

'Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, bless the bed that I lie on.' Words which many people will know for one reason or another. But when we begin to think what we know about these four writers of the Gospels we may be in some difficulty. Take **Mark** for example . . . The Church remembers him especially on 25th April each year, and one of our local Churches, at Teddington, is dedicated to him. Perhaps the first thing to notice is that although he appears to have written about Jesus he does not appear in any story connected with Jesus. Some people have thought that he was the friend or perhaps the secretary of St. Peter. We just do not know for sure. He is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles travelling with Barnabas and was obviously active and earnest. We believe that his version of the 'Good News' was the model for the other evangelists because almost everything that occurs in Mark's account of Jesus appears in the other Gospel writings. His style is urgent as if he can hardly wait to tell of the difference that Faith in Jesus will make to those who are prepared to trust their lives to Him. For Mark there is none of the Christmas Story. He starts straight away with John the Baptist's encounter with Jesus and tells how John and Jesus stand in the line of the great Prophets of earlier times. And then he launches into the main narrative of Jesus' life and ministry. He hardly pauses for breath in his enthusiasm. Hallmarks of his vocabulary are "straightway" and "immediately" as if there is no time to lose.

Are we as fired with the Love of God that we cannot restrain ourselves either from sharing the Good News which we have so far understood with others or so eager to find out more that we use all our efforts to get closer to God to find out how he can change our lives? Why not make an Easter resolution (to follow on your Lenten one!) to read St. Mark's Gospel again (or for the first time if you have not yet read it) and refresh yourself of the main points of Jesus' life, teachings and works. You will be surprised by the freshness and realism of it all and it will enable you to give thanks in a new way for St. Mark.

Nicholas Chubb

DISCUSSION ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The discussion was held in the vestry after a shortened Evensong on 13th February. Nicholas told us how, in following the Scarman report, the Diocesan Board for Social Responsibility had urged the need for awareness and discussion at the parish grassroots.

Hannah Stanton, who represents us at Deanery level, told how this local Board is actively concerned with many problems and listed current concerns, including among others unemployment, homelessness for young single people, the Church and the Bomb, licensing of sex shops, and racial issues.

Kath Brooks and Yvonne Childs spoke about their experience with classes of mixed colour from which it seemed that while children were likely to be ostracised by their contemporaries for being 'odd', this wasn't necessarily on colour grounds. However, some older children had strong racist attitudes. Sometimes problems could arise because a child of an immigrant family was kept from school to act as 'interpreter' during the weeks after a new birth in the family, being the only one able to communicate with health visitors and the like.

Hannah pointed to the need to teach English to Asian women, referring to the small groups teaching sessions arranged in Hounslow. Although it appeared that these were not always welcomed, we agreed that we should be on the lookout to improve immigrant opportunities for learning.

As a sidelight on xenophobia, a new study in clergy training, Nicholas reminded us that the Greek word *xenos* not only means 'stranger', but also 'guest' or 'friend'. Something here for Christians to ponder.

We spent some time on unemployment, concluding that although we have had a decline in opportunities, the area was only lightly affected by comparison with the black spots in some regions.

There was a far greater problem of homelessness among young single people, and this was seen as part of the general grave shortage of all forms of rented accommodation. This bore particularly hard on the single, to whom local Councils gave a low priority on waiting lists, removing them altogether when they reached the age of 30. It was felt that the problem had been created by the rent-control policies of successive Governments. Houses and flats let at uneconomic 'controlled' rents were invariably sold as soon as tenancies fell in, reducing further the available stock: Hal Severn confirmed his company's policy in this respect. While rents of £80.00 per week for a furnished bedsit-flat can be demanded in this area, Helen Taylor instanced houses in South Wales let unfurnished at £2.00 per week.

We closed the meeting, deeply conscious of many urgent and pressing needs to be faced if we are to be worthy of our calling.

Jack Gostling

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER (INTERDENOMINATIONAL)

This special day, March 4, was celebrated by Christian women throughout the world, bringing us together, seeking renewal of our life in Jesus Christ. Although separated by culture, language, class, distance and history, we called on God in the spirit of love and unity.

The order of the service was arranged this year by the women of the Carribean, the theme "New Persons in Christ" was simply and expressively woven into the celebration, giving us all a great awareness of how far short we have fallen of God's perfect love. But as the story of the Prodigal Son, one of the readings, reminded us, if we come into His presence to confess our sins and failures, we can, empowered by the strength of His forgiveness, live again as "New Persons in Christ" and recommit ourselves to his service.

It did seem a pity that more people were not able to attend the evening service, at St. Francis de Sales, as the choir, organist, readers and speaker made it, at least to me as 'a woman' a very special day. But maybe next year, with more publicity, the congregation will be larger. The Women's World Day of Prayer will be celebrated as usual on the first Friday in March. The draft order of service will be prepared by the women of Sweden.

Marion Nevill

ST. JAMES' YOUNG FAMILIES GROUP PRAM SERVICE

Thursday, March 10th was a clear early Spring day, the sun shone brightly overhead and it seemed appropriate that I was about to attend church that morning, with my seventeen month old daughter, Alice. The occasion was the St. James' Young Families Group Pram Service which has been held about four times a year since I have been attending the group. We were greeted by fellow mothers with their children and babies at the door. Inside we parked our respective prams and buggies alongside the pews down the aisle. The attendance was good and the service just the right length for toddlers with itchy feet!

The theme was on mothering, in conjunction with Mothering Sunday; which I personally found supportive. I feel that it is important for mothers to get together in this way with their children, as it is a reminder of the great power of creation. It is so easy to get absorbed with the physical side of bringing up young children that I feel our lives need this sort of enrichment, in order to step back and see what truly motivates us.

Whilst we sang, our offspring seemed to be stunned into silence, which was quite magical. The power of music is quite remarkable.

After the service we were kindly attended on by three ladies from the Mothers Union who made and served us with tea and biscuits, plus a slice of traditional Simnel cake. The toddlers and babies were exceptionally good and enjoyed being in the spacious church. Alice and I left the church in the right frame of mind to enjoy the rest of that fine, bright day.

Sheila Baddeley

A DAY OF DANCE, 12th MARCH

There can't be many more fruitful subjects than 'The Church's Calendar' for any medium, and for a dance medium there is almost too much material. At a recent Dance Workshop which our own group of Liturgical Dancers attended in Kingston this was the theme. Several groups brought dances which they had already performed and which fitted into this programme and indeed we took our own Candlemas dance. There was plenty of hard work to be done, bending, stretching and exercising to music lead by Honor Avis, who runs the Partnership Dance Group in Kingston, and thinking through a short talk given by Lola Webb on ideas for dances, on choreography and about some books which might help give us inspiration and information.

After lunch we split into groups and each group worked to produce a dance for the Service. The group I was in not only danced but sang as well and the theme was Christmas, the only difficulty we had was in remembering the words of a totally new song and dancing at the same time, but we managed.

The Service started off in Advent with a dramatic representation of John the Baptist calling to people who really did not want to hear, and moved on through the Annunciation, Christmas, Candlemas, Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost, Trinity and Harvest finishing on All Saints Day. Two of the dances were performed by everyone and when about fifty people all join together in one united action it really is a quite wonderful experience. One dance was for Good Friday, 'Nailed to the Cross' and the other a Sanctus for All Saints Day; the music for the latter is from a tape made at Taize and has an ethereal quality.

Several of the dances were very moving and very simply staged, the dance depicting the Annunciation was particularly beautiful and we are hoping to incorporate it into our repertoire in the near future.

We had a very enjoyable day and felt tired but exhilarated at the end of it, our numbers have increased lately but anyone who is interested in joining us will be very welcome.

Helen Taylor

LITURGICAL DANCERS' WORKSHOP – AN ONLOOKER'S VIEW

It was strange on a Saturday afternoon to walk from the bustle of Kingston market into the peace and lofty grandeur of the United Reformed Church, and then to join (if only peripherally) in an act of worship which was an immediate result of the Liturgical Dancers' Workshop day. Although there can be little doubt that the main place for liturgical dance is as a part of a service in which it is blended with other forms of worship, the sequence of dance presentations and associated readings appropriate to the seasons and festivals of the Christian calendar was moving and showed a range of styles, some directly representational, some, like the contribution of our own group – the Dance for Candlemas – more abstract, and others expressing joy and other emotions. And always present were the grace or exhilaration of movement and the beauty of posture, the effects often being enhanced by appropriate use of colour and by the music itself. As the service closed with prayers and the "The Peace", one felt it had been a very worthy offering.

Ron Bridges

THE MOTHERING SUNDAY SERVICE THIS YEAR – 13 MARCH

What an interesting one it was. Mrs. Severn (dear Eila) "unaccustomed as she is to public speaking" gave a lovely little testimony to the joy she got from her three little grandchildren ("the imps"). Janet Jeffries with her little "chatty" bits from a book by children on their mums, and the Ladies Choir plus the lovely organ music and church choir (small though it be) all combined to make a very happy service. Helen Taylor on being a mother, Coryn Robinson's prayers and Alan Taylor's "linking bits" gave us much to think about. And we were sent home happy by tea and portions of simnel cake generously provided by Hilde Bucknell ("what a good cook she is"). Thank you one and all who contributed.

Olive Wright

MOTHERING SUNDAY

What is the origin of Mothering Sunday? No-one seems to know. In the olden days when children reached adolescence (sometimes even before) they were sent away to service as housemaids or boot boys. On the 4th Sunday in Lent they were given a holiday so that they could go home and see their Mothers – often having to walk several miles before they reached her (their wages were so small they could not afford any form of transport.) On their way they would pick flowers – violets or primroses – to give to her. The custom became known as "going-a-mothering" and gave rise to the saying "He who goes a Mothering, finds violets in the lane."

Simnel Cake was another traditional gift. The word Simnel is said to come from the word "simila" the latin for wheat flour, but the cake consisted of far more than flour. In shape it was rather like a pork pie and its contents resembled those of a rich plum pudding. A delightful old legend says that the name "Simnel" came from the names of a happy couple who baked such a cake; their names were Simon and Ellen and their abbreviated names SIM and NEL were put together.

Mothering Sunday has also been known as "Refreshment Sunday" reminding us of the time when the 40 days of Lent were strictly kept and Refreshment Sunday was a day to relax from fasting. What about a clock in the tower of the local church as a gift? Unusual? Yes, but that is how the clock in the church tower at Buckland in the Moor came to look as it does. A local man had it put in but instead of the usual numbers 1 - 12 he had the words "MY DEAR MOTHER" set around the dial — a very unusual tribute to a much loved Mother.

"Going a Mothering" was a custom well established long ago, and Robert Herrick wrote of it in his poem "Hesperides" in 1648:

I'll to thee a Simnel bring.
Gainst thee goest a Mothering —
So that when she blesseth thee
Half that blessing thou'll give me.

An ancient Shropshire rhyme which was recited as the simnel cake was being made gives the contents of the cake and its destination. It runs thus:

She who would a Simnel make,
Flour and saffron first must shake,
Candy, spices, eggs must take,
Chop and pound till arms do ache,
Then must boil and then must bake
For a crust too hard to break.
When at mid-Lent thou dost wake,
To thy mother bear thy cake;
She will prize it for thy sake.

In one Sunday School in Cheshire it has become the custom for the teachers to bring the raw ingredients for the simnel cake to Sunday School on the Sunday before Mothering Sunday. Wooden spoons are brought too and all the children have a stir at the cake — thus they have all helped to make it; back it goes to the teacher's home where it is baked and cut into pieces, each piece being put into a little bag. Then on Mothering Sunday each child is given a bag for Mother together with a card which they have coloured — Mothers are delighted. I seem to remember Miss Stewart (dear Betty) doing something similar with St. James' Sunday School some time ago, and with much joy and happiness to both children and "Mums" alike.

Olive Wright

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An eyebrow or two were raised, I hear, when Arundel Park Cricket Club published its list of fixtures for next season, including on June 6th: "Chichester Clergy v. Guildford Clergy (to be confirmed)."

PENTECOST

CELEBRATION



SATURDAY 21 MAY, 10.00 - 18.00 h

OPEN DAY

(BARBECUE IN THE EVENING)

SUNDAY 22 MAY AT 18.30h

WORSHIP AND PRAISE

"WE BELIEVE"

Worship of God and service to men — the two functions of the Church will be demonstrated by our special celebration of Pentecost (Whitsun) this year.

During the **Open Day** on the 21 May all the various aspects of worship will be presented in the beautifully decorated church building, and stands will illustrate the involvement of people of the church in various activities at different levels of the community. There will also be a programme of organ music and live presentations by many groups. We shall be trying to show the effect of our Christian beliefs in our lives and what we have to offer to all who would like to join our fellowship in Christ. Representatives will be available at all times to discuss any queries.

Of course there will be the usual morning Eucharist on Sunday 22, but our **Worship and Praise** in the evening will be a very special occasion indeed. Part of the evening will be arranged for us by a group of Christian musicians called "Burnt Oak" who will no doubt infect everybody with the happiness their faith has given them. And the first part of the celebration will be our own joyful witness to the fact that WE BELIEVE.

Details will be made available throughout the parish later but book the date now and let your friends know about our plans.

PRE-OPEN-DAY SPRING CLEAN

Please help us to make our church look as beautiful as possible for the Open Day. The main task will be to clean the splendid tiled floors as it is some years now since they have had a major scrub and sealing. We are able to borrow two Hoover scrubbers but would like to have the use of two more if possible, and of course, we need some people to swab up, and also as many others as possible to give the pews an extra special polish. It would be most gratifying to see some new faces helping with these tasks as well as the faithful few: it would make the work so much lighter and more fun. We propose to do this on Thursday 5th May from 8 pm and from 9.30 am on Saturday 7th May for as long as it takes to complete the job. Please make a note in your diary now, and come along with your sponges and buckets for as long as you can spare on one or both occasions.

Roma Bridges

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK, 16 – 21 MAY 1983

I shall be distributing my letters appealing for help to my band of volunteers between April 18-24, and hope they will be able to help me again this year. If anyone in the parish, who has not been a collector before, but would like to be one, will please phone me at home 977 1823 so I can give them the opportunity to help with this work. On Sunday May 8 I shall have available in church each collector's parcel containing envelopes, badge, certificate of authority. The envelopes should be distributed to the houses being called on between May 9 - 15, and then collected from the same addresses between May 16 - 21. Many thanks for your kind offers of help.

Alwyne Loyd

SCOUT GROUP NEWS

Congratulations to the Brown Cub Pack Football team who were runners-up in the Twickenham District Football Competition which took place on Saturday 19th March.

43 Walkers including some Guides took part in the SPONSORED WALK held on Sunday, March 20th. The weather proved kind and it is hoped the St. James's Parish Hall Maintenance Fund, our own funds, also the Guides, will benefit from this worth-while effort. Thank you all parents and friends who came along and acted as Marshalls on the 18 Gates in Bushey Park.

On 25th February last we held our first Founder's Day Dance. Just about 100 people turned up and it was voted a great success. This was due to the fabulous "John West Trio" who gave their services on our behalf. Thank you John, Maureen and Martin and we wish you a happy and successful season at Butlins.

Michael J. Childs, G.S.L.

AROUND THE SPIRE

A big Thank You to Margaret Lawrance for the very beautiful new hangings for our altar and pulpit for Lent. Apart from the cross in the centre of the altar frontal, which was transferred from the old hanging, all the embroidery is Margaret's own work; the pulpit fall carries her own original design. I hope it has given Margaret great satisfaction to employ her artistic skill directly to the glory of God – the congregation certainly appreciates these precious new furnishings.

Don't forget the **ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING** on April 27. Not only a new PCC but new Church Wardens to be chosen. A momentous evening. See article in March Spire.

There is still time for anyone wanting to join the production of William Godfree's 'Leaves of Life' to come along. Rehearsals are on Friday evenings at 8.15 in the Vestry. We do need some more people, singers especially welcome.

At a recent Parish Communion Service we welcomed three people from the same family into the wider family of the Church as we witnessed their Baptism, Richard Mortimore and his two daughters Rebecca and Louisa. This was a very happy occasion and the service seemed to have a joyfulness about it which is not always present. We are very happy to see Richard and his family among us and hope that they may grow in spirit and in truth and that we may all learn a little from each other's experiences.

It was very nice to see Len Rockliffe again at the recent PCC meeting. His faithful car has just passed it's MOT so Len is mobile once again, and he and Vera have now been able to come to Church together once more, we welcome them back.

Congratulations to Marion Nevill on becoming a Grandma, to her son's little boy, James.

Confirmation

On May 3rd, we shall be taking eight children and six adults to St. Augustine's Whitton to be confirmed by the Bishop of Kensington. Please remember in your prayers William Baverstock, Stephanie Boan, Fleur Goram, Victoria Hazell, Angela Horner, Rachel Lloyd, Alison Toal, Georgina Treherne, Carol and David Green, Richard Mortimore, David Lloyd, Peter Roberts and John Taylor. This is a great moment in the lives of our candidates and we look forward to making them feel thoroughly part of the family at St. James. If anyone would like to come and support them at the service at 7.30 pm they will be very welcome but it would help the organisation if I were able to tell the Vicar of St. Augustine's how many to expect.

QUESTIONS CHILDREN ASK

Children's questions range from the deeply perceptive to the innocently simple, from the amusing to the harrassingly repetitive, what ever they are, they are provocative. Lucie 3½, asked "Why did God make me?" To each reply I gave she asked, "But why?", and suddenly we found we were discussing the purpose for existence and our place in God's plan and honestly I could not satisfy her curiosity, nor mine! Have you any questions that children have asked that you would like to share? Please write to our Editor.

Jane Ormerod

DATES TO NOTE

- April**
- 9 10.00 Churchyard Working Party
10 FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER, LOW SUNDAY
Morning Services as usual
Preacher at 09.30 Brother Donald of the Society of St. Francis
18.30 "Risen with Christ" – a devotion for congregation and choir
- 11 14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry
- 12 09.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Editorial Board, 75 St. James' Avenue
15.30 Liturgical Dancing, Church
20.00 Hampton Council of Churches, All Saints
20.00 Tuesday Club, Wayside "Dickens"
- 13 20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burtons Road
- 14 19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Koinonia
20.00 Hall Management Committee, 36 St. James' Road
- 15 20.15 Rehearsal for "Leaves of Life"
- 17 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER
Services as usual
- 19 09.30 Holy Communion
15.30 Liturgical Dancing, Church
- 20 20.00 PCC, Wayside
- 21 19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Koinonia
- 22 20.15 Rehearsal for "Leaves of Life"
- 24 THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER
Services as usual
- 25 ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST
14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry
- 26 09.30 Holy Communion
15.30 Liturgical Dancing, Church
20.00 Tuesday Club, Wayside "Care of the Feet"
- 27 19.30 for 20.00 Annual Parochial Church Meeting, Parish Hall
- 28 19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Koinonia
20.15 Rehearsal for "Leaves of Life"
- 29
- May**
- 1 FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER, ST. PHILLIP & ST. JAMES,
08.00 Holy Communion [APOSTLES]
09.30 Parish Communion with Parade
18.30 "Leaves of Life" by William Godfree
- 3 09.30 Holy Communion
15.30 Liturgical Dancing, Church
- 4 14.30 Mothers Union, Wayside, Deaconess Wareham "Women's place in
20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burtons Road [the Church"
- 5 19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Church Spring Clean
- 6 20.15 Liturgical Committee, 63 Park Road
- 7 09.30 Church Spring Clean

- May**
- 8 FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER, ROGATION SUNDAY
Morning Services as usual
18.30 Evensong for Rogationtide
- 9 14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry
- 10 09.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Editorial Board, 75 St. James' Avenue
15.30 Liturgical Dancing, Church
20.00 PCC, Vestry
20.00 Tuesday Club, Walside "History of Richmond Park" with slides
- 12 ASCENSION DAY
06.00 Holy Communion
20.00 Holy Communion
- 13 19.30 Scouts AGM, Parish Hall
- 14 ST. MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE
10.00 Churchyard Working Party
- 15 SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY
Morning Services as usual
18.30 United Service for Christian Aid Week, Methodist Church,
Percy Road, Hampton

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

- 27th February Richard Peter Mortimore 73 Park Road
Rebecca Helen Mortimore 73 Park Road
Louisa Jane Mortimore 73 Park Road
- 27th March Nicole Loise Rhoades-Brown 11 Rectory Grove

Marriage

- 26th March Graham John Seal and Teresa Joy Bower

Funerals

- 3rd March Ivy Usher formerly of Hampton Hill aged 74
4th March Gladys Wheeler Laurel Dene aged 83
18th March Muriel Tolfree 128, Hanworth Road aged 87

CHEMISTS ADDITIONAL DUTY ROTA

- April 10 H Hall, 62 High Street, Hampton Hill
17 D G Manley, 122 High Street, Teddington
24 Boots the Chemists, 59 Broad Street, Teddington
- May 1 E Moss Ltd, 14 Broad Street, Teddington
2 E Moss Ltd, 14 Broad Street, Teddington
8 F G Martin (Chemists) Ltd, 28b Priory Road, Hampton
15 E & R Kirby, 53 High Street, Teddington