicholas's address. The representatives then took up

different positions around the church to form a circle of light and it was around this circle of light that all the other children processed with their Christingles. It was at this point that the lights of the church were switched off leaving only the flickering candles of the Christingles to lighten the room, and also a lot of little adoring faces.

The service provided an opportunity for all ages to remember those less fortunate children who would not be celebrating Christmas in the usual tradition, and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Doris Childs and Ron Bridges with their helpers for organising the smooth running of this service.

Joe Brownlee

EPIPHANY

One requires a special reason to go tramping through the snow on a cold Sunday afternoon, when the wind is howling and the churchyard looks sombre and grey; did the three kings really go out in such conditions or is that experience confined to King Wenceslas of later fame. Anyway, they made it, as the current expression goes, by following a star, a light that guided them, shining even brighter when their spirits flagged, sustaining them in the "hope which they had grasped", leading ever onward until they reached their destination. We need that hope, we need such a star to lead us to Christ.

And the gifts they bore, gold precious because it does not tarnish, frankincense to purify, myrrh to preserve, surely is that not what the Holy Spirit can do for us. Should we not offer back to God the first fruits of the harvest we have received.

All three were on display, gold jewellery courageously provided for the occasion, fuming frankincense guaranteed to frighten off deathwatch beetles and any other bugs that may lurk in the recesses and dark corners (what about the mice!), and finally myrrh which looks like tree bark and has a bitter taste that lingers. With the added welcome participation of younger members of the congregation (some of whom needed a little encouragement), the occasion was well worth attending and after a hot cup of tea at the end we followed the beetles out into the night making our separate ways home. Nothing in the heavens to guide us, but the hope in our hearts that we, too, can follow that star, and go on into unknown territory in the footsteps of the three kings.

David Parry

On Thursday morning, January 14th, the Young Families Group held a short Epiphany Service in church. About a dozen stalwarts turned up and joined in the singing of well-known Epiphany carols. Our Vicar gave a short address, and took us to have a good look at the stained glass windows in the south aisle, telling the story each one depicts. As he said, these windows were gifts people had made to God for various reasons. Then with a silver star in our hands, we processed to the crib, bearing gifts, symbolic of the Three Kings' gifts. Short and simple as the service was, I think the children will remember this in years to come.

PANCAKE PARTY

If you haven't bought your tickets for the Social Committee's Pancake Party next Saturday, the 20th February, it may be too late. But try all the same. It'll be a happy occasion for all the family. £1.50 for adults, 75p for 14 years and under, covering all refreshments and drinks. Don't be a flippin' lemon. Help the party to fall flat in the Church Hall from 6.30 to 10.00pm.

Roger Bucknell

MORNING LENT GROUP

It has been suggested that a Lent Group would be appreciated during a morning. I am very willing to hold a group in my home at 63, Park Road, on Thursdays during Lent, starting on February 25th at 10.30am.

I would suggest that we study together the Kingdom of God: starting with the Old Testament background, and continuing with what seems to have been in the mind of Jesus Christ when he spoke of the Kingdom. We would go on to examine the different slants writers of the different gospels put on this concept and how St. Paul wrote about the Kingdom. What does the Kingdom of God mean to us today?

If there are other suggestions for subjects of study, however, let's have them; there may well be some aspects of modern church teaching which may prove more attractive.

Details of other Lent groups being held in other Churches in this area will be put on the notice board. People will be most welcome to go to any that they fancy.

Hannah Stanton

WOMENS WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

This year's Women's World Day of Prayer is on Friday, 5th March at All Saints, Hampton. The theme of the service is Peace and has been compiled by the women of Ireland. At the W.W.D.P. Conference last Autumn we were told of the meeting of the women from north and south, of all denominations, to prepare the order of service, a service which will surely help and inspire us all. The afternoon service is at 2.30pm and the speaker Miss Gladys Ganderton. The evening service is at 8.00pm with Mrs. Connie Brunt as a very welcome guest speaker. Refreshments will be served after each service.

THE MOTHERS UNION

The Mothers Union have decided that for 1981/2 their theme to follow is 'Increase your Faith'. Eight suggested subjects have been listed as guide lines: Increase your faith in God, in Others, in Adversity, in the Young, in the Future, in Action, in Yourself and as a Christmas Party theme "O, come *all* ye Faithful". At our meeting last November we pursued 'Your Christian Faith in Action' when various members gave a few minutes talk about their own special voluntary work. In March the Vicar is coming to tell us how to 'Increase our Faith in God' and anyone is welcome to join us in Wayside at 2.30pm on 3rd March. We hope to include another of the subjects at one of our meetings in the near future.

Dorothy Edmonds

CHURCH CLEANING

It takes two people about an hour and a half to clean the church every week, and although usually done on a Friday may be done on another day. Anyone who would like to help once a month please contact Judy Hewitt – 977 4762.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Someone asked me recently whether the Sunday School had “broken up” because there were so few children coming to church for the Parish Communion. It is true that, in common with many parishes, our Sunday School is very much smaller than it used to be, but we are still “in business” and ready to welcome children between the ages of 4½ and 11 years.

We meet in two groups – 4½ to 7 years and 8 to 11 years. The younger children are following a course from “Partners in Learning”, which is suitable for their age group. The older children are doing “Share the Word”, a course closely connected with the theme and Lectionary readings for the day. We spend most of our time doing things and our worship is mainly in church with the congregation. There is always a church link – some thought for the children to take to church, or something to look or listen for during the service, so the two parts of the children’s morning are connected. It is particularly suitable for children whose parents attend the Parish Communion Service, as all the family can come together, the children coming on to “Wayside” and then joining their parents during the service at the time of the offertory procession. Children whose parents do not come to church are, of course, also welcome and they go with their leaders into church.

We all know of the other Sunday morning attractions – horse riding, football, rigger, swimming, etc., but how about encouraging the children to come regularly to church and Sunday School? Our children have a place in Christian worship, fellowship and service, and their experience of Christian belief and belonging to the “Body of Christ” will only be complete if they share in the worship and fellowship of the church.

THE ALTERNATIVE SERVICES BOOK

The Book of Common Prayer was intended to be a Manual which would be useful to all people in all the usual situations of Life. So it contained orders of service for morning and evening prayers, baptism (both for infants and those of ‘Riper Years’) marriage, sickness, funeral, confirmation (and confirmation preparation in the form of the catechism), and of course Holy Communion. There were too the special prayers (collects) for each Sunday in the year and the appropriate readings as well as for special days. It also contained various less routine matters like services at sea, the ordination of Bishops, Priests and Deacons. That is not all (I have not mentioned the Psalms) but it gives an idea of the thinking behind it.

The Alternative Services Book is intended to provide the same sort of material for people, with some things left out and some new things added; and all in a language which can be quickly understood.

So orders for morning and evening prayer are still provided but this time in two forms, normal and shorter, so that a busy person can use which ever suits them for their private devotions as well as in public. Baptism comes in a number of

formats. Not only does the new book provide for infant and adult baptism but it takes into account that whole families are now quite often baptised together and this is often in the context of a Confirmation; the two are no longer separated. There is also a welcome addition of a proper service of Thanksgiving for Childbirth and Thanksgiving after Adoption. The Marriage service allows for the blessing and exchange of one or two rings and there is choice of 'obeying' or not! The Funeral Service keeps the Resurrection very much to the front and the readings are a great improvement.

Holy Communion is provided in both new and old forms (Rite 'A' and Rite 'B') and the familiar as well as the not so familiar forms of the traditional parts are included. Great emphasis is laid on the *possible* use of various ingredients of the service; there is scope for individual parishes to decide which format will be best for them. No-one can say that the ASB is heavy-handed. Always choice is available and although the collects for each Sunday are static the readings are based on a two year cycle which means that much more of the scriptures are read. There is provision for three readings including Old Testament, New Testament and Gospel for each Holy Day.

The Calendar has been restructured fairly radically, based on the usage of the early church. The Church Year now starts 9 Sundays before Christmas with Advent still the 4 Sundays immediately before the festival; Easter is also preceded by 9 Sundays with Lent still starting on Ash Wednesday 6½ weeks before the festival; Whitsunday is now officially called Pentecost and the summer Sundays are counted after Pentecost. Holy Days are divided into two sections (the second called 'Lesser Festivals and Holy Days') and all are counted from January to December. There is also a list of collects and readings for 'Various occasions' (and very varied they are!).

The most surprising omission it seems to me is the lack of any service for Visiting the Sick with provision for a person to make their confession and receive absolution. The Psalms have been included (and 'pointed' so that the congregation can fit the words to the music).

In such a short account it is impossible to cover every detail, but with *use* many will find it a treasure house of things old and new to be visited regularly and with profit.

Nicholas Chubb

DO YOU CARE?

Thousands of believers in countries where the right to believe is suppressed, on account of their beliefs lose jobs, homes, belongings and even freedom itself! These are people whose faith is costly in ways at which we can only guess. CAN YOU HELP? Yes! "There is good deal of evidence to show that a believer will be less badly treated by the authorities if they know that people in the West have heard about the believer and are concerned." (from Keston College Newsletter). Keston College, some of you may remember, sent a speaker to St. James' Church just over two years ago. At Keston College many files are kept on individuals in Communist countries, who are suffering because of their brave stand for their beliefs. Every Christmas and Easter Keston College will send on request the names of 6 believers — they could be Russian, Bulgarian, Roumanian, etc. Brief details of each family or individual are sent to you, together with a clearly printed sheet of suitable greetings in the various languages. If a reply is received, Keston College will interpret it for you.

Some people receive replies – others never! Although I have never received a reply, I know that God has things in hand at the other end – and that is all that matters!

To conclude – a brief extract from one of those replies:

“We are deeply touched by your offer of help and prayers. It is easier to endure hard times when you know that somebody is looking at you, believing that you are courageous and faithful please pray for us.”

I think this extract says it all!

Anyone interested should contact: Keston College, Heathfield Road,
Keston, Kent BR2 6BA.
Tel: Farnborough 50116/7.

B. Page

FRIENDSHIP

Just before Christmas there was a short article in my morning newspaper reporting the outcome of a study into loneliness in Britain. It said that one-third of women and nearly one-half of men in this country claim to be without any friends at all. We hear a lot about the scandal of unemployment, with nearly three million out of work, but fifteen million lonely people – could there really be so many?

What a cold, uncaring society this must be if so many people feel that they have no friends. Perhaps it is just another reflection of the stress and strain which we hear about and see around us. So many broken marriages, fragmented families, disinterested, selfish communities.

And yet my own experience is different, I have so many friends. I am not thinking of the superficial contacts in the daily round of polite conversation or gossip which fills up so much time, but of people who I know hold me often and lovingly in their thoughts. People who are my inspiration and support in joy and sorrow. People who allow me to open myself to them and do the same in return, providing that essential depth to human contact which is such a comfort and a source of growth.

Who are these wonderful people? Well apart from my immediate family – God Bless ‘em, they are to be found in the Christian community of St. James’, Hampton Hill. Those who doubt it should come and see for themselves!

True friendship is a characteristic of all Christian communities who are alive to the Holy Spirit. It is based on love, compassion and a willingness to accept sorrow and hurt to help others. These are not ordinary human virtues, they require superhuman strength coming from outside the individual, frail person. Remember, our best friend gave of Himself to the death – not just for you, or me, but for all mankind throughout all time. Can you think of a better source of inspiration?

Tony Lawrance

Little girl comes home from her first visit to Church.

Mother: “Did you like it?”

Little girl: “Yes. But a funny thing happened: half way through they came round with half an oven glove.”

TAIZE – THE COUNCIL OF YOUTH

On the 31st January a few of us had the pleasure of chatting to some of the young people who had come to London from all over Europe and even from Hong Kong to take part in the Pilgrimage of Reconciliation. We gave them their midday meal of soup and bread after they had met some Sikhs from Kingston in our church. No doubt you have read about this remarkable Pilgrimage in the press. We hope to have a more detailed report in our next issue. For the moment here is an extract from a letter from Brother Roger, the founder of the Taize community which introduces the Council of Youth, within whose framework the Pilgrimages of Reconciliation are organised:

"We have been born into a world which for most people is not a place fit to live in. A large part of mankind is exploited by a minority enjoying intolerable privileges. Many police-states exist to protect the powerful. Multinational companies impose their own laws. Profit and money rule. Those in power almost never pay attention to those who are voiceless.

And the People of God? What way of liberation is it opening? It cannot avoid the question.

When the very first Christians found themselves faced with a question without a solution, when they were on the point of dividing, they decided to gather in council. We remembered them at Easter 1970, when we were seeking answers for our own age. And we opted, not for a forum of ideas, not for conferences, but for a Council of Youth: that is to say, a reality that gathers youth together from every land, committing us unambiguously on account of Christ and the Gospel.

At the very heart of the Council of Youth is the Risen Christ. We celebrate him, present in the Eucharist, alive in the Church, hidden in our brothers and sisters

Church, what do you say of your future?

Are you going to surrender your privileges, stop capitalising? Are you at last going to become a "universal community of sharing", a community finally reconciled, a place of communion and friendship for the whole of humanity? . .

Are you going to become the "people of the Beatitudes", having no security other than Christ, a people poor, contemplative, creating peace, bearing joy and a liberating festival for mankind, ready even to be persecuted for justice?

AROUND THE SPIRE

Paul William St. John Gostling is a young man in a hurry! He arrived on October 10th 1981 - 16 weeks before his expected date of arrival, and since then has struggled hard to hold on to a thread of life, but now it looks as if he is on the winning side. He has now celebrated his nought birthday. The devotion of the hospital staff, the prayers of many people and the love of his family have all helped to make this possible. He is not yet completely out of the wood but is making good progress. We send our love and good wishes to him and his family and pray that his good progress may continue in 1982.

Two other recent arrivals, both on December 3rd, were Elysia Heidi Melville, born to Ruth and Richard Melville and granddaughter of Dilys and Len Melville; and David Edward Leatherdale, born to Sheila and Richard Leatherdale, and grandson of Margaret and Denis Leatherdale. We send them all our congratulations and love.

Congratulations of a different kind go to Violet Clark who recently became the heroine of Hampton Hill by bravely rescuing Mr. Jim West, a blind gentleman of Hanworth Road, from the ditch outside Fairlight in the Uxbridge Road. Mr. West had fallen into the very deep ditch that was filled with freezing cold water, and Violet and a passer-by who came her help later, had a very difficult task pulling him free. We understand that Mr. West has not suffered any adverse after-effects, and he naturally is very grateful to his gallant rescuers.

A big thank you on behalf of the Parish to the CYC, our noble Christmas postmen. The letterbox looked splendid and the distribution was carried out most efficiently.

And finally our best wishes to Mr. Stan Childs who fell on the ice in the recent wintry spell and broke his knee. He is now in Teddington Hospital and making good progress.

BAPTISM

3rd January Genevieve Ann Noble, 54, Rivermead Avenue

MARRIAGE

2nd January Thomas Alfred Frewin and Phyllis Mary Winifred Hart

FUNERALS

24th December Queen Victoria Atkinson, Anlaby Road

29th December Ronald Gosling, 16 Lindsay Road

30th December Dorothy Hollis, 6 Cross Street

5th January Anne Halliday, 55 High Street

7th January Kathleen Procter, Laurel Dene

8th January Agnes Bourne, Laurel Dene

14th January Rose Grindle, Laurel Dene

18th January George Hawkins, 41 Laurel Road

28th January Ellen Carrie Catt, 6 The Wilderness

CHEMISTS ADDITIONAL DUTY ROTA

February 14 Martin F.G. (Chemists) Ltd., 28b Priory Road, Hampton

21 Manley, D.G., 122 High Street, Teddington

28 Martin, F.G. (Chemists) Ltd., 3 Station Approach, Hampton

March 7 Kirby, E. & R., 53 High Street, Teddington

14 Boots the Chemists, 59 Broad Street, Teddington

DATES TO NOTE

February	13	Parish Quiet Day, Ham
	14	8th SUNDAY BEFORE EASTER Services as usual 19.00 "Announcement of the Good News", Church
	15	14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry 09.45 Editorial Board, 75 St. James' Avenue
	16	20.00 Tuesday Club, Meeting in Hampton Hill Library
	17	20.00 "Announcement of the Good News", Church
	20	18.30 Parish Pancake Party, St. James' Hall
	21	7th SUNDAY BEFORE EASTER Services as usual 14.30 Guides Thinking Day Service 19.00 "Announcement of the Good News", Church
	24	ASH WEDNESDAY 10.00 Liturgical Dancing, Church 20.00 Holy Communion
	25	10.30 Lent Study Group, 63 Park Road
	28	1st SUNDAY IN LENT Services as usual 19.00 "Announcement of the Good News", Church
March	1	14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry
	2	20.00 Social Committee, 115 Burtons Road 20.00 Tuesday Club, Miss Thomas "Cine-Talk" Safety in the Home, Wayside
	3	14.30 Mothers Union, Rev. Chubb "Increase your faith in God", Wayside 20.00 "Announcement of the Good News", Church 20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burtons Road
	4	10.30 Lent Study Group, 63 Park Road
	7	2nd SUNDAY IN LENT Services as usual 19.00 "Announcement of the Good News", Church
	10	10.00 Liturgical Dancing, Church 20.00 "Announcement of the Good News", Church 20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burtons Road 20.00 Hall Management Committee, 89 Connaught Road
	11	10.30 Lent Study Group, 63 Park Road
	14	3rd SUNDAY IN LENT Services as usual 19.00 "Announcement of the Good News", Church
	16	09.45 Editorial Board, 75 St. James' Avenue

Regular Weekday Events

Monday	10.30 - 13.30 and 20.00-22.00	Monday Wayside Centre
Tuesday	19.30	Choir Practice, Vestry
Wednesday	20.00	Catechumenate
Thursday	10.30-12.00	Young Families Group, Wayside 19.15 Holy Communion 20.00 Koinonia
Saturday	19.00	Catechumenate
Sunday	19.30	Church Youth Club, Wayside