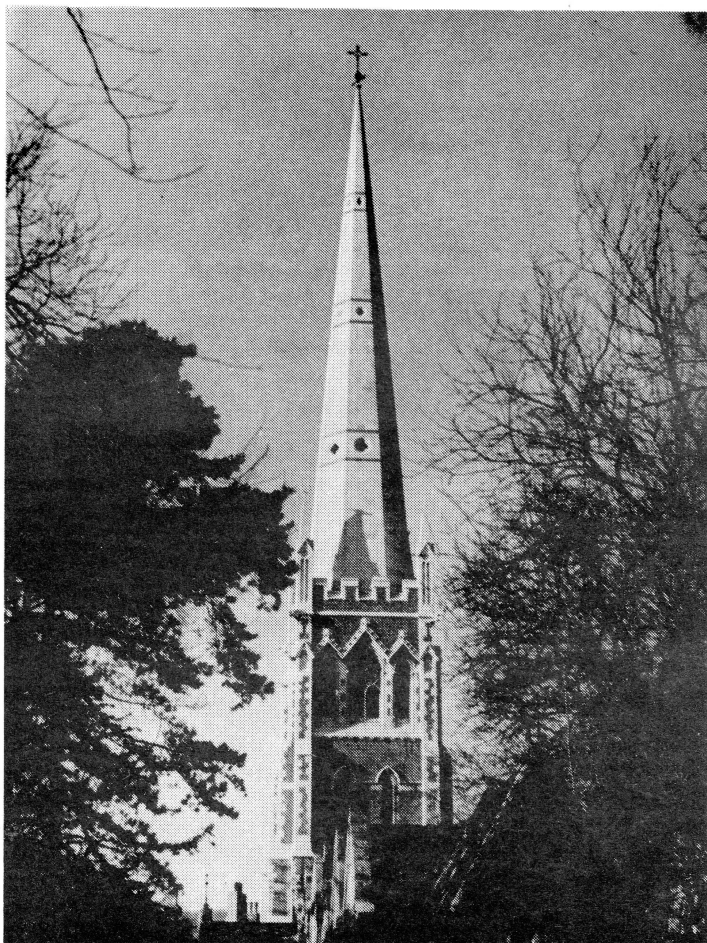


THE SPIRE



THE MAGAZINE OF ST. JAMES'S CHURCH

HAMPTON HILL, MIDDLESEX

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SUNDAY SERVICES AND MEETINGS

| | | |
|------------------|--|-------|
| HOLY COMMUNION | Every Sunday | 08.00 |
| PARISH COMMUNION | Every Sunday | 09.30 |
| | On most First Sundays in month also | |
| | Parade Service | 09.30 |
| SUNDAY SCHOOLS | Every Sunday (Except first in month and during holiday periods) in Wayside | 09.20 |
| INFANT BAPTISM | After due notice, once a quarter at Parish Communion | 09.30 |
| | or by arrangement | 15.00 |
| WELCOME SERVICE | At dates and times to be announced | |
| EVENSONG | Every Sunday if no Welcome Service during Autumn and Winter | 16.30 |
| | during Summer Time | 18.30 |

Division seems to be the most popular subject at the moment. Not simple division, or peaceful division, but a sort of wilful tearing apart that seems planned to give maximum hurt. We observe it in all aspects of life throughout the world. We have seen it for many years in our own century in political situations in every continent. The most obvious example outside our own country is India where there has been a resurgence of violence that is comparable with anything that country has ever seen. The disease seems to be catching as we in this country tear ourselves apart increasingly angrily and viciously. Most of us have been appalled by the dreadful events we have seen on Television. What is the answer? It is surely not to be found in any political system that we know of. Otherwise the solution would have been found by now. It is rather in finding new attitudes which build rather than breakdown, which create rather than destroy, which mend rather than break.

There is a word which describes this — Love. Unfortunately it cannot be imposed on people against their will. It has to be accepted willingly and joyfully by individuals. It cannot be accepted by groups. Sadly the church which should have demonstrated this quality steadily and universally throughout the centuries has not always done so. It has allowed itself to be tarnished by the general attitudes of society and has at various periods fought fiercely and offensively for its own sake.

Mercifully it now has no armies at its command. And at last, but not before time, it is witnessing to a way of life which is unity centred rather than anything else. The decisions taken recently in the General Synod of the Church of England have been received in sorrow rather than in anger by those who disagree with them, because they believe that the ordination of women to the priesthood will keep divisions larger rather than smaller. There is no cry of triumph nor one of revenge.

So this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will take on a new urgent look. From 18th to 25th January once again the Churches will be praying for the Unity which is acceptable to God. On Sunday 20th January there will be a United Service at St. Mary's, Hampton at 6.45 p.m. (there will be no evening service at St. James). We shall be praying for that Love which enables us to overcome division without the searing pain and hurt of former years. Hopefully too we will be demonstrating how to tackle the problem of resolving problems between parties whose ideas are very far apart. In the world of politics, in our own country as well as in others, we must show that policies of confrontation sow seeds of violence and not peace. It is a lesson that needs to be learnt and learnt fast or this country will drift ever more quickly towards the attitude that force is the only power that matters and that achieves anything.

If we do not learn that Love is the only permanent bond between people we shall not experience a Happy New Year.

Nicholas Chubb

MESSAGE FOR NEW YEAR

Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs, does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance.

(1 Corinthians 13: 4 - 7, NEB)

A MEDITATION

"Faith is the assurance (being sure of) things hoped for, the proving of things unseen". "We walk by faith and not by sight".

Think of Day. In the night we have assurance that the hoped for day will come, we believe by faith. We cannot yet see Day if it is still night, but Day dawns, we see that which we are assured of, coming — the unseen thing is proved in the seeing.

We plant a seed, we lose sight of it, the ways of nature assure us that it will grow. We look forward in faith and knowledge that it will grow, first in the the dark finding root, then upwards until we see it, then onward to leaf and harvest. When we plant the seed in faith and hope we cannot yet see the harvest, when we reap it our hope is proved by sight. So with faith itself, so with the mustard seed of the Kingdom of Heaven, so with prayer.

What *is* the prayer of faith — it is the belief that day *will* dawn, the knowledge that the seed *will* grow, that the prayer at the moment of praying *has* reached the Almighty loving Lord, has been answered.

The prayer of faith keeps praising until the unseen as yet, becomes seen. The prayer of faith accepts Jesus and His promises as one who opens the door of a dark room and steps suddenly into the light, or as one who waits in confidence in the night for the dawning of the day.

Some may say "But I have little faith" or even "I have no faith". Go then where there *is* faith, lean for a while on the faith of others until you can walk in your own faith.

God has given us His Son, who, through the Holy Spirit is with us. Accept this gift — it is already yours.

It is as a tool given by the master carpenter into the hands of his apprentice. It is his, given as a free gift; he holds it, he gives thanks for it, little by little he learns the skills he has not yet achieved, he gives thanks as the tool in his hands performs first little skills, then greater skills until he one day is a master at his craft. Think on these things.

The prayer of faith then is rather like this. "I believe in you Lord Jesus, Son of God. I believe in your love for me, I believe in your power, I believe that you want to give me good gifts. Dear Lord — I place this my trouble in your hands, relieve me of it according to your promises. You know me Lord, you know that I am a sinner. I lay my sins at your feet and I accept your love and forgiveness with grateful thanks. I accept your help, I praise and thank you for it and I look forward in confidence — accepting the answer to my prayer which was in my gift before I claimed it. I believe in your Word and praise you for it."

"The prayer of faith will save".

"Whatever you pray for in faith you will receive". "Whatever you ask for in faith believe that you have received it and it is yours".

"If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will and it shall be done for you".

"Do you believe in my power to do what you want? — as you have believed so let it be".

"Trust in the Lord and lean not on your own understanding"

BETHLEHEM'S TREASURES

A production of Violet Clark's "Bethlehem's Treasures" at Wayside on November 28th was very well received and thoroughly enjoyed by cast and audience alike. Violet's approach to the Christmas story emphasized the giving and receiving of God's gifts by everyone. Costumes were impressive, music supplied by Mrs Pamela Atkinson and star performances too numerous to single out. The play was followed by refreshments and the promise of another performance to the Mothers' Union on January 2nd at 2.30 p.m.

Debbie Nunn

COPING WITH CHILDLESSNESS

A REPORT OF A MOTHERS' UNION SOCIAL CONCERN MEETING

You are happily married and want children but are unable to have them. This was the theme of the meeting addressed by three deeply committed Christians with wide professional knowledge and experience in this field.

Drs. John and Peggy Edmunds are the parents of a now grown-up adopted son and daughter. From personal experience Dr. Peggy was able to talk about the problems and pain of childlessness, but at least in her youth it was a problem which could be solved by adoption. The maternal instinct is very deeply implanted, and when all one's friends are having babies, and constantly talking babies, and would-be grandparents are exerting pressure, the result is agony for the childless. Dr. Peggy thinks that the church is insensitive to the problem, so strongly is it geared to family life. One can be left thinking 'how can God let this happen to me?' She stressed that one should never ask anyone whether she is planning to have a child and to remember that single people may also long to be parents.

In 1979 there were 250,000 childless couples in this country, but only 500 babies available for adoption.

Dr. John felt that positive thinking helps. While a childless couple will ask 'why has God done this to me? what is His purpose?', these thoughts can be followed by 'there must be something I can do better without a family, than with one'.

Dr. Angela Boyers, a genetecist at the Middlesex Hospital, dealt with the scientific and medical help which can often solve the childless problem. One couple in ten has difficulty in starting a family; a difficulty which can cause much anguish and distress. However, there is now a 50% chance that these couples can be helped, but such help can be a traumatic business with many embarrassing examinations and investigations.

A.I.H., Fertility drugs, Test tube babies, A.I.D., Womb leasing, Surrogate mothers. All these are aids to combat childlessness, but we were asked to think very seriously about the moral implications of such solutions. A.I.D. is frowned upon by those who look upon the introduction of a third party as adultery. Also it leads to a great deal of deception because secrecy usually surrounds the whole process and the husband invariably puts his name on the birth certificate. It is a system open to abuse by single women, and few people would argue with the statement that ideally a child needs both mother and father.

Dr. John was obviously very concerned about the moral and legal aspects of A.I.D. and other scientific methods of solving the childless problem. In A.I.D. the father will never know his own child, or the child his father. A baby can grow into a thoroughly difficult problem teenager, and one half of the married couple could easily feel "Well, he's nothing to do with me. He's your problem, not mine". In adoption, at least the parents have an equal stake in the child.

Womb leasing and the introduction of the Surrogate mother were viewed with deep concern by our speakers. The surrogate mother may not want to part with the baby – this has happened. She has to be supported during pregnancy and once money comes into the problem, it is open to much abuse.

Within the next few years legislation will be introduced dealing with every aspect of the scientific and legal solutions to childlessness, including the use of embryos for research purposes. Already Mothers' Union has been asked to examine the Warnock report and submit their comments and suggestions. This we are doing, bearing in mind that in the end it is the well-being of the child which is of the utmost importance.

M.L.

CRUSE SILVER JUBILEE

Twenty five years ago CRUSE, the National Organization for the Widowed and their Children, was born in Richmond. What was started as a tiny local effort, to bring together the widowed to talk about their needs, has grown into a nationwide organization with 100 branches.

All through 1984, local events have been arranged throughout the country to commemorate CRUSE'S 25th birthday. January was marked by a major event when Her Majesty the Queen became a patron; and the last few weeks have seen the culmination of the commemorative programme – a Choral Evensong in Westminster Abbey on October 9th and a Gathering at the Royal Albert Hall on November 8th in the presence of the Queen.

The service in Westminster Abbey was well attended, both transepts being well filled. The first lesson 1 Kings 17:8-16, which tells the story of the widow's cruse, from which the organization takes its name, was read by the High Commissioner for Uganda (whose National day it was). The second lesson, James 1, 16-end was read by Mrs. Elizabeth Insall, of Kew, for many years a dedicated worker in our local Twickenham, Barnes and Richmond branch. The Reverend Derek Nuttall, Director of CRUSE, preached a very moving sermon.

About 4,000 CRUSE members widows, widowers and voluntary workers – travelled from all parts of the country to the Albert Hall Gathering. A galaxy of stars from the entertainment world took part, including Sir John Gielgud, Penelope Keith, Vanya Milanova, Dickie Henderson, Wayne Sleep and Cherry Gillespie. Music was provided by the Birmingham School of Music Chamber Orchestra, the Band of the Metropolitan Police and the Ynysowen Male Voice Choir.

Her Majesty accepted a gift of a leather-bound volume of the anthology "All in the End is Harvest"* , published to mark the Silver Jubilee of CRUSE. This includes a piece written by John Whale until recently a church warden of St. Mary's Barnes.

Further information on Twickenham, Barnes & Richmond Branch of CRUSE from John Kerry, 33 Sydney Road, Richmond (940-1209).

** Published by Darion Longman & Todd.*

STEWARDSHIP REVIEW NOVEMBER '84

This was a most invigorating meeting and if the enthusiasm of those on the platform was anything to go by it should bear considerable fruit.

Eila, a most able Chairperson, opened the meeting by suggesting a moment or two of silence to collect our thoughts from the hurly burly of everyday life and then Nicholas gave us the prayer of "Where there is Let there be" and the business was begun by Len Rockcliffe, our splendid treasurer.

As alert and forceful as usual he stood and told us about the financial side of Stewardship. He said that people were inclined to think that Stewardship was all about money but not so, as we heard later. He explained that money was necessary to get the things we needed for our community church life. He told us how the Covenant method worked so that for every £70 donated and covenanted an extra £30 was added from the Treasury as Tax Relief. Also he gave us the figures for our steady but not fast enough growth of income.

After this the first speaker was Alan Taylor, with his mastery of oratory and his spiritual enthusiasm he spoke of the need to spread and enlarge our concept of Stewardship. Yes, Stewardship was about money but it was also about spreading the gospel and enlarging the church community and about ourselves. Could we not grow and spread our own ideas in ourselves and by so doing maybe spread the churches' influence among those who had not enjoyed it to date.

The next speaker was Dick Wilde and as he spoke I thought how fortunate we were to have two such excellent speakers in our ranks. Dick wished to put to us the idea which had been conned over in Committee that during Lent we should have various groups, each under a leader, meeting once a week to discuss and enlarge on our own experiences and convictions. Maybe we could incorporate members of other churches or even those who so far had not been involved in church worship and effort. The scheme is to start immediately and take shape for Lent and it is hoped that most of our congregation will take part in what might have far reaching effects.

I think it was here that Nicholas stood up and added his approval of the idea and lastly Margaret Taylor explained her view of the proposed undertaking and the good that she saw in it.

Eila then threw the meeting open for questions of which there were quite a few and they were dealt with efficiently by the Committee.

It remains to express our sincere thanks to the (Social and Refreshment) Committee for the welcome glass of warm wine cup on arrival out of the wet night and the most attractively displayed sandwiches, biscuits and pate, also the cup of coffee and cakes during question time.

We all departed with something to think about.

Alison Thompson

OUR COMMUNITY – THE CHURCH AND LENT 1985

For many people in the church it is of great concern that relatively few people in the community consider Christianity sufficiently seriously to make a strong or lasting connection with the church, either ours or it would seem any other. It would appear that throughout the country even the present size of congregations is under pressure and gradually declining.

The P.C.C. has discussed what it might do to understand the situation in Hampton Hill better and to try and find possible ways of bringing before more

people something of what the Gospel means in terms of reconciliation, hope, renewal and wholeness for individuals and for communities.

Of course this is a programme of many years duration, much prayer and inspiration. However we are making a start, albeit a tentative one, by looking at where we are now. This coming Lent we hope to have ten house groups meeting, following and using common material. Hopefully this will embrace about a hundred people. At this time group leaders have met together for three evenings and discussed the arrangements and the material. We need soon to arrange meeting places and if you would like to have a group meeting in your house please put your name on the list which will be in church from early January onwards.

This is a major happening in the life of our church. Please support it – whatever your misgiving about house groups. Hopefully it will not involve any extra nights out as the P.C.C. is hoping most committees and groups will try not to meet in Lent so that these groups may really flourish. Please let that happen and pray that God will use them.

A.R. Taylor

MOTHER AND CHILD

It was November 22 and, for my liking, a little early to be thinking about Christmas. My eye had been caught by a photograph of the mother and child on an inside page of one of the newspapers. She was in traditional desert robes; the baby on her lap. Not particularly good taste, either, to have people posed so obviously as Mary and her child, I thought as I turned the page. But something drew me back. The woman's face was attractive, despite its thinness. The toddler had inherited the looks, and even had a little necklace – which drew the eye momentarily away from the skeletal legs and the rib cage pushing against the starved chest. Mother stroked the little head with both hands. The caption said they were among 22,000 victims of the Ethiopian famine crowded into one refugee camp built for 5,000. The child died later.

Chris Richards

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LAY TRAINING

Thanks to the P.C.C. for sending me on a course arranged in Hampton Deanery for prayer group leaders. We met Bridgid Pailthorp, who is Lay Reader, and licensed for the Healing Ministry in the London Diocese. Together we prayed silently and aloud, reflected on our individual life of prayer, and talked about our lives. We learned pen and paper exercises that would be helpful to any group of people wishing to know one another better. The Area Dean and Nicholas joined us to talk about using our experience in our own parishes. We thought that St. James' family might like to think about small informal meetings for prayer after Easter.

If you are a Bishop Wand parent, we hope to start a Hampton prayer group soon, to add to the network already existing in Sunbury, Richmond and Ashford. If you are interested, and think that God might be calling you to deepen your prayer life in this way, please give me a phone call – 01-941 6784.

Anne Malins

FOR CHRIST'S SAKE SHARE (continued)

The fourth speaker talked about Nicaragua, very apt since the United States were accusing the Soviet Union of providing Mig fighters that very day. Keren King, (Chinese brought up in Ireland), from the Church Action for Central America, had visited Nicaragua and knew the country well. She was most moving in her description of this tiny country, population 2½ million, and how the people during the last 5 years have worked together and struggled to re-build their country; they wish desperately to remain non-aligned, the Sadanista Government being accused by the opposition Communist Party of being too "right", and throughout there has been sporadic fighting with the Contras, backed by the USA. Keren described the people in their poverty, and yet having a spirit of unity, forgiveness, hope and confidence in the future. They have combatted illiteracy, bringing the figure down from 36% to 13%; during their struggle they have harboured 22,000 refugees from El Salvador; they have helped Honduras with polio vaccine. She spoke again and again of cleanliness and order. Now they are threatened with invasion from the USA. They wished to preserve their independence, won through death, struggle, hard work; Keren said that invasion would be the end of everything.

Feeling in the meeting was strongly in favour of following up what had been said by a telegram to President Reagan saying how much our group abhorred military intervention in Nicaragua, and this we did, raising £17.80 then and there towards the cost of the telegram.

The last session was held on Thursday, November 22nd. To everyone's disappointment Miss Pauline Webb was prevented from coming as she was needed to work as part of a film on Peace movements in Israel. I also could not get to the evening. I am told, however, that the Rev. Timothy Higgins, who had been responsible for the whole course, organised a particularly interesting evening with a market, group discussion and a final talk from the Rev. Brian Frost on the subject of Holiness and Justice.

Comments on the course were asked for, and suggestions for future involvement and follow on.

Grateful thanks are due to Timothy Higgins; and what bad luck it was to be let down by three speakers out of five! All honour, however, under these difficulties, to have constructed and carried through such a worth while series.

Hannah Stanton

NELL ROBINSON

An article about the Service of Celebration for her life will be appearing, we hope, in the next issue of *The Spire*. Many people have said how moved they were by it. In the meantime Mark and Janet have asked us to express their thanks to all those who have shown such love and affection for them as a family. They have also said that they would like people to know that over £700 was donated in memory of Nell. Half will go to support British Wildlife and the other half will go to Ethiopia through the Agencies of Blue Peter and Save the Children Fund.

WAYSIDE AGM

This was held on 21st November when 12 people were present. David presented his report as Chairman during which it became clear that the Monday morning sessions were being very well used and supported but the evening sessions less so. There had been some occasions on which there had been no visitors. However it was decided to keep the Centre open, for the time being at least. The Centre was well thought of locally by other carers. Next year there would be a course for helpers run under the auspices of the Richmond Fellowship. This would train people in the skills needed for a "listening post" such as this.

The second half of the evening was devoted to a talk by Nicholas on "Burnout" based on a new book "Prayerways" by Savary and Berne. Although American in authorship many of the facts of analysis were thought to be very accurate, but the remedies less helpful.

David has now retired from office on the Management Committee and as Chairman. Thanks were expressed to him for all he had done. Ruth was chosen to succeed him and we wish her well and promise her all support.

ANSWERING MACHINE

A telephone answering machine has now been installed at the Vicarage. To some this may seem odd – or even threatening. We hope however that it will be found by many to be a very great help in leaving messages when, for one reason or another, no-one is available to receive them. It has already proved to be useful and enabled the Vicar to take action earlier than he would otherwise have done. Do please use it.

AROUND THE SPIRE

Many of you reading this will have been present on a cold wet Sunday in December to witness the Baptism of a remarkable family from Iran who decided to become Christians. It was a very joyous and moving occasion when the lighted Baptismal Candles seemed to glow extra brightly in the Advent austerity of the Church. Ali, Sheri and their three children, Salome, Sanaz and Reza were surrounded not only by God-parents, Vicar and Servers but also by friends and wellwishers in the general congregation and all of these added to the warmth and love we feel for our rather special new family. As the service says "We welcome You".

FROM THE REGISTERS

BAPTISMS

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 9th December | Charlotte Jane Wickham | 90 Gloucester Road, Hampton |
| | Robert Philip Orme | 135 Wordsworth Road |
| 16th December | Ali James Sazegar | 5 Vincent Row |
| | Shahrbanoo Elizabeth Sazegar | " |
| | Sallome Sarah Sazegar | " |
| | Sanaz Mary Sazegar | " |
| | Alodulreza John Sazegar | " |

FUNERALS

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| 22nd November | Hilda Gertrude Redford | aged 89 | Laurel Dene |
| 28th November | Doroth Beadle | aged 76 | Laurel Dene |
| 29th November | Ivy Violet Irene Clark | aged 77 | 33 Cranmer Road |
| 11th December | George Lucian Phillip | aged 73 | 33 Cross Street |
| 14th December | Leopold Thomas Hamilton | aged 80 | 25 Pigeon Lane |

FROM THE REGISTER OF SERVICES

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Communicants</i> | <i>Attendance</i> | <i>Pledged Giving</i> | <i>Other Giving</i> |
|---------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 21st October | 94 | 127 | 126 | 42 |
| 28th October | 100 | 133 | 131 | 7 |
| 4th November | 122 | 142 | 188 | 15 |
| | | | For Ethiopia | 106 |
| | By Banker's Order for October | | 479 | |
| 11th November | 104 | 142 | 304 | 12 |
| | | | For Ethiopia | 17 |
| 18th November | 95 | 136 | 97 | 7 |
| 25th November | 104 | 134 | 202 | 10 |

DATES TO NOTE

December

- 30 Sunday after Christmas
16.30 Service of Lessons and Carols

January

- 1 Naming of Jesus
09.30 Holy Communion
- 3 19.15 Holy Communion
- 4 06.30 Holy Communion
- 6 EPIPHANY
Services as usual
16.30 Christingle Service
- 8 09.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Magazine Committee
- 10 19.15 Holy Communion
- 11 06.30 Holy Communion
- 13 1st after Epiphany
Services as usual
- 15 09.30 Holy Communion
- 17 19.15 Holy Communion
- 18 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
06.30 Holy Communion
20.15 Properties Committee
- 20 2nd after Epiphany
Morning Services as usual
Evening Service 18.45 at St. Mary's Hampton
- 22 09.30 Holy Communion
- 24 19.15 Holy Communion
- 25 Conversion of St. Paul
06.30 Holy Communion
- 27 3rd after Epiphany
- 29 09.30 Holy Communion
20.00 Liturgical Committee
- 31 19.15 Holy Communion

February

- 1 06.30 Holy Communion
- 2 Presentation of Christ – Candlemass
- 3 9th before Easter (Septuagesima)
Services as usual
- 5 09.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Magazine Committee
- 7 19.15 Holy Communion
- 8 06.30 Holy Communion

March

- 2 Covis (Communicating Vision)
Training Day 11.00 - 4.00 in Christian Doctrine