



CHRISTMAS

Most of the Christmas Carols that we sing are written to cheerful tunes (after all the word "Carol" means "dance".) Much of the imagery which is used is warm and glowing. Even "While shepherds watched their flocks by night" has a comfortable tune The reality of something of

the harshness of Christmas was once brought home to me in a church where the heating system had been turned off (because it was noisy and would have drowned the children's singing) and there was a very sharp frost. All the parents, as well as the children, were shivering before half an hour was out! It made me realise just how cold it must have been on the hillside where the shepherds were watching their flocks.

This should help us to realise just what we say in the Creeds of the Church when we say Jesus was "born of the Virgin Mary" or He "Became incarnate (that is 'made flesh') of the Virgin Mary". Jesus did not in any way have a soft life. He was enmeshed in the same sort of trials and tribulations which we all know about and experience.

Christianity therefore is not an escape route from realities. It is a faith that enables us to stand up to, deal with, and help others with day to day problems of all kinds. Just because Jesus faced the same difficulties as we do we know that He is able to help us and stand beside us. Christians, by the same token, have a duty to support other people who are being unkindly, if not harshly, treated by the world. So it is right that we should make special efforts to help the unfortunates who are our contemporaries and fellow citizens in this world: they are also fellow children of the same God. Just because we recognise that God can and does help us, if we allow Him to, it is also right that we should celebrate the Festival of Jesus' birth with everything possible. One of the Psalm writers said "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord". I hope that we shall see many of you at our Christmas Services. Look at the list of what is being provided; make a note in your diary or on your Calendar in the kitchen; put these things down as priorities and work your other commitments and meals round them — not the other way round! At the end of the Festival you will find that you and your family and friends have enjoyed the season more because you have put first things first.

A very happy and blessed Christmas to you all.

Nicholas Chubb

IN REMEMBRANCE

A combination of events has reminded us more acutely this year of the people of this country, and in particular those of Hampton Hill, who lost their lives in wars since 1914. This year it was the turn of St. James's Church to hold the Service of Remembrance and there was the sad loss of young lives in the Falklands.

The Amenities Committee of the Hampton Hill Association was asked recently to investigate the responsibility for the upkeep of the Hampton Hill War Memorial, which stands in quiet dignity in the peaceful surroundings of St. James's Churchyard. This reminded HHA members of Remembrance Day and a wreath

of poppies was laid on the "11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month". We had a brief ceremony conducted by the Vicar, Nicholas Chubb, and attended by the Churchwardens, Bill Robinson and Ron Bridges and members of the HHA. Seeing once again the list of names carved on the memorial we wondered if, before all is forgotten, we could find out more about the men (and women) of Hampton Hill who had given their lives. The same thought had occurred to Bill Robinson, who is collecting information to compile a book of remembrance. We would be grateful to hear any reminiscences and memories about the dead or their relatives.

At the impressive British Legion ceremony before the church service on Remembrance Sunday all the bright poppies glowed in startling contrast to the cold, wet day and sombre occasion.

Joyce Doughty

YOUNG FAMILIES GROUP

The Young Families Group's Fireworks Party on 4 November proved to be the enjoyable get-together we have come to expect from this event. The evening began with a bonfire in the churchyard followed by a beautiful display of fireworks with no bangers in the vicarage garden. Hot soup, ribena and hot dogs warmed us all, and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Many thanks to all who helped, especially Bill Robinson and to Nicholas and Susan Chubb for the loan of their garden and kitchen.

Debbie Nunn

HARVEST FESTIVAL

The Harvest Festival Service with readings from "The Providence of God" by Richard Tatlock and Desmond Ratcliffe consisted mainly of the singing of hymns well known to both choir and congregation. The readings by the Captain of the Hampton Hill Girl Guides and of the Hampton Hill Boy Scouts made one stop and think about the advantages and disadvantages of modern life.

How better to reflect on life and also at the same time thank God for all the good and wonderful things that have come our way this past year than in partaking in the Harvest Festival Service ourselves by singing out aloud the hymns that for years past have always said all the things we have come to reflect on, thank God for and express in gratitude. We look at the fruit and vegetables of this year's harvest so richly displayed around the Altar, and it really makes sense to sing, powerfully lead by the Organist, Miss O.H. Hayward: "We plough the fields and scatter Wir Pfluegen and wir streuen den Samen auf das Land" by J.A.P. Schulz, 1747-1800, which was the hymn I came to sing, and it was sung.

Edna McLean

CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

SPONSORED KNIT. I would like to thank all those who supported this very worthwhile cause, and am pleased to tell you that as a result I have been able to send a cheque for £86 to the Society. Surprisingly knitting for 1½ hours among friends was quite enjoyable and an unexpected visit by the "Surrey Comet" photographer proved quite hilarious.

Doris Childs

PRACTISING OUR VISION — A Day Conference

Five helpers from the "Wayside" Monday Centre, together with Susan and Nicholas (one of the organisers) had a very instructive and interesting day at All Hallows on 6th November. The Deanery had organised a "workshop" to develop the understanding and give confidence to the caring Christian.

The day was led inspiringly by Mrs. Joy Thompson from Willesden, whose vast experience in marriage guidance and family education formed a background to her devoted work in helping Christian lay people in their learning and understanding. During the course of her talks she undauntingly guided all 75 of us through a series of simple trial encounters, bringing home to each of us our great need to practise and study the art of listening. It came as a most helpful reminder to those of us who had previously received some training from the Richmond Fellowship and a very worthwhile experience to others who were introduced to some new approaches to the caring role of the layman.

The Deanery is very much to be congratulated on organising such a rewarding day.

Roma Bridges

THE VISIT OF RUPERT AND CONNIE

It was a great pleasure to have Rupert and Connie back in the parish for two or three days, and to be able to welcome them in church on Sunday 31 October. At the Parish Communion, Rupert preached an inspiring sermon to a large congregation. He explained that he was not happy with the theme for that Sunday — the Fall — but managed very successfully to adapt it so as to show us the way forward: he spoke of an image which had made a deep impression on him at Seaford — that of a brilliant reflection of the setting sun — and of how we, as we grow as Christians, should reflect the glory of God and so bring light to others.

Rupert and Connie had been enthusiastic members of our Koinonia group from its beginnings some years ago and were as delighted to join us again on the Friday evening as we were to have them. On this occasion, a typical Koinonia evening of singing, discussion and prayer was followed by a joyful agape.

In between the more public occasions, there were visits to be made to old friends in hospital, and to Clare, a few miles away, on her birthday and calls by a succession of parishioners to have a word or two with them. All were delighted to find them so well and to be thriving on their busy "retirement". Soon it was all over — rather too quickly — and we felt again the loss of some of that reflected light from the parish. May God bless them.

Ron Bridges

A HOSPITAL WITHOUT A DOCTOR

When we go to the West Middlesex Hospital or to Teddington Hospital (long may we be able to!) or to a smaller clinic, like the Maddison, we see the consultant, are X-rayed or examined, or we have a regular check-up; perhaps we enjoy a cup of tea and maybe we are offered a lift home. At Gideon Mhagama's hospital at Gwelo in Tanzania, treatment such as this is totally impossible — there is no doctor, there is no electricity for X-ray machines or

even for lighting, there is usually no running water and the hospital's only transport is an old Land Rover. Yet those of us who heard Gideon's moving talk on October 24 after Evensong, know that there is much loving care in this remote missionary hospital where he is nursing officer and administrator.

There are only 50 beds, but the nursing staff do simple operations, care for the sick and run clinics in remote villages covering a vast area with a 'parish' of 45,000 people. At the hospital there is a pre-nursing school and a tiny village has grown up around — all these, hospital, school and houses built by the local people from home-made bricks. But there is desperate need for running water, for electricity and, of course, for a doctor.

The hospital's only vehicle, the Land Rover, is used for taking staff and medicines to the village clinics where much valuable work is done in child and general nutrition, family planning, public health as well as general medicine. But the Land Rover is old and needs replacing, whilst petrol, when available, costs £4 or even £5 a gallon. You can see that the transport problem is great and will become even worse.

The small amount of money provided by the Tanzanian Government must be supplemented considerably to cover wages, food, petrol as well as all the necessities of a hospital — bandages, drugs, beds, dressings, instruments and so many other things. Whilst Gideon has been in this country he has spent some time discussing with Christian Aid the digging of a deep well and provision of a pump so that running water will be always available. It seems that there may be a possibility of help from Christian Aid, but there is still the need for a generator for electricity and Gideon is also praying that they will find a doctor.

At Gwelo there is great need, as I have tried to explain, and those of us who met Gideon felt that we must offer him help of some kind. The CYC are hoping to provide a small motor-cycle through their own efforts and the PCC is considering how best to help financially. We have been thinking recently of Stewardship — hearing of Gwelo's great need has made us realise how lucky we are in our life here in Hampton Hill and has given us an opportunity to help in Christ's healing and teaching ministry. "When I needed a neighbour, were you there, were you there?"

Margaret Taylor

SCOUT GROUP NEWS

Instead of holding a Fete this summer we have taken part in various fund raising efforts, a toy stall, Tombola and games at the Hampton Hill Association Sports, three stalls at the Hampton and Hampton Hill Carnival, also we were represented at the Hampton Hill Junior School Fete. We did quite well at the Carnival with a Highly Commended Certificate for our Float.

Last Saturday we had our usual Bonfire Party which went with a swing — 200 hot-dogs were sold and even so some of us "went hungry". All the same a really jolly evening.

The highlight of this month must surely be the function organised by Twickenham District to celebrate 75 years of Scouting. About 500 Cub Scouts descended on Twickenham Station at 7.30 a.m. on Saturday October 30th for Portsmouth. A very full itinerary — first a visit to H.M.S. Victory and Museum. Then on to the Alliance Submarine and Museum and followed by a trip round the harbour to view the ships that had returned from the Falklands.

There were about 60 boys from our Group together with their Leaders and adult helpers (including "old Skip"). We arrived back at Twickenham Station about 7 p.m. full of enthusiasm for a wonderful day.

Michael J. Childs

STEWARDSHIP REVIEW AND SUPPER

A splendid repast and happy atmosphere greeted all who came to the Stewardship Review and Supper on Wednesday 17 November. One was immediately struck by the family feeling which is generated by the people of St. James'.

Once all were replete the evening's business began. Alan Taylor reminded the meeting of the 20 year contribution that Stewardship has made to the Parish, how initially it had revitalised St. James' and now, through monetary and practical offerings was encouraging dynamic expansion. Father Nicholas went on to thank all for their commitment to the campaign and especially those responsible for its smooth running. Speaking on Len Rockcliffe's behalf, Dick Wilde reported the facts and figures of the scheme for the last year; encouragingly, there are more members than in December 1981. Alan then introduced Sister Audrey Shilling to the meeting.

An evangelist with the Church Army in Old Ford, Sister Audrey is based at St. Paul's Tower Hamlets, as a Church worker. She began the description of her work with a series of slides which vividly depicted the realities of life in this part of London. These illustrations showed tower blocks, densely packed together, where 50% of the inhabitants live above the second floor, a stark contrast with our wide avenues in Hampton Hill. We learned of a multi-racial area where 8,000 people wait to be housed, of a work force in which 28% are without work, where social services are stretched too thinly, and of people who want to help themselves. Of how they are struggling to raise funds to refurbish the Bow Slipper Baths (now closed) as a Community Centre for all the people and of our Stewardship which contributes to the cost of Sister Audrey's housing.

During the questions and answers that followed, Margery Orton drew an interesting parallel between the evangelistic spirit of Sister Audrey and that of the first vicar of St. James' the Rev. Fitzroy John Fitz Wygram in 1863; he too was confronted with an area beset with poverty and all its ensuing problems.

Sister Audrey showed us how her community is drawing together through God; her strength of spirit and quiet fervour caused all present to reflect.

Jane Ormerod

In her talk Sister Audrey mentioned a very important question which might well arise in her hearer's mind: What does the very practical work she is doing to help the local community have to do with evangelism?

Lobbying councillors to try and get something done about the housing problem, deciding what music to play at a disco in order to attract the right racial grouping to a particular youth club, approaching suitable organisations to obtain grants for the establishment of a community centre — are these jobs for an evangelist — somebody who is bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to people? It is a very deep question. And to get anywhere in one's thinking one has to put it very bluntly. Should one really feel obliged to try and improve the social and economic condition of one's fellowmen if one is basically concerned for the salvation of their souls?

To my mind the answer is YES for two reasons. One is that when one loves one's fellowmen one cannot really leave them in a desperate plight if one can see a way out. Jesus fed the 5000 in the wilderness because he could not bear to see them go hungry. But he did not see this feeding as his sole purpose. This is explained to us in John, chapter 6, which happened to be the Gospel reading for the Sunday before Sister Audrey's talk. And this reading gives us the second reason why the answer is YES. Jesus said to the people who came looking for him after the feeding of the 5000: "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves." Because Jesus satisfied their physical needs the people came to him. By helping people in their day to day needs the church can hope to attract them, and then the evangelist can start to tell them about the real bread of life. When the people had come to Jesus, he proceeded to teach them further. "Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life. I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst."

Your work is not finished when you have built a community centre, if you are a Church Army evangelist, but that is a good start.

Hilde Bucknell

JOE BOYLE

We have now received the Chancellor of London's written ruling about the decision concerning the application by some Canadians to exhume the mortal remains of Joe Boyle and transport them and the memorial stones back to Woodstock, Ontario. The judgement runs to five pages of A4 size paper so what follows must necessarily be a precis.

First, the Chancellor established to his satisfaction that the sole remaining child of Col. Boyle was his daughter, Mrs. Flora Boyle Frisch, and that she had a right to make the petition together with those who were acting on her behalf. (A similar case occurred at Chelsea in 1976). Then the Chancellor identified the petitioners' request to transfer the mortal remains of Joe Boyle and the monuments associated with the grave to the Boyle Family Plot in the Presbyterian cemetery in Woodstock, Ontario. He next noted the considerable interest shown in Canada and the support given by a wide range of noteworthy Canadians.

He then summarised the objections of Hampton Hill parishioners under two headings: 1) opposition in principle to exhumation and 2) there was already a memorial in Canada so any other would be unnecessary. He pointed out that the parish was not unanimous in this point of view and that the Presbyterian Cemetery was consecrated ground.

He said that exhumations are in fact quite often ordered and that no desecration of the churchyard arises. He quotes two other instances. The Chancellor did not accept that there were any 'declared wishes' of Joe Boyle and said that he had been buried at St. James' in accordance with common law.

The Monuments might have belonged to Queen Marie of Rumania, but she is dead; so the Chancellor allowed the petitioners also to have the Cross, Urn and Slab on condition that the Canadians erected a 'proper monument' of a kind that he would approve later. The details must be discussed first with the Incumbent and Parishioners of Hampton Hill. The cost would be met by funds already lodged with the Consistory Court.

CHURCH BOOKSTALL

The Bookstall ought to give a service to the parish for the purpose of backing up the Christian teaching of the church, and to help us all in our worship.

I should welcome enquiries and suggestions about the best way to increase the usefulness of the bookstall. There are a number of catalogues of books on all aspects of our faith which some of you may be interested to see. The staff of the Scripture Union bookshop in Richmond, where we have our agency, is always helpful, and willing to order books which they do not have in stock, so if you would like to buy books which you do not see on the bookstall, please ask me and I will try to obtain them. It is very difficult to keep as comprehensive a stock as I should like, as we do not have "sale or return" arrangements except for special occasions.

In the last few months you will have seen the prayer cards and bookmarkers, perhaps some of these would be a good addition to Christmas correspondence this year. I have found that they can also be used in the ASB as markers quite satisfactorily, so if you do not want to spend £1 on a set of ribbon markers, several cards or bookmarkers, at 4p each, are quite a good substitute.

Jean Western

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

We hope that there will be a Confirmation in one of the neighbouring parishes near Pentecost next year. This year we were privileged to have the service in St. James', but it will not be so in 1983. So as soon as we have a definite date we shall publish it, but in the meantime Confirmation Classes will begin in January. *During December* please be prepared for Confirmation.

It is not fair to expect children to be prepared for Confirmation without the *active* support of their parents and family. It does not mean that children will not be prepared without this support because some children have a greater awareness of what is involved than many adults. But the Church family can only give a certain measure of help. There is a long-running discussion in the world-wide Church as to whether there is a "best" or "most suitable" age for Confirmation. Some churches like the Eastern Orthodox administer Baptism and Confirmation to Infants and admit very small children to Communion; others, like the Roman Catholic Churches tend to confirm children around the age of 9 or 10; the Church of England has tended to confirm children during their teenage years. There is no *right* age as such; what there is, is a right age for the individual, if we agree with the principle that the person ought to know what he or she is doing. No person who presents themselves for the first class must feel bound to continue; nor must he or she assume that they will be accepted, just like that.

If you who read this are an adult who would like to consider confirmation, please put your name on the list and also if you can have a word with the Vicar. It is by no means unusual to be confirmed as an adult; in fact it is the case that in every Confirmation I have attended over the last twenty years there have been at least one or two grown ups each time.

Nicholas Chubb

LETTER FROM A FAINT-HEARTED CHRISTIAN

Dear James,

I'm sorry to bother you, but you did say you would try and help me if I had any more problems with the "Good News". So, with apologies in advance, I will try and explain my difficulties.

Its this Christmas business - I find it difficult to take it all seriously. Most of you seem to think the nativity story is true and a reason for joy and celebration, but it makes me feel self-conscious and uneasy. Perhaps that is what faith is all about, and I don't seem to have much at the moment.

All this ballyhoo about shepherds and angels, wise men following a star. It sounds like the sort of story which is made up after the event. I suppose the early Christians would have been keen to give Jesus a good 'build-up' in the years following His death and it would be a much less satisfactory story if He was first heard of when He was about thirty years old.

Obviously Jesus was born somewhere, sometime, but is His birth relevant to the real Christian message, or does it simply establish His credentials as God as well as man?

If Jesus was man and lived and suffered in the world as a man, then this is comforting and somehow understandable to me. It seems much more real and meaningful if Jesus was a living demonstration that common sinful man can aspire to Jesus-man, perfect man. But if He was God - well, how can we even begin to imagine a relationship with a God and how can He relate to us?

Or have I got it all wrong? Perhaps you would sort me out.

Your somewhat confused friend,

Thomas

Dear Thomas,

I am not really sure whether I am the right person to try and answer your difficult questions. But of course I would like to help you.

There seem to be two separate points in your letter. First you wonder whether the nativity story might be made up after the event. Well, I am not learned enough to offer any theory on how this particular episode in the Bible originated. But to me it is a very meaningful story. It is very beautiful in itself, very graphic and easily remembered, and therefore attractive to the young and simple. And at the same time every element in it has some deeper significance which one can slowly understand more and more the more one studies the rest of the Bible.

And you will find the only proof as to its truth by trying to live your faith. If you begin to put your trust in God, and take risks in order to obey His commands, you will find that He is faithful. All his commands and his promises are true. You begin to trust in His Word more and more, and you will come to accept that He had a good reason for causing the nativity story to be put in the Bible.

Your other point is even more difficult. You find it hard to understand why Jesus should be thought of as true man as well as true God. To me faith would be much more difficult if Jesus was just a perfect man. How daunting to have to follow his example. How impossible.

But the very fact that God loves us so much that He makes it possible for us to grasp what He is like by letting this man Jesus live on earth - that God, the Holy, the Incomprehensible, says to us: just look at this Man and then you will know Me, that is the most comforting and truly amazing thing that could ever have happened. Without Jesus a relationship with God seems impossible. Precisely because He came to earth, the link is established.

I do hope this is helpful. God bless.

James

SOME SPECIAL SERVICES

To celebrate our Dedication Festival on December 12 we shall have a Play Reading at Evensong about the life and work of the first Vicar of St. James', the Rev. Fitzwygram. This was first presented some years ago and is remembered as very impressive.

We are again this year holding the ancient Christingle service in our Church on the Sunday before Christmas at 4.30 p.m. It is based on the centuries old custom of the Moravian Church when families gathered together to welcome the coming of the Christ-child. Christingle means "Christ-light". The orange stands for the world, the red band around the orange our redemption through the Blood of Christ, the sweets and nuts the fruits of the earth and the candle symbolises the Light of the World.

Doris Childs

AROUND THE SPIRE

Baptism

David Gerald Craggs 148 Wordsworth Road

Wedding

27th November David Angus Crichton and Janet Mary Sly

Funerals

1st	November	Arthur Ives	50 Fortescue Avenue	aged 56
1st	November	Myra Carrick	75 Laurel Road	aged 90
4th	November	Mabel Rivers	29 Windmill Road	aged 91
23rd	November	Lesley Smith	16 Rectory Grove	aged 71

CHEMISTS ADDITIONAL DUTY ROTA

December	12	Kirby, E & R, 53 High Street, Teddington	
	19	Thomas, D R, 113 Stanley Road, Teddington	
	25	Thomas, D R, 113 Stanley Road, Teddington	
	26	Manley, D G, 122 High Street, Teddington	
	27	Martin, F G, 3 Station Approach, Hampton	
	28	Moss, E Ltd, 14 Broad Street, Teddington	
	January	1	Martin, F G, 28B Priory Road, Hampton
		2	Hall, H, 62 High Street, Hampton Hill
3		Hall, H, 62 High Street, Hampton Hill	
9		Moss, E Ltd, 14 Broad Street, Teddington	
16		Martin, F G, 28B Priory Road, Hampton	

DATES TO NOTE

December



- 12 ADVENT 3 DEDICATION FESTIVAL
08.00 Holy Communion
09.30 Parish Communion
16.30 Evensong with Play Reading
- 13 14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry
- 14 09.30 Holy Communion
20.00 PCC, Vestry
20.00 Tuesday Club, Christmas Party, Wayside
- 15 19.30 Rectory School Carol Service, Church
19.30 Bishop Wand School Carol Service, St. Mary's, Hampton
- 16 10.30 YFG Christmas Party, Wayside
19.15 Holy Communion
- 19 ADVENT 4
08.00 Holy Communion
09.30 Parish Communion
16.30 Christingle Service
- 21 09.30 Holy Communion
- 23 19.15 Holy Communion
- 24 CHRISTMAS EVE
23.45 Midnight Eucharist
- 25 CHRISTMAS DAY
08.00 Holy Communion
09.30 Parish Communion
16.30 Carols at the Crib (specially for the very young and their families)
- 26 ST. STEPHEN SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
09.30 Parish Communion
16.30 Evensong with Christmas Music
- 27 ST. JOHN
09.30 Holy Communion
- 28 THE HOLY INNOCENTS
09.30 Holy Communion
- 30 19.15 Holy Communion

January

- 2 2nd SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
08.00 Holy Communion
09.30 Parish Communion
16.30 Festival of Lessons and Carols
- 4 09.30 Holy Communion
- 5 14.00 Mothers Union Party, Wayside
20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burtons Road
- 6 THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD
20.00 Holy Communion
- 9 EPIPHANY 1
08.00 Holy Communion
09.30 Parish Communion
16.30 Evensong
- 11 09.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Editorial Board, Vicarage