

We in this country have the privilege to be served by a wonderful medical profession. It has a tradition second to none not only of scientific excellence but also of caring for the patient and seeking the best possible solution for all those concerned with illness and disease. Even when we mutter about some mistake which has occurred we are really saying these things because the standard is usually so high. Recently we have become aware of a dimension which frankly most of us would rather dodge — the ethical dimension. This involves all the questions surrounding rights and wrongs of particular decisions such as: when is it 'right' to turn off a life-support machine? who should have the benefit of a heart or kidney transplant? and most recently, is it right to proceed with the practice of 'surrogate' motherhood? We cannot just wish these questions would go away. They will not. Now the techniques are known we have to decide how to handle the new knowledge. We all know that we cannot 'disinvent' atomic power; what we have to do is to learn how to handle this piece of God's creation for the benefit of His creation. And that is hard and painful. Inevitably mistakes will be made; people may be hurt and perhaps even die as a result of these mistakes but it will be hard to deny that most probably much good will result if the tests are made in good faith. Human life is part of God's creation too and most of us would support the idea of improving the quality of life as much as we can for all those who suffer. The trap into which we must never fall is to think of ourselves as God; nor must we push others into that category and then blame them if things go wrong or do not work out according to our hopes or wishes. Later in this edition of the Spire is a review by Alison Thompson, herself a retired physiotherapist, of a recent book dealing with questions which doctors have to deal with every day. It may seem a bit 'heavy' for the parish magazine but it is an important as well as a topical subject. Above all, as Christians, I believe we ought to remember the medical profession constantly in our prayers and do all we can to help them in their ministry to the sick. Remember that they are human, too, like us and do not necessarily find it easy to make decisions which are matters of life and death to their patients.

Nicholas Chubb

P.C.C.

Three important matters were discussed at the P.C.C. meeting held on 15th December, in addition to routine business.

First on 3rd March the 9.30 a.m. Service would *not* be a Eucharist. Many children and non-confirmed adults attend this service. We would put together a special form, much shorter than at present to finish well within an hour. There will be much more opportunity to involve young people and to learn and sing good new hymns and songs. There is already a Parish Communion in the evening so, apart from changing the time, no-one should feel they could not make their communion. It is possible that the new Service will be held once a quarter.

Secondly during Lent there will be a Series of House Groups (see an article in another place) beginning on 18th February, to examine the role of the church. We hope to involve about 100 people. During Holy Week (31st March – 6th April) Brother Edward from the Society of St. Francis will be leading our Devotions. Please book now in your diary the evening of Palm Sunday, 31st March, as well as, as many evenings as you can that week. Brother Edward will also be leading the Three Hours' Service on Good Friday. We can be assured of an interesting lively and different approach from usual which will challenge us all.

Thirdly the P.C.C. agreed that we must discuss in one form or another the important documents which have recently been published concerning Christian Unity. One is the World Council of Churches booklet on 'Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry' worked out at Lima in Peru and known as 'Lima' for short; the other in the ARCIC Final Report (ARCIC stands for Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission). Both have far-reaching implications for all Christians, especially Anglicans.

CRIB SERVICE

Our family first went to the crib service at St. James's four Christmases ago. It was held on the chilly afternoon of Christmas Day, and only a few hardy families gathered around the crib in one corner of the church. In the following year it was again held on the corresponding afternoon, but for the last two years it has been held on Christmas Eve and the numbers gradually crept up. In fact, in 1983, Nicholas was literally turning people away at the door – not, it must be admitted, because we were packed out, but because there had been some confusion over the times of the two services planned. (Of course, the fact that there were two services, showed their growing appeal).

And finally to 1984, when the crib service was held once again on Christmas Eve. Whether or not it was the change of day, I don't know, but more than 200 children, parents, grandparents and friends turned up eager to begin the Christmas season with such a service. Hannah read from the Bible the passages that still best tell the old, old story. Nicholas provided an explanation and commentary that made it plain to all and led us in enjoyable carol-singing. The children then filed past the crib and its simple scene. I am sure many walked home in the cold evening air determined to remember the advice, that in the midst of our festivities a thought for the meaning of what we were really celebrating would make the whole event much more worthwhile.

JUST SUPPOSING

Suppose every member of the church did as much work for the church as you are presently doing. Would more seats be needed, or would the doors of the church be closed?

Suppose your name would be dropped from membership if you didn't win to Christ at least one person a year. How long would you remain a member?

A MUSICAL FEAST

*Hark! the herald angels sing
"Glory to the new-born king."*

Once more the lovely harmonies of the refrain ring out to fill the building — this time with the descant soaring up above the melody. As usual my own voice sadly lets me down, particularly this Christmas under the influence of that ubiquitous bug which has claimed so many victims; but nevertheless the keen pleasure of being enveloped by this glorious sound is something I really savour; it has almost become an essential part of Christmas for me and I look forward to it from year to year. The happy moment came at the end of the service of lessons and carols on the Sunday after Christmas; a service with much beautiful music, particularly well rendered by the choir. It began with another of those special treats when the procession has formed up behind the tall cross in the south aisle, the whole church is hushed and into the expectant silence steals the sweet soprano solo of "Once in Royal David's city". This, too is a happy tradition which we can look forward to every year. But on this particular occasion the true, unique highlight came in the middle of the service. It was one of those rare moments when music at its best seems to me to be a gift from God generously bestowed on us just to make us happy. Choir and flute (most charmingly played by Abigail Oprey) combined for the "Christmas dance of the shepherds" by Kodaly. I felt almost lifted out of myself — transports of delight became an appropriate expression — I am sure I speak for many when I say thank you Olive for this very special Christmas present.

Our organist was equally responsible for the opening number of all our celebrations this year: the evening of Carols with Orchestra on Thursday 20 December. A very different feel to this event; in a brisk and jolly way Olive talked us through a garland of carols all accompanied by a talented orchestra which she conjures up on these occasions. With the minimum of rehearsals they manage to produce some very enjoyable music indeed, and make me wish we could have such events more often. In a very clever way Olive had spun the whole programme around all the peripheral trimmings of our Christmas celebrations: food, decorations, gifts, parties, etc. A reading from Toad of Toad Hall led into some charming "carol singing by some field mice" (here personified by the choir in red scarves), and we were further regaled by some actual carolling: i.e. the Liturgical Dancers with a number of children danced a wassail song which asks for food and drink in return for good wishes for the New Year.

In thinking about all the secular timings mentioned that evening it occurred to me that one can only enjoy them to the full if there is something at the centre of one's Christmas. If one knows that the heart of the matter is the new-born Saviour — a Saviour for the world and myself — then one can be truly merry. This it seems to me is very well expressed in the carol chosen to be No. 1 in St. James's own Carol Book:

*God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour,
Was born upon this day:
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray
O Tidings of comfort and joy!*

Hilde Bucknell

THE CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

A truly great occasion because it is a family occasion – a coming together, this year particularly 'in the bleak mid winter' to celebrate Christ coming into the world. A feeling of togetherness in the family and the community as a whole.

It was an adventurous service that set out to combine worship, song, prayer and spoken word including junior theatrical production, succeeding because of the commitment, dedication and devotion apparent on the day. Problems with acoustics and restlessness of the very younger children cannot be easily solved; however the service carried its own momentum through to the conclusion with the very attractive imagery associated with the Christingle oranges. The children having been requested to resist consuming the artefacts associated with the orange, whilst still in the church, gazed longingly onto their prize – in various stages of attempting to eat the sweets unseen – before being nudged into order by their parents.

The singing was a true expression of enthusiasm and feeling within the congregation – with many extending their voices and it would seem their hearts high into the church and beyond. The occasion was atmospheric, heightened by the use of lighting – focussing and highlighting in the junior Nativity play – subdued for the candlelit procession – making the most of a moving occasion. All must have absorbed some of the atmosphere and underlying spirit of the event.

And finally off home, pelted with a snowball at the church door on that icy night, and again to dim the lights and light the candles on the oranges.

David and Carol Roe

£89 was raised from the Christingle Service for the Children's Society.

Thank You. Editor

MEMORIAL SERVICE

The Memorial Service held on November 24th for Nell Robinson filled the Church with people wishing to show their love and respect for the Robinson family as a whole. There were young people from School and College as well as older people who had known Janet and Mark for a number of years, family friends and relatives – seldom has the Church been so full and the colourful flowers added their own warmth to the occasion.

The Service itself was made up of prayers, hymns and readings which were either those that Nell knew and loved or which seemed appropriate to the occasion. Janet's moving reading of Dylan Thomas's 'Fern Hill' brought tears to many eyes and a recollection of Wales, of which Nell was particularly fond, and where her ashes are scattered. The address was given by John Latham, a master from Bishop Wand School and he spoke with sincerity and warmth about the girl who had had such a zest for living.

At the close of the Service Mark Robinson thanked everyone for their love and support and asked us to greet one another in whatever way we felt happiest and such embracing, clasping of hands etc. went on for several minutes.

Many people stayed behind in the Church after the family had departed to meet old friends and enjoy the music specially recorded as being Nell's favourites and many people also returned to the house to see the family.

Now it is 1985 and Janet, Mark and Kate begin a new year, a new beginning, not the same as before, but different. We wish them well.

CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION

A new and unusual exhibition is to be held in February at the Royal Horticultural Society's Hall entitled 'Christian Resources Exhibition'. Under one roof will be gathered a variety of people interested in different aspects of the Church both material and spiritual and embracing every facet of Christianity. There are seven main aspects — Media and Communication; Buildings and Foundational — to include stone masons, bell foundries, vestment makers, sound engineers, etc; Missions and Charities; the Arts; Education and Careers; Residential Centres and Holidays; Finance and Administration.

The exhibition is on 6th - 9th February from 10 am - 6 pm at the RHS Hall, Vincent Square, Westminster SW1 and the admission price is £2. It would be very interesting for anyone wishing to go and a poster advertising the exhibition will be on view in the Church with more details on it.

LENT 1985

Many of you will have received a letter indicating something of the arrangements the P:C.C. is making this Lent. Principally they consist of about ten house groups in and around the parish, and we hope that about ten people will go to each group. One group at least will meet during the day and one will be primarily for under 21 year olds if they should prefer to meet within a similar age group.

The groups will have the same material to use and the purpose will be to consider the role of our church in our community. Are we in danger of becoming a smaller and smaller inward looking sect? Are traditional christian values in danger of being lost? Would anyone care if the church as presently constituted disappeared?

If you feel concerned to try and discover how we should respond to the present situation, please do come and join a group and make this Lent a memorable one for St. James's Church.

The meetings start week commencing February 18th and will last six weeks, finishing before Holy Week. The details of where the groups will be meeting are at the back of the church.

It may be that you have not joined such a group before and are apprehensive about it. Please be assured you will be very welcome and you will very quickly feel part of the group.

Does confrontation mean no-one shows the love of Christ to anyone?

Stephen Brown — quoted in 'Bits & Pieces', Ripon

A BUNCH OF ANEMONES

A friend recently bought me a bunch of anemones. I can never look at these flowers, particularly at this time of year, without being vividly reminded of a miracle which happened to another close friend of mine many years ago.

Jeanne and Graham had put all their savings into an isolated smallholding near Redruth. Life was very hard. After milking, Graham had to balance the two full milk churns, one at a time, on the pedal of his bicycle and push it 2½ miles to the collecting point and then return and do the journey all over again. On top of his duties on the holding he used to cycle to Redruth in the evening to work during the night as a baker, returning in the dawn to do the milking while Jeanne attended to the two little girls before walking them to school some distance away.

Came a time, not long before Christmas, when resources had dwindled and everything depended on whether their cow which was about to calve produced a heifer calf or a bull. Alas she produced a bull calf and their hopes were shattered. Jeanne wrote to me and told me that that morning she stood in their tiny lean-to kitchen and gazed out at the pouring rain. Then she knelt down and prayed for God's help. Immediately afterwards something urged her to put on her boots and raincoat and, in spite of the weather, to go for a walk. At the gate she was urged to turn right, away from her friends' farm where she could have gone for comfort. She walked along the desolate track and paused at the gate leading into their rented field. Across it was a small spinney into which she had never been. She was urged to cross the sopping meadow and to circle the clump of trees where she found a rough gate. She pushed it open against the long grass which clogged it and walked into the little wood, and suddenly, her eyes lighted on rows and rows of colour, red and pink and blue and white and purple – anemones, hundreds of them just coming into bud. Previous tenants had planted them and there they had bloomed and multiplied unseen in quiet glory; no-one but God had known they were there.

The beautiful crop was just in time for the Redruth Christmas Market and Christmas tide instead of being cheerless and drab and the end of an era, was full of gratitude and happiness and saw the re-birth of their hopes.

Co-incidence or God-incidence? I know which I believe.

M.O.

P.S. I had my usual long Christmas letter from Jeanne this year – at least thirty years after her miracle. God has continued with her and she with Him and her life is full of His Grace. She has been used powerfully in His healing and caring ministry. Praise be to God.

COVIS TRAINING DAY 2nd MARCH

In the light of the Bishop of Durham, What do Christians believe? Have those beliefs changed in recent years? Do we feel threatened by modern expressions of Christianity? Is there One Faith? All these things (and no doubt others) will be discussed at a Training Day organised by the Hampton Deanery Lay Training Committee on 2nd March between 10.30 am and 4.00 pm at All Hallows, Chertsey Road, Twickenham. The day will be led by the Vicar of All Souls, St. Margaret's, Dr. John Halliburton. He is a member of the Doctrine Commission of the Church of England and until his appointment locally two years ago was Principal of Chichester Theological College. So he is well able to lead us in our thinking. Application forms will shortly be in the church. Places are limited, so first come, first served.

PARISH QUIET DAY

We last had a parish Quiet Day nearly two years ago. We have now booked Saturday, 11th May, 1985 for the next one to take place at St. Michael's Convent, Ham Common (between Kingston and Richmond). For anyone who has not ever experienced a Quiet Day it is something of a treasure to be explored. We meet mid-morning making sure there is no rush to get there, have a short social time together over a cup of coffee and then take advantage of the peace and quiet of the Convent and its grounds to recharge ourselves and allow ourselves to listen to what God is saying to us through times of addresses, and formal and informal prayer time. We take a picnic lunch (drinks are provided) and we shall be invited to join the Sisters of the Community in their mid-day office. There will be plenty of time to walk round the beautiful gardens or to take a book and read uninterruptedly, or to spend time in the spacious Chapel. Most of us do not give ourselves enough space for this kind of activity and most people welcome it. If you have been before, you will book the date immediately: if you have not yet engaged in something of this sort think about it seriously and talk to those who have. There will be enough space for about 20 or so of us and the list will be in the Church in April. We look forward to seeing old and new faces at St. Michael's, Ham Common on 11th May – we finish with tea at about 4.00 pm.

DOCTORS TALKING by Norman Autron

Asked to review this book I have struggled with it. It is a book I could not read late at night for it gives me mental indigestion and I cannot sleep.

It is not to be taken lightly. I think it is a book for the intelligent, even the intellectual for it deals with deep and controversial subjects quoting the opinions of dedicated medical and scientific personnel. These opinions have to be sorted and weighed morally and practically. It is written by a hospital chaplain in close contact with medical staff. Obviously a man who has been perplexed and worried by the necessity of human experiments, and the need for definite decisions on these controversial subjects combined with his own moral responsibilities.

The introduction gives the reason for the book. The fact that technology has advanced so rapidly that the old comfortable answers no longer serve. As he remarks – in the sphere of medical ethics, while other disciplines *may* raise important questions about the quality of treatment and recognition of human need, the hospital chaplain *must* raise these issues.

The first chapter deals with human experimentation with emphasis on fully informed consent and the need for constant advancement in medicine and science against the risks, mostly slight, of those who, for the sake of their fellow men, will allow their bodies to be subjected to experiments.

The second chapter on Organ Transplants describes the transplant being done and the need and the results and the care of both receiver and donor and families. In fact he puts great stress on the families in all his chapters realizing that in all these subjects it is not only the patients who suffer.

Chapter three deals with Brain Death, a subject which worries many people when they read about the terrible decisions that doctors have to make when they cut a patient off from a supportive machine. Doctors are trained to

cure and to save life and so they have a terrible ethical decision on what to advise. As with the next chapter dealing also with Life or Death he deals with it thoroughly and sympathetically, remarking that the people who make these decisions must be very balanced and impartial and carefully selected for their profession. He explains simply the structure of the Brain and how the state of Brain Death is considered conclusive.

Chapter Four on To Live or Let Die is the heart rending subject of children born deformed or mentally handicapped. At one time far more of these unfortunate children would automatically die at birth or soon after but with the present advances they can so often be kept alive and so the question arises — should they? Is it best that nature should take its course? The Doctors, Surgeons, parents, family and probably the hospital chaplain all come into this. How satisfying and how long will the child's life be and how much stress on the family? The loss of a child after perhaps five years of extra loving care and constant attention must inevitably be greater than the loss of an unknown child.

Chapter Five is on Human Fertilization and Embryology and he spends about fifty pages discussing the various methods of having a family when natural methods fail, and of discussing the disadvantages to both parents and child.

It is a fair unbiased explanation of the situation today, of the illegitimacy of AID birth, the stress of the child who is aware of his origin and his attitude to it.

The writer has obviously taken a great interest in the plight of childless couples and how their stress can be alleviated. Also he has pondered much over the law and the natural disadvantages and thought out ways and means of easing the worries and complications, including how he would like to see the law and the practice altered.

All the subjects which he has taken to discuss and explain in these 5 chapters are treated with the same thorough explanation and sympathetic understanding and he writes well. I think it is possibly a book which needed to be written, a book which should be read, maybe in small doses, by most mature people for it does present these problems as they are today.

Alison Thompson

AROUND THE SPIRE

Once again we have to report the very sad news of a death of a teenager, Paul Kibble, aged fifteen years killed by a lorry while riding his bicycle just outside Squires Nursery on 29th December. Many of you will know Brian and Ann Kibble and their other two children Nicola and Stephen, members of our congregation for some years until they moved. This is a very sad time for the family and we would like them to know that we shall be thinking of them and praying for them. Paul's funeral was on 8th January.

The Church was very full with people from his school and from the Sea Scouts, of which he was a member as well as many of the family's friends and relatives. The death of another youngster so soon after Nell Robinson's death also in a road accident should make us all very conscious of our responsibilities when out on the road in a vehicle especially where cyclists are concerned so that we may never be in a position of blaming ourselves for an accident which might have been avoided.

Now we should like to offer our warmest congratulations to Lesley Hayter and fiancé Ian Brough who have recently become engaged and hope to get married at St. James' on September 21st. Lesley has long been attached to the Guides in one capacity or another and is well known among us. No doubt Vera and Stan Bannister, her grand-parents, are very pleased and we look forward to greeting the happy couple, who are going to continue to live in the parish.

The Hampton Hill Association
will be holding their Annual Buffet Party
in the Parish Hall
on
Saturday 16th February
from 7.30 to 11.30 pm.

Wine and soft drinks will be on sale.

TICKETS: Members — £1.50 Guests — £1.70
 includes light refreshments

For tickets contact any H.H.A. Street Representative
or Mrs. Audrey Smith 979 1835;
Mrs. Joyce Doughty 979 2839;
Mrs. Edna McLean 979 3407.

FROM THE REGISTERS

FUNERALS

4th January	Muriel Milner	aged 78	19 Burton's Road
8th January	Paul James Kibble	aged 15	10 Warwick Close

DATES TO NOTE

February

- 3 9th before Easter
Services as usual
- 5 09.30 Holy Communion
- 6 20.00 Good News Group
- 7 19.15 Holy Communion
- 10 8th before Easter
16.30 Rev. John Slater talks on the Old Testament
- 12 09.30 Holy Communion
- 14 19.15 Holy Communion
- 17 7th before Easter
Services as usual
- 19 09.30 Holy Communion
- 20 Ash Wednesday
20.00 Parish Communion
- 21 19.15 Holy Communion
- 24 Lent 1
Services as usual
- 26 09.30 Holy Communion
- 28 19.15 Holy Communion

March

- 1 Women's World Day of Prayer
- 2 Covis Training Day on Christian Doctrine
- 3 5th before Easter
09.30 New Style Family Service
16.30 Parish Communion
- 5 20.00 P.C.C.
- 9 M.U. Jumble Sale in Parish Hall
- 21 10.30 Pram Service