

By the time this reaches you there will be something over 30 shopping days till Christmas. Most of you will already have made plans of preparation with varying degrees of completion. You may have bought or ordered your Christmas cards (or at least begun thinking about how many you will need). You may have ordered or made your Christmas Cake. You may have decided whether or not to hold a party for children or adults. You may have decided whether you are going away, abroad or to stay with friends or relatives, or you may have decided it is your turn to be host or hostess. These things seem quite obvious to most of us.

Fewer of us will have put so much thought and effort into preparing ourselves for the spirit of Christmas. With what motives do you intend to celebrate the Festival? The Church has for many years prepared for Christmas with the Season of Advent. It has varied quite a lot in its history, in time from a length of between one and forty days, and in spirit from one of joy and expectancy to one of penitence. I suppose that we in this country fall somewhere in the middle.

How can Christians demonstrate the importance of their faith? Recently considerable publicity was attached to the publication of the Report on Nuclear Disarmament written by a committee of the Church of England's Board of Social Responsibility. It has already provoked much discussion and comment and, I hope, thought. Will our attitude of preparation for Christmas provoke as much? Probably not if we continue to behave in the usual way; but if we were to approach Christmas in a spirit of cutting out the unnecessary, lavish costs on presents and cards? Are people really impressed by the *size* of our gift? Is it not rather the 'thought that counts' if we are honest? Or are we really so influenced by the spirit of the times we live in that we take more notice of those whose gifts are materially larger? The only place to start is with ourselves. That means that we have to prepare for the season of Christmas with greater simplicity than we have previously done, to resolve to spend less on the outward show and more time in considering the inward meaning. Our attitudes and behaviour may have greater repercussions than we imagine!

## THE PRESENCE OF GOD

The presence of God is like a clock ticking in a room full of chatter — or birdsong when Concorde flies over.

We might not be aware of it because of the business we generate in our lives. We might go for days working frantically for whatever reason, without a moment's pause; and feel exhausted and God-forsaken at the end of it. Whereas God has never really been away from us — if only we had stopped to make ourselves aware of His presence.

The clock does not stop ticking just because none of the chatters listen to it — and the birdsong does not cease, it is merely drowned by the louder man-made noise.

Hilde Bucknell

## HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICE 1982

'Come ye Faithful People Come' was one of the hymns sung at the Harvest Festival Service on Sunday afternoon the 3rd October and the people did come, people of all ages, to take part in the service of thanksgiving.

On entering the porch massed arrangements of michaelmas daisies in their gorgeous blue, pink and mauve shades made us welcome, and the font was beautifully decorated with corn, long stalks of it, sent from the Parish of Brixworth, the previous home of Nicholas and Susan. Each pillar had its arrangement of bright yellow sunflowers, which, combined with the yellow and white chrysanthemums and sturdy stock of wheat by the altar, brought the mellowness of Autumn right into the church.

On the altar was the harvest loaf donated by our local baker and two smaller loaves. These are traditional altar adornments in English churches at harvest time and take many hours to create. The larger loaf was 3ft 6ins in length bordered by five plaits each using 1¼lbs of special dough. This design depicts the five loaves and two fishes, and plaited edging representing the basket, from which Our Lord fed the 5,000. Another design is a sheaf of corn complete with harvest mouse in one corner.

The procession was led by the Scouts and Guides, Brownies and Cubs carrying their banners and looking extremely smart, followed by the Mothers Union led by Mrs. Casey, one of the most senior and well known of its members. A server with the Cross preceded the choir and our Vicar who wore a gold cope embroidered in red with a hood lined in red silk attached.

The sermon was directed toward the young in the congregation, pointing out how fortunate we are in this country to have enough and even more than enough, for our needs. To illustrate this Nicholas had brought the actual rations of sugar, butter and cheese that were ours during and after the war. It looked very small for one person for one week, but was enough to keep body and soul together. Older people present must have recollected, as I did, how we exchanged and bartered with our neighbours and the spirit of cooperation in the community at that time.

The tea and cakes for our own refreshment after the service were greatly enjoyed and our thanks go to all who worked so hard to provide the tea, and to those who decorated the church so beautifully.

Dorothy Weston

## HARVEST COLLECTION

As always we had a beautiful array of harvest produce this year which was distributed to members of the congregation who might be cheered by such gifts, and some of it was taken to the Vietnamese Children's Home (see below).

For several years now, the adult members of the congregation however, remembering their own good fortune set against the neediness of their fellowmen in the poverty stricken parts of the world have put their offerings into financial form to bring a little practical aid where it is most needed. This year the results of the morning and afternoon services — £32 — have been sent to Christian Aid.

Margery Orton

## HARVEST SUPPER

It was good to be able to go to a Harvest Supper once again. It is invariably an evening of good cheer that offers something for everyone – as this year's revival did: good company, a splendid, even exotic repast most tastefully presented and most enthusiastically enjoyed, followed by entertainment in the true St. James' tradition.

The songsters, gathered together for the occasion, touched the memories of the more elderly with their nostalgic "The Minstrel Boy to the War has Gone" with its tear-jerking old fashioned unashamed patriotism and pathetic valour. The next number, "Art Thou Troubled?" in one or two bars could have been answered by "Yes, a little" as the participants appeared momentarily "sore dismayed" by a difference of opinion regarding various notes! However, Nicholas, witty as ever, announced cheerfully that we had been listening to what was, in fact, the singers' second rehearsal.

Vera Rockliffe, mistress of monologue, amazed and amused us with her saga of a proud but poor Mum getting her too numerous progeny prepared for a beanfeast at "the Big House". "How does she remember it all" was heard on every side.

The Youth Club's version of Beauty and the Beast was one of the most hilarious items in my memory in its deadpan and farcical rendering. We were presented with two awful ugly sisters completely anonymous in their truly amazing disguises, a laconic and long-suffering Beauty (Peter Rawlins), two Beasts – before and after love's transforming miracle, a city-suited and at times athletic Father (Joe Brownlee, the Club's energetic leader), and – hats off to Leslie Hayter the raconteuse – clearly audible at all times, who kept the entire production together. The whole thing must have been well rehearsed; it was amazingly costumed (!) and very, very funny.

So, thank you everyone – the hard working (and in the vernacular 'you can say that again') catering ladies – a team of 6 under the direction of Eila Severn made full use of their past experience to look after everyone with skill and care; as did all the waiters and backroom boys. PLEASE can we have a Harvest Supper again next year, we would be satisfied with a much less elaborate meal for the sake of the real fellowship and happiness the occasion offers.

Margery Orton

## TWO BACK-END CLEANS

As the Vicar explained to us during the harvest supper, a spring clean done after the end of March is a back-end clean. The Parish Hall has one of these every year. The latest one gave rise to some Laurel & Hardy scenes I am told, but left the hall looking really splendid again.

This year, the church itself was given a thorough overhaul as well. That this mammoth task is not undertaken quite so often will not surprise anyone who stops to think what is involved. It happens at the end of September and left the Church beautifully fresh to receive all its lovely harvest decorations. In view of that it could not really have been timed better.

if "back-end clean" is a new expression for you, here is another one. Have you ever seen a "nave of activity"? If not, you should have come to the church on Wednesday 29th September. There were very tall step ladders in the aisles, even taller extension ladders leaning against the side walls, people perched on top of these with mops, dusters and rags, brushing thick layers of dust off the wooden beams or washing stained glass windows. There was someone standing on a pew vacuuming the stone carvings around the tops of the pillars, there were various ladies washing tiled floors or polishing choir stalls with fragrant concoctions. Noise, bustle, laughter. "Roma, I have finished. What do you want me to do now?" Two ladies heaving the bared altar table from its usual spot in order to vacuum the carpet underneath. And three ladies crouching in the corners of the vestry relentlessly eradicating cobwebs and dust from behind, underneath and inside every item of furniture.

It should be extremely difficult to find any skeletons in any cupboards in St. James' now!

All this daytime activity was preceded by an evening's hard work the night before and another few hours' labour on the Wednesday night. All carefully planned and directed by Roma Bridges to occur in the right sequence so that dust from the beams above would not settle on freshly cleaned furniture or floors underneath. And although the helpers who turned up did a splendid job by bringing a great deal of willingness and elbow grease which they swapped for aching backs, knees and shoulders, it seems in order in this context to misquote a famous statement:

"Often in the course of St. James' history has so much been done by so few."

Hilde Bucknell

### "JESUS ITS ME"

I went to Church one Sunday  
Very falteringly knelt to pray,  
But no suitable words could I say  
Just "Jesus it's me".

Week after week I go to share  
In the love that I know is always there  
My own love will flow in a wordless prayer,  
"Dear Jesus it's me".

Came a time, thought I'd go no more  
But with humble heart came to the door  
And found faith to implore  
"Oh Jesus it's me".

Inside the Church was warm and bright  
Then, I saw the light  
With arms outstretched stood my Saviour  
So pleased. "Child it's Jesus"  
Then all my struggles ceased.

Violet Clark

## HAMPTON HILL ASSOCIATION EXHIBITION OF LOCAL ARTS, CRAFTS AND HOBBIES

This amazing exhibition grows yearly in size, scope and versatility. It is so well presented that it is easy to forget the weeks of hard work, by many people, which precede it. It will be reported in more length elsewhere, but needless to say St. James' congregation was well represented. Mrs. Casey and Freda Moses acted as stewards, the latter having brought her beautiful kneeler, worked and presented to the Church in memory of Connie and Rupert Brunt. There were Ruth Gostling's two charming patchwork cushions, and Mary Metcalf – a regular contributor – was demonstrating her artistic and skilful Fair Isle garments. Dick Waltham's exhibition of calligraphy drew a lot of attention and showed facets of his genuine artistic skill. Carol Tipper was delighting children and adults with her expertise on the potter's wheel and her intricate pottery candelabra made a brave show ornamented with candles and fresh flowers. Patricia Mitchell's tapestry, pottery and oil painting display was as varied and original as ever, while Peter Moorey's simple but effective painted fret-saw animals gave pleasure to many. Some of the children to whom he was demonstrating will be out looking for fret-saws! Some of the musical background was provided by Hilde Bucknell and Louise Murphy, and in the poetry section Violet Clarke's poem "Jesus, it's me" was touching in its simple faith.

Margery Orton

## OUT OF THE DARK?

On Sunday 10th October the Nuclear Fallout Theatre presented "The Galaxy's Guide to Survival". The title's claim is certainly ambitious!

Traditionally the first step to personal redemption is a profound disquiet, mounting to despair, at one's present condition. Traditionally this dark despair is lightened, possibly very slowly, by a vision of the route to salvation.

If as a people we have not yet taken that first step in our awareness of the international arms race, then the dedicated players we heard on Sunday may have helped us to do so. At root we are emotional beings, and our logic will be guided by our emotions. As a soldier 25 years ago I found the two-week course on atomic warfare interesting and enjoyable. Today, knowing no more, but feeling quite differently, I find the whole armaments business disgusting and degrading. I am ashamed that we have weapons of offence in this country.

I am profoundly thankful for people of courage and vision who attempt with every means at their disposal to make us aware of what we are doing and where we are. We all have our roles to play, some on the stage, some in politics, some in personal encounter. I think we will succeed, but it will be a very close run thing.

Dick Wilde

## **VIETNAMESE CHILDREN'S HOME – HAMPTON COURT HOUSE**

On August 19th 32 Vietnamese children, 7 staff, 2 dogs, 2 cats, 2 rabbits, 3 ducks and a guinea pig arrived at Hampton Court House. We had moved from an old hospital in Bishops Stortford, Herts, our home for the past two and a half years. We had previously been at Redhill in Surrey for 9 months and before that near Colchester in Essex. We hope we will not have to move again!

In December 1978 Save the Children Fund were asked to help with the Vietnamese Boat People in this country as it was an unprecedented problem which needed speedy action. Within three days we had opened the first centre in Essex and eventually Save the Children Fund had 13 centres in England and Scotland. During this time there began to be identified a number of 'unaccompanied' Vietnamese children who had been sent by their parents with other families or on their own for safety in the West. It was impracticable to care for them in the large camps and in August '79 at Nutfield in Surrey we started to take our first children and established a separate unit within the refugee centre. The children came to us from various other centres in the U.K. but had spent varying lengths of time in Hong Kong, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand depending where they had landed up after their very hazardous and terrifying journeys.

Gradually the 1500 Vietnamese the U.K. had agreed to take all arrived and the Centres began to close. Save the Children Fund chose Hampton Court House for the unaccompanied children because of its position and grounds but also because we felt we would be welcome in the area and Richmond Council were being very helpful. It is very important to the children that they are accepted in the community in which they live.

The children range in age from 6-17 and there are 7 girls and the rest boys. We hope that eventually most of them will be re-united with their parents from Vietnam so it is very important that they keep their language and cultural identity. The British Government will give entry visas for close relatives but the difficulty is for them to get an exit visa from Vietnam. We have had 3 children re-united with their parents in this country and some have gone to the U.S.A. to parents or relatives who have landed up there. Some have been re-united here with their older siblings. One boy of 12 who had not seen his mother for 3½ years saw her again 2 months ago when she got to England via Malaysia. The children all go to local schools and are beginning to make friends in the community.

We celebrate a double lot of Festivals – all ours and the Vietnamese ones. Christmas is a new festival for the children as they do not celebrate it in Vietnam and Father Christmas does not seem to get that far! They now write their letters to him and are so excited with their stockings on Christmas morning.

We have been made very welcome here and have completely furnished the house with things people have given us. Many thanks go to all the people of your church who have helped in so many ways. Many of the things that have furnished our home have come through the Church and the lovely Harvest Festival produce was most welcome. The children said the pumpkins do not grow so big in Vietnam! We are glad to be amongst you all and thank you for welcoming us.

Robina Brand  
Project Leader, Save the Children Fund

**PS.** In this context I was interested to hear about some German efforts in the rescue of Boat People. The German Red Cross has for years been funding a ship, the CAP ANAMUR, which cruised about the South China Sea picking up any Boat People she came across and bringing them home to Germany whenever she was full. Recently funds had run out – and the German Federal States had all taken as many people as they thought they could cope with – over 2000 in all. But public compassion for the Boat People was such that CAP ANAMUR has just been sent out again to rescue more of them.

Hilde Bucknell

## **FORTY YEARS OF ECUMENISM**

On September 30th the British Council of Churches celebrated the 40th anniversary of its founding with a most inspiring service at St. Pauls' Cathedral in London. Mrs. Bolsover, the secretary of the Hampton Council of Churches, had arranged a coach from this area, and 4 representatives went from St. James's. The 4 included Bishop Bamunoba from West Ankole in Uganda, and Sister Bertha from the Community of the Holy Name, Lesotho, Southern Africa, this added considerably to the variety and interest of the occasion.

St. Pauls' was packed. There were three processions, and the banners of the member churches were brought up, and were received with welcome and pleasure by the President of the British Council of Churches, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The vast assembly sang the well known hymns lustily. At the point where the Archbishop was giving the sign of peace to the congregation, he paused and looked down the long main aisle, "Ah" he said, "Here come our Chinese friends from the China Christian Council" and up the nave they walked led by Bishop Ting. It was a great moment and everyone clapped with enthusiasm. The Church leaders had just arrived from Peking to spend 2 weeks in the UK and Ireland, at the invitation of the British Council of Churches.

Archbishop Lord Ramsey preached, saying "That the most significant change in the religious scene during the lifetime of the BCC has been the virtual disappearance of aggressive denominational self-consciousness." And indeed, despite the recent failure of the recent Covenant proposals, there was, in that massive gathering, a real family feeling of rejoicing and celebration. Much, as the Archbishop had said, had been achieved in comradeship and friendliness.

As well as the welcome presence of a Chinese Christian delegation there were other encouragements: the Rev. Myrna Bligh, a young ordained Non-conformist minister, speaking of the young people who are to lead the Christian Churches into the 21st century; a black Pentecostalist choir, dressed strikingly in long white and green robes singing with great power; also a Russian Orthodox choir giving us music haunting in its beauty.

It was a truly great occasion. Archbishop William Temple, who presided at the Inauguration of the British Council of Churches 40 years ago, would, we thought, have been content.

Hannah Stanton

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If anybody would like to join the Liturgical Dance Group to prepare a special presentation for Christmas please contact Eila Severn (979 1954).

## JOE BOYLE

About 60 people attended the Consistory Court in St. James' Church held by the Chancellor of the Diocese of London, Mr. George Newsom, Q.C. on Wednesday, 20th October. After a lengthy session by the Canadian barrister, Mr. George Calder, Q.C., and a somewhat shorter presentation of the case for the parishioners of Hampton Hill by Bill Robinson, the Chancellor decided that the mortal remains of Lt. Col. Joe Whiteside Boyle together with the Cross, Slab and Urn should be moved to Canada at the request of Joe Boyle's daughter, Mrs. Flora Boyle Frisch. We hope to publish a rather longer account of the proceedings, together with the Chancellor's reasons for his decision in the December Spire. Meanwhile our thanks to Bill for all his efforts in connection with the hearing.

## AROUND THE SPIRE

In February of this year we announced the death of Mrs. Henrietta Thompson, now sad to say we have to announce the death of her husband, John. They were both keen and loyal supporters of St. James over very many years. It was to them each year we could give a heartfelt 'thank you' for all their many gifts of flowers and decorations for the Church not least among which was the Christmas tree. At Festival times they never failed to produce something appropriate and decorative and these items we shall now sorely miss. We send our thanks to their remaining family and also our condolences at this sad time.

The death has also occurred of another well known and much loved figure of a few years ago, Mrs. Margaret Eustace. She had suffered long and bravely for the last few years from Leukaemia but such was her courage and determination that she and her husband, Eric, managed a visit to the Holy Land last year which fulfilled a lifetime's ambition and brought them much joy. Margaret's was the inspiration that produced (under the auspices of the Hampton Council of Churches) the medieval mystery play 'Everyman' in which Mr. Brunt played the leading role in the early 1960's. There were subsequent equally successful dramatic productions. Another cause which Margaret espoused was that of Christian Aid and was indeed the C.A. organiser for Hampton and Hampton Hill, a cause to which she was totally committed and wherever she moved she instigated the collection for C.A. week. Because she was an Anglican and her husband a Methodist she was also a great supporter of the Ecumenical movement and later the Ordination of Women. However all these things apart she was a truly great Christian lady and to know her was a privilege. We send our love to Eric and the family and assure them that Hampton has not forgotten Margaret or all that she did in this place.

On a day when the weather looked uncertain we saw the marriage of Charles Taylor-Young to Abigail Gilcrist, two young people who have recently moved into the area and have become regular members of our congregation. The sun shone as they emerged from the Church looking radiantly happy – we wish them a long and prosperous life together and pray that the longer it lasts the better it will become.



We are pleased to see Mrs. Rockliffe among us once more and send best wishes for a speedy recovery to Helen Corney who has been in hospital several weeks already.

The time has come for us to bid farewell to our Archdeacon Rev. John Perry, one of the few men holding this office that we have come to know personally. It is a difficult job and one to which he has brought new life. He is going as Vicar to four Parishes near Ashford in Kent and we wish him God Speed.

We apologise for any distress caused by publishing the wrong address given under funerals in the September Spire. Mrs. Margaret Varley lived at 179 Uxbridge Road and not 73.

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## **DATES TO NOTE**

### **NOVEMBER**

- 14 6th SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY  
0800 Holy Communion  
09.30 Parish Communion  
11.00 Royal British Legion (Hampton Branch) meet at St. James' War Memorial  
11.15 Service in Church  
18.30 Evensong
- 16 09.30 Holy Communion  
10.30 Editorial Board, 75 St. James' Avenue  
20.00 Study Group "Christian Discipline", Church  
20.00 Tuesday Club. Mrs. Cunningham on "Her work as a J.P.", Wayside
- 20 10.00 Leaf Clearance in Churchyard
- 21 5th SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY  
Services as usual
- 27 14.00 Community Care Group Christmas Bazaar in Aid of Premises Fund  
St. James' Parish Hall
- 28 FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT  
Services as usual
- 30 SAINT ANDREWS DAY  
09.30 Holy Communion  
20.00 Stewardship "Think-in", Church

### **DECEMBER**

- 1 2.30 Mothers' Union, Wayside
- 5 2nd SUNDAY IN ADVENT  
Services as usual
- 9 20.15 Properties Committee, 36 St. James' Road
- 12 3rd SUNDAY IN ADVENT  
Services as usual
- 14 20.00 P.C.C., Vestry
- 15 19.30 Rectory School Carol Service, Church

## FROM THE REGISTERS:

### Baptism

10th October Douglas James Forbes  
32 Coleshill Road, Teddington

### Funerals:

15th October Edgar Ayliffe aged 61 5 Roy Grove  
19th October Lily Avery aged 88 formerly of 33 Dean Road

Date	Communicants	Attendance	Pledged Giving	Other Giving
26th Sept.	100	115	139	14
3rd Oct.	98	108	187	14
10th Oct.	105	117	101	6
17th Oct.	108	138	102	14

## CHEMISTS ADDITIONAL ROTA

21st November Martin, F.G. (Chemists) Ltd., 28B Priory Road, Hampton  
979 5275

28th November Manley, D.G., 122 High Street, Teddington 977 6140

5th December Boots the Chemists, 59 Broad Street, Teddington  
977 2899

12th December Kirby, E. & R. (Agrappo Ltd.), 53 High Street, Teddington  
977 5509

19th December Thomas, D.R., 113 Stanley Road, Teddington 977 2391

The Chemists are on duty in the weeks commencing on the above dates during the following hours:

Weekdays (except Saturday)	6 - 7 pm
Early Closing days	6 - 7 pm
Sundays & Public Holidays	11 - 12 noon