

LENT

What sort of image does the word Lent bring to you who read this? Gloom? Self-denial? Bad weather? Spring-is-on-the-way? Snowdrops and daffodils? It could well mean all or any of these things. For the Christian perhaps the most obvious meaning is one of Preparation for Easter. The Church over the centuries has gradually built into its system periods of preparation before the great Festivals which recall and commemorate the major events in Jesus' life. It sometimes surprises people to realise that the customs which we now practise have not always been the same. Most of them have evolved over the years and very few have been static for more than a few hundred years. That may seem to be a long time to you and to me but it helps us to realise that we need not slavishly follow the precedents we find ourselves faced with if a better or more suitable way presents itself. But before we throw the old customs out of the window it is no bad thing to understand why and how they arrived in the first place.

Forty days is the prescribed length of Lent. Why forty? Obvious, you say, because Jesus fasted 'forty days and forty nights' before He began His Ministry. But it is of more significance than that. Forty had an almost mystical meaning in the Old Testament. The Jews wandered for forty years in the wilderness, several of the Kings apparently reigned for forty years, (David and Solomon among them), and Moses even assumed the leadership at forty years old. Moses also fasted forty days and nights twice when the Ten Commandments were given. So there is good precedent for forty. But how is it to be measured and from what point? This has varied over the years and has sometimes included Sundays and sometimes not. We inherit the custom of starting on Ash Wednesday some six and half weeks before Easter. Not many churches still mark their worshippers' foreheads with ash made from the burnt palm crosses of the previous year, nor do too many observe Shrove Tuesday except in a very secular way. Originally it was the day when Christians were 'shriven' or absolved of their sins after confessing them to a priest. (Shrive is an Old English word). The custom grew up of having a fling before Confession and so all sorts of parties and orgies became the usual thing.

I hope that many people will work out for themselves some sort of special preparation for Easter, using Lent to worship more regularly and perhaps more often; perhaps attending one of the groups which already meet (Don Rawlins' Good News Group will meet weekly instead of fortnightly on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. and Hannah Stanton will be holding a Bible Study on Thursdays at 10.45. Koinonia led by Alan Taylor will meet every Thursday at 8 p.m.). Details of Holy Week will be in the March Spire. Try something extra this Lent and enjoy it more.

Nicholas Chubb

CHRISTMAS 1982

Thanks to Roger Bucknell offering me transport I joyfully attended the midnight service on Christmas Eve. I hadn't at all liked the thought of missing it. The church started to fill long before the service. We are the only church in the area which starts its Service a quarter of an hour before midnight and it was explained to us that this custom of St. James' is to allow the Gospel Reading and the switching on of the main Christmas Tree lights to coincide with the start of the new day.

The crowded church, always beautiful, was almost overpoweringly so this year. Was I just more aware of the flowers and impressive arrangements by Roma and her helpers? The tree seemed bigger and better lit than ever before and the little blue candles above the main aisle were enchanting.

Nicholas led us through the special service with his quiet unassuming conviction; Olive played as though she were in a cathedral and the choir was splendid. The large congregation did their part to make this a warm, loving and joyful occasion as we of St. James' church once more celebrated the birth of Jesus together.

And now tonight, Sunday January 2nd, I have attended the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. I wished even more people were there and wished also that I could have taken my friends — they don't know what they miss — the Joy and the Peace.

Again the church looked beautiful and the choir sang better and better, especially the soloists. Here I must say "Thank you" to our young chorister, Matthew Williams, with the golden voice and the ability to read and be heard!

I hope that you all enjoyed Christmas and I wish you a very happy, healthy and contented 1983.

Alison Thompson

THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

On Sunday, 19th December, the children of the parish enjoyed one of their favourite services. There was excitement and anticipation in the air as we assembled for this, and the big question was "When do we walk round with the oranges?" — a certain interest being shown in the "fruits of the earth!"

After some spirited singing we were shown a Nativity scene during the Reading, followed by the children's favourite carol, "Away in a Manger".

Alan Taylor, in his address, called on us to dedicate ourselves this Christmas to the spiritual dimension, the rock on which to build a society. He recalled the dedication of Mary Jones of Abergynolwyn, who, 200 years ago took six years to save 3s. 6d., and walked across the mountains to Aberystwyth to buy her longed for Bible. She later set up the school at Abergynolwyn, a place known to some of the congregation as a stop on the Tal-y-llyn railway line.

The children then, under expert guidance, took over. Led by Brownies and Cubs, they walked solemnly round the church with their Christingle oranges, the Guides and Scouts bringing up the rear. Even the smallest children arrived back in the right place, which always impresses me!

We then sang the hymn to explain the significance of the Christingle, and to remind us of God's love for us all.

Susan Roberts

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Our Bishop, Mark Santer, spoke to the Kensington Area Synod on 16th November, 1982. He feels that after two years he has still not fully mastered his job and with so many demands on his time has taken on Peter Myles as part-time chaplain to help share the burden of dealing with letters, telephone calls, meetings, etc.

The Bishop is concerned and perplexed by the problem of sharing responsibility in the government of the Church between clergy and lay-people. He is proposing to use the Bishop's Council meeting on a more regular basis, to review and advise him in this area of shared responsibilities in church affairs.

His experience in the diocese so far suggests that, on average, each priest remains in a parish for seventeen years. The Bishop feels that in many cases this is too long a period. He suspects that more frequent movement would often prove beneficial to both priest and parish.

The new scheme of pastoral visits has been under way since the beginning of 1982. Within three years each parish should receive a visit from the Bishop himself, the Archdeacon or Area Dean. From visits so far, the Bishop has been surprised at the tremendous variation in size and complexity of the various parishes. He commends the commitment to the social needs of the community found in several priests and congregations.

He also comments on one feature of congregations in London churches, where people are willing to travel miles to find a particular church with the religious practices and fellowship with which they are comfortable. The Bishop is not sure that this is a good development for sustaining the traditional parochial activity, i.e. to uphold a Christian presence in the local parish.

Finally, the Bishop hopes to find a means of reinstating an area magazine to replace the Middlesex Roundabout which lapsed with John Perry's departure.

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Given space and time, there is much else I could have said — about the Pope's visit, about the collapse of the proposals for covenanting, about the Falklands' Crisis, about *The Church and the Bomb* and much else. But I wish to confine myself to one thing only, this is, to reiterate my conviction that — at

any rate for myself — the most fruitful way of seeing my life as a Christian is that of union with Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, in his doing of his Father's will — a self-giving which was at once a self-giving to his Father and a self-giving to his human brothers and sisters.

† Mark Kensington

CHRISTIAN AID FOR NJOMBE HOSPITAL

Those of you who listened to Gideon Mhagama's appeal for his little poverty stricken hospital in Tanzania and grieved that to give a *significant* amount towards the huge cost of bringing in fresh water to Njombe was beyond our means and that it was better for us to spend St. James's donation (£500) on supplying less ambitious but desperately needed items, will be delighted that Christian Aid has granted the fabulous sum of £35,000 to Gideon's hospital — enough to supply the crying need for water.

I'm sure that many of us went away and prayed for a miracle for Gideon. Who says that miracles never happen! They *could* happen, often, all over the world if our giving to C.A. were to be realistic as a nation instead of derisory; £4,000,000 from the whole country last C.A. week — what does that work out at per adult? When our yearly chance comes round again in May let us in Hampton Hill at least, put into our envelope a sum of which, before God, we need not be ashamed.

Margery Orton

A MESSAGE FROM THE ARGENTINE

15th December, 1982.

From: The Rev. P. Donc an, B.A.
Iglesia Anglicana
S. Bartolome, Paraguay 482
2000 Rosario, Argentine.

Dear Mr. Chubb,

Bishop Cutts in Buenos Aires has just passed on to me a copy of the Christmas greetings from your congregation, which I shall be happy to display in our porch. We are very touched that we should be in your thoughts and prayers, as surely you will be in ours.

My wife and I arrived in Rosario only in November of 1981 — previously I had been a Missions to Seamen chaplain in East London, S. Africa and in Dunkirk, France. I still serve as M. to S. chaplain in the port of Rosario as well as being Rector of St. Bartholomew's. At the outset of the Falklands crisis we were rather worried, as we could not forecast what the local reaction would be, but in fact we were quite overwhelmed by the friendship and Christian love we received from the people of Rosario — our own congregation of Anglo-Argentines, priests and congregations of other denominations, neighbours, shopkeepers, casual acquaintances and the local police, all came forward with assurances of sympathy and help, if needed — in fact, it never was. The extent of Christian love demonstrated was a most moving experience and I hope you will make

known the warmth and friendship of the Argentine people, in spite of political differences, which seem only to exist at government levels.

Sincerest good wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year, and may God grant us the blessing of peace to men of goodwill.

Philip and Frances Donovan

(See Comments in Church Times, Friday, January 14th under heading "To Argentina – with Love", back page.)

WORKING PARTIES IN THE CHURCHYARD

Last year we organised Saturday afternoon working parties in the churchyard once a month from March to October to try and keep the main area of the churchyard looking neat and tidy. Although we only had a small number of helpers they were very loyal and we made a lot of progress over the eight months. We are very grateful for their support and hope that this year a few more people will come along to help. The work is not necessarily hard – there are a lot of light jobs to be done – and we usually have a break for refreshments and a chat.

Several people said they would have come if the working parties had been organised on Saturday mornings! This year we are going to try Saturday mornings to see what happens! We have chosen the second Saturday in the month as this keeps clear of all the Bank Holidays. The dates are as follows starting at 10 a.m. each morning:-

12th March

9th July

9th April

13th August

14th May

10th September

11th June

8th October

David and Janet Nunn

A THANK YOU

I would like to take the opportunity offered through the pages of The Spire to express my sincere thanks to all those who sent me expressions of sympathy during the sad days following the sudden death of my husband. I was deeply touched and have been very much strengthened and sustained by all the tokens of understanding I have received.

Bless you all for your kindness.

Elsie Lay

NEWS FROM NEPAL

Here are extracts from two letters recently received from Margaret Cranston :

Dear Friends,

Imagine: a small thatched cottage in a village well away from the main road, with a small veranda from which you can look out over a beautiful valley. Looking down into the valley you can see the river with its sandy beaches and white foam as it winds its way round the hills. Looking across the valley, you have a fantastic view of snow covered mountains. The neighbours are very friendly and welcoming, and there is an enormous variety of birds, flowers and trees. Fresh oranges, pumpkins and other vegetables are brought to your door regularly

Now imagine: a small dark mud hut. The floor is covered with cow dung. There is no electricity, 'fridge or running water in the house, and the only cooker is a paraffin burner. The toilet is outside and down the garden. The neighbours are nosey, and rarely understandable. The diet is limited (oranges, pumpkins, rice). Apart from the local village shop, a shopping trip is equivalent to walking down Snowdon and up again.

Now: try to imagine a place that fits both of these descriptions at the same time, and you'll have a little idea of where I will be living in January. The village is called MAKASINGH and it's half way between Kathmandu and Pokhara, 3-4 hours' walk uphill from the road. At present there are two other U.M.N. teachers there, teaching in the local high school. Jean is an American, and Christine is Scottish. I will probably start doing a little teaching — possibly English, but for the whole of 1983 my main work will be learning Nepali.

The last four months of language study have gone better than I imagined possible. Thank you for your prayers. However, I've still got a long way to go, so please continue to pray for my language study, as good Nepali will be essential to my life and witness in the village. In Kathmandu, there are several Nepali Christian Churches, but in Makasingh there are no Nepali Christians

. Although Nepal is a Hindu Kingdom, religious freedom is increasing, especially around Kathmandu. This was shown especially recently when the King opened a new hospital that U.M.N. (United Missions, Nepal) have built. In his speech the executive director of U.M.N. was allowed to pray and read a Psalm. It is illegal to preach and evangelise, but it is not illegal to talk about what you believe. In fact it is very natural and people are very keen and interested to hear.

Much love to all at St. James.

Margaret.

**EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER FROM
RICHARD TIPPER IN LESOTHO**

..... time flies here faster than fairies, witches, almost as fast as angels
..... I went to a lovely midnight Mass here in Maseru at St. John's
it's really not much different from England (apart from the weather of course),
if anything the Masutho make less of Christmas than we do. However Easter is
the real big celebration of the year here and so I promise to send you something
on that The nuns are kind, energetic people and easy to get on with, the
children although even noisier than the English, are far better behaved and
harder working. Then there are the workmen whom I am involved with — they
are a motley crew at first sight but once a few sutho phrases and gestures are
learnt we all get on pretty well, even with Moho the deaf and dumb but highly
skilled chap

Please send my regards to the congregation and tell them that for
the time being at least Maseru is quiet.

Love and New Year Good Wishes.

Richard

SCOUT GROUP NEWS

Congratulations to those Scouts who took part in the Twickenham
District Five-a-Side Football Competition and succeeded in bringing back the
Trophy. This took place on January 16th at Heatham House.

3rd Hampton Hill Scout Group

FOUNDER'S DANCE

Friday, February 25th at St. James's Hall

DANCING TO "THE JOHN WEST TRIO"

£1.50 (including Buffet)

8 p.m. — 11.30 p.m.

JUMBLE SALE — Saturday, March 12th at The Parish Hall.

'Phone any of these numbers if you require Jumble to be collected.

977-5041

979-5178

979-1713

TWICKENHAM BRANCH UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION

Quiz 1982 — Congratulations Rectory!

This year six schools competed in the UNA Quiz — an increase of two
over last year. There were three heats when one of the schools acted as host to
another resulting in three left to compete in the Final which was held in York
House on Monday, October 18.

For the heats Whitton School entertained Orleans Park School; St. Catherine's Senior Girls' School entertained Shene School and Teddington Boys entertained Rectory School. The three left for the Final were Whitton, Shene and Rectory.

The Small Hall at York House was filled to capacity with parents and supporters for the Final. We were glad to have our old friend Mr. Edward Bostock, as Question Master and Father Beirne, our Chairman, presided. To the onlooker the questions seemed difficult but the competitors had studied the literature provided and they found the questions teasing — as befits a final — but not too difficult. The winners were Rectory School followed by Whitton and Shene. Rectory won the Alfred Holmes Shield but all the competitors were to be congratulated on their performance. The shield was graciously presented by Mrs. Katherine Holmes. Each participant also received a small shield or medal as a memento of the occasion.

TUESDAY CLUB PROGRAMME

- 15th Feb: "Antique Silver" — Mrs. Rees
1st Mar: "The Work of the W.R.V.S." — Mrs. Sweet
15th Mar: "History of Bentalls" — Mr. Downing

D. Weston

AROUND THE SPIRE

We express our deep sympathy to Mrs. Elsie Lay, on the very sudden death of her husband, Alfred, at Christmas time. Amongst many outdoor interests Alfred was a keen beekeeper and many will remember him in connection with this activity.

We welcome Sandy Lavender, as a new leader for the Guides. It is often difficult these days to find people willing to take on the kind of commitment that the youth organisations require, so we do appreciate what Sandy and many others like her do for our young people.

The Bishop of London has now appointed a new Archdeacon of Middlesex, the Rev. Timothy Raphael who has been vicar of St. John's Wood for the last eleven years. Before that he was Dean and Vicar of St. Paul's Cathedral, Dunedin, New Zealand. The new Archdeacon and his wife, Anne, will not be starting in this post until after Easter, but we wish them a good trip to New Zealand in the meantime and look forward to meeting them later in the year.

There are at present several major matters under discussion which will greatly affect the quality of life in Hampton Hill one way or another. The first is the proposal for a fifth air terminal to be built at Heathrow; terminal four is already under construction and some people believe that air travel may not grow as quickly in the future and a fifth terminal may therefore be superfluous. Either way there will be a considerable increase of aircraft noise and more congestion on the roads leading to the airport. A public inquiry is being held at the moment and is expected to last for about six months so it is by no means too late to make your views heard.

Past objections have already had some effect on the second matter, the proposed closing of St. John's Hospital, Twickenham, and Teddington Memorial Hospital. The latest news is that the wards at St. John's will remain open and the Out-Patient facilities will be closed and at Teddington the wards will be closed and Out-Patients department will remain open. It is undoubtedly true that Hounslow Health Authority need to make savings, but these proposals, while a considerable improvement on the original, do seem like closure by the back door; again letters voicing people's views are required.

The third matter in the same vein is the proposal to build a Hypermarket on the St. Clare nursery land. This will bring a considerable increase in the amount of traffic using local roads and may prove very detrimental to our already emaciated High Street — views again sought on this matter.

Two recent improvements in our local environment deserve a mention at this point: the first is the new churchyard path and the second, the mural in Windmill Road executed by pupils from Rectory School and based on ideas from Hampton Hill Junior School. Both these improvements have caused widespread favourable comment, and as far as the churchyard path is concerned, it is hoped to extend this work to cover all the remaining paths in the not too distant future.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

30th January	David Michael Gibson	12, Browning Close
	Daniel Peter Clare	171, Uxbridge Road

Wedding

8th January	Peter Michael Wilde and Jane Mary Phillips	15 Holly Road
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Funerals

24th December	Sarah Blake aged 100	Laurel Dene
7th January	Alfred Lay aged 79	8 Greenwood Lane
7th January	Percy Jennings aged 79	3 Rectory Grove
12th January	Dora Jenkins aged 83	formerly of 5, Pantile Cottages
14th January	Mabel Coley aged 83	'Lavernock', Albert Road

We seem to have omitted the details of attendances and giving in December and January magazines. Here are the figures from Christmas.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Communicants</i>	<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Pledged Giving</i>	<i>Other Giving</i>
25th Dec.	301	475		£148
26th Dec.	31	34	£193	£ 10
2nd Jan.	102	111	£115	£ 39
9th Jan.	122	137	£189	£ 15
16th Jan.	103	111	£105	£ 10

CHEMISTS' ADDITIONAL DUTY ROTA

Feb. 20th	Manley, D.G., 122 High Street, Teddington	977 6140
27th	Martin F.G., 3 Station Approach, Hampton	979 5559
Mar. 6th	Moss E. Ltd., 14 Broad Street, Teddington	977 1351
13th	Martin F.G., 28b Priory Road, Hampton	979 5275

DATES TO NOTE

February

- 13 7th SUNDAY BEFORE EASTER Morning Services as usual
16.30 Shorter Evensong followed by open Meeting on Social Responsibility
- 14 14.30 Ladies' Choir, Vestry
- 15 09.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Editorial Board, 75 St. James' Avenue
20.00 Tuesday Club – Antique Silver – Mr. Rees
- 16 20.00 ASH WEDNESDAY Holy Communion
- 17 19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Koinonia, Vestry
- 20 1st SUNDAY IN LENT Services as usual
- 22 09.30 Holy Communion
- 23 20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burton's Road
- 24 10.15 Lent Bible Study, 63 Park Road
20.00 Koinonia, Vestry
- 25 20.00 Scouts' Founder's Dance, Hall
- 26 20.00 Hampton Hill Assoc. Social and Dance, Hall
- 27 2nd SUNDAY IN LENT Services as usual
- 28 14.30 Ladies' Choir, Vestry

March

- 1 09.30 ST. DAVID'S DAY Holy Communion
20.00 Tuesday Club – The Work of the W.R.V.S. – Mrs. Sweet
- 2 20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burton's Road
- 3 10.15 Lent Bible Study, 63 Park Road
19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Koinonia, Vestry
- 6 3rd SUNDAY IN LENT Services as usual
- 8 09.30 Holy Communion
- 9 20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burton's Road
- 10 10.15 Lent Bible Study, 63 Park Road
19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Koinonia, Vestry
- 12 10.00 Churchyard Working Party
14.30 Scouts' Jumble Sale, Hall
- 13 4th SUNDAY IN LENT, MOTHERING SUNDAY
Morning Services as usual
16.30 Welcome Service
- 14 14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry
- 15 09.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Editorial Board, 75 St. James' Avenue
20.00 Tuesday Club – History of Bentalls – Mr. Downing
- 16 20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burton's Road
- 17 10.15 Lent Bible Study, 63 Park Road
19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Koinonia, Vestry
- 19 13.30 M.U. Jumble Sale, Hall