

Those of us who were unfortunate (?or fortunate) enough to have been brought up by 'old-fashioned' educational methods will have struggled for hours taking apart pieces of writing in various languages trying to describe how it was all put together and built up to make sense. (Half the problem was that of course it didn't always make sense!). From that we progressed to trying to describe what made it an effective piece of writing. We learnt various tricks that writers use to improve their effectiveness. One of the words we are likely to have come across is 'paradox', which describes the putting together of opposite or contrasting ideas. On the face of it, it seems nonsense. But the odd thing is that it can be a very good method of saying something powerfully.

In the Christian context the idea of Holiness induces paradox. For on the one hand it describes the untouchable God who is of such a kind that He cannot be approached and is alone in his Heaven. He is of a different kind from humans and in the Old Testament is feared and held in awe because of His Holiness. On the other hand we, as Christians, are ourselves called to be Holy. We are called to be a Holy People, set apart from the rest by our standards of behaviour, by our acknowledgement of God where others ignore Him. And yet we observe Jesus somehow achieving the paradox, or being a paradox. Christians believe Him to be both God and Man. He is God and yet demonstrably related to the men and women of His time easily and moved amongst them. How can we achieve this? For it is reasonably easy either to cut ourselves off from 'ordinary' life and become recluses or introverted individuals or groups (and this is what some church congregations are) or to do the opposite and live as if God does not exist and have no morals or standards or sense of responsibility for others.

Some people have managed to do this and they are those whom we call 'Saints'. In the Church's calendar we remember specific individuals throughout the year whom we recognise to have got things about right in the living out their christian lives. But of course we don't know them all by name. At the beginning of November, on the first day of the month, we celebrate All Saints' Day. Then we give thanks for those who have lived so close to God in their daily lives that the quality of their spirituality shines through to those round about. They have acknowledged the Holiness of God and have been transformed by it.

For most of us this is a daunting prospect which we do not relish. And yet I know of one person who was so struck by the holiness of a man he just saw and listened to in the pulpit that he has just begun training for the full time ministry in the church.

Will we be called Saints after our life is done? Do we wish to be called Saints? Possibly not! Probably not! And yet it ought to be our aim to be remembered as those who have resolved the paradox of living both close to God and also close to this world in which we live. Isn't that why we admire Mother Teresa and Desmond Tutu?

We who live here in Hampton Hill are called to be Saints.

Nicholas Chubb

JESUS and the SEVEN DEADLY SINS

Nicholas' September "Spire" article seemed to me to be very thought provoking and needed something of a reply. I offer my thoughts and hope that others may offer theirs.

It seems to me that Christianity is not just a moral code. It must entail an acceptance of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and a personal saviour. That also assumes an acceptance of God as an eternal power beyond humanity and the recognition of something to be saved from and for. It must make a difference to one's moral attitudes, behaviour and relationships to the rest of creation. Exactly how that concept is interpreted by each individual is not something I am prepared to judge. The morality of Christianity is accepted by almost all religions and by many atheists - they may be right, but they aren't Christians. I also believe that it is arrogant of any person or religion to claim to have the whole truth about God, but we all need a working hypothesis to guide our lives and I find Christianity suits me and my concepts of creation and God very well. Total "belief as a little child" in the literal interpretation of every word of the Bible is, perhaps, enviable (Oh dear, did I commit a deadly sin?) but I don't think a loving God gave us the Bible or our intellect to expect us to manage that. It occurs to me surprising that supremely authoritative writings ended with the Bible. Surely God has spoken through individuals since then. Should St. Paul be considered more authoritative than the Bishops of Woolwich, Durham or Capetown? Why?

Today's Seven Deadly Sins, sins against the self, are the same as they always were. Modern English might use different words. Greed and Avarice seem to be the most measurable and so the most openly condemned and legally punished of the seven, but it is lust that sells newspapers and the revelling in other people's sufferings - the more gory the better. Does Apathy come under "Sloth"?

The list of 'particular vices of our time' provoke these thoughts. Drug pushing is murder, fraud and tax evasion are theft, Drug (including alcohol) taking leads to violence, theft, murder, adultery and other actions arising from lack of self control. I feel that the entry into marriage so lightly that it permits divorces and "remarriages" throughout adult life, not to mention other infidelities to one's partner is less acceptable than a stable and loving "living together" relationship. At least that is honest - considerably more so than those marriages in church by people who care nothing for Christianity and who are not prepared to face up to the responsibilities and hard work involved in marriage. I wonder if God feels the bit of paper is important.

As for homosexuality, I have yet to meet a convincing Bible based argument against it. Promiscuity, homosexual or heterosexual must come under the heading of "lust" or adultery. It is believed that 10% of any population is homosexual despite prosecution, persecution and the varying social attitudes of history and geography.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Ruth Mills

HARVEST FESTIVAL

This year our main religious service took the form of a special Children's Thanksgiving. The scouts were once more present and their banners were presented to the altar - to me always rather a moving token of the offering to God of what the scouts and their banners stand for.

Usually the church is lavishly decorated with flowers, berries and greenery but this year it looked a little bare by comparison with other years. It seems that a lot of people, including me - had for some reason entirely forgotten to bring flowers for its decoration. Perhaps it was the fact that this year we were asked to concentrate our giving on money and non-perishable foods that made us forget.

I enjoyed the service. I always love to see the young people in church. Nicholas's address which concerned the various occasions on which Jesus supplied people with food was very apt, and his questions did manage to elicit some answers once shyness was broken down and the hands started to go up.

A nice touch was that the children were asked to present at the altar the Harvest Envelopes containing the donations from the adult congregation. I could see them fingering the contents and coming to the realisation that quite substantial offerings were being made - not just the random token coin - but enough to be of real help to the recipients. I was seated immediately behind the boys and it was good to see them going up to receive a blessing and giving the peace to one another for the most part without too much embarrassment. It was a good moment when some of the boys turned round to offer us the peace and the young gentleman immediately in front of me said, as he clasped me firmly by the hand "Peace be with you". It made my day.

Margery Orton

"SONGS OF PRAISE" AND GLORY

"The valleys stand so thick with corn that even they are singing". This joyful phrase from our first hymn set the spirit of our worship on Sunday, 5th October when we celebrated harvest in the evening.

In hymns, anthem, verse and readings, mostly chosen and introduced by members of the congregation, we gave thanks and celebrated our boundless gifts from God. I was surprised (but why should I have been?) at how the choices reflected, some exuberantly, some quietly, the same feelings of our wonder, reverence and above all joy in nature and the mighty rhythm of the seasons. I think we were conscious of the triviality of our own affairs unless they are part of the grand design.

As believers we sometimes have the exhilaration, but always the certainty, of knowing that "God is working his purpose out". We also know that our peace and happiness lie in making ourselves conform to that purpose.

Dick Wilde

HARVEST SUPPER

It was a packed house on Saturday 11th October at St. James's Church Hall, all anticipating a sociable evening for the Harvest Supper. The meal was organised by the entertainments committee who did a splendid job catering for the 109 people who attended. The suggestion that older members of the Church should be served first produced an interesting response - it would appear very few members consider themselves "older"!

After an excellent supper, Violet Clarke entertained us with a recitation. Those who believed they could relax for the remainder of the evening were proved mistaken. Ruth Mills organised an extremely energetic sing-song; what it lacked in musical quality was amply made up in enthusiasm.

A very successful and most enjoyable Harvest Supper.

Sylvia & Brian Parkin

HEALING SERVICE

On Wednesday 8th October St. James's held another healing service. The service was led by Don Rawlins and commenced with worship in song, using the new Spirit of Praise songbooks. Paul Revis led the singing, to his own guitar accompaniment, and song followed song with only the announcement of the song number to interrupt the flow of worship. The songs were grouped into three parts, and between each part there was a time of quiet for meditation or prayer. Within this framework, one was free to become quite absorbed in the Lord, and I hope we really did minister to him during that time. Nicholas followed this with a short address which focussed on the healing ministry of Jesus. He explained how healing was an integral part of that ministry, that in the Bible the word used for 'save' and 'heal' is often the same, and that the healings of Jesus speak of the power and love of God and are signs of his presence. He emphasised that this ministry was not confined to Jesus alone, but that he sent his disciples out to heal too, and he encouraged us not to think of this ministry as being confined to the clergy, but to recognise that God could work through any (or all) of us. Don then continued, speaking to us of the practical aspects of becoming involved in this ministry today. He said that there would be disappointments, failures and discouragements as well as successes, but that the over-riding concern must be for obedience to the commission to "preach the gospel and heal the sick". He encouraged us to make ourselves available to God and to step out, assuring us that God would enable us to persevere, and that in his time and in his way he would begin to work amongst us. A time of prayer followed, and then any who wished to be prayed for were asked to make their way over to the left side of the church where each person was able to share their need with a member of the healing team. During this time, Paul continued to play quietly and the rest of the congregation was invited to remain and to pray or to meditate. There was no 'official' end to the service, and one could leave at any time after the ministry began.

The service was peaceful and reverent. The teaching promoted a sense of purpose and was a declaration of this church's desire to follow Jesus and to move forward in obedience to Him.

These services will be held regularly on the second Wednesday of each month, at 8pm. After a few months it is hoped that other members of the congregation will want to join in praying for each other. It is hoped that people with various needs will come forward - not only those who are physically ill, but 'all those who are weary and heavy laden' with all kinds of problems. What a privilege it is to be able to participate in this new thing that God is doing amongst us.

Carol Kennedy

STEWARDSHIP REVIEW 1986

This Year's Stewardship Review will be held on Thursday 20th November, in the Church Hall (School Road) starting with refreshments at 7.45pm. Stewardship Sunday will be on the 23rd November.

Lately there has been much heart-searching in both political and Church circles regarding the conditions of life in our big cities. Everyone agrees something needs to be done, but what, and how, and by whom?

The principal speaker at this year's review will be Keith Griffiths of the London City Mission and his experience will help us formulate our response in helping and supporting the moves to bring new life and hope to these communities.

Please do make every effort to come to this evening and the following Sunday in Church. It is so important to the life of our Church that the Stewardship movement is vigorous and moving ahead. Your continued interest and support will therefore help enormously. These events are the only time in the year when all the members in Stewardship come together to hear about progress and any new developments that are being planned.

Every member will receive a personal invitation and we would be very grateful if you would reply as soon as possible. If you cannot come but would like someone to call and discuss either Stewardship generally or to change your financial contribution, please let us know.

We do hope everyone will consider their involvement very seriously and if possible arrange to increase their contribution. Much needs to be done and much has to be done.

We look forward to seeing you on 20th November.

Alan Taylor

PRAYER 'N' PRAISE (Part I)

I was asked today what we did at Prayer 'n' Praise. Lots of people have heard of it but for those who wonder and have not yet plucked up courage to come here is a short trailer.

The most noticeable difference from an ordinary service is the type and quantity of music. Over half the service is taken up by what is perhaps best described as congregational rock gospel music played on piano, guitar and percussion. The

singing is led by a small group singing into microphones. This gives a clear lead on songs which helps to obtain spirited singing from the congregation. In addition there is a reading, talk and prayers. The whole service takes 40-45 minutes and is very informal. Coffee is available after the service and a chat with friends.

This is an ideal service for people of all ages who enjoy the "new wave" of Church Music. It aims particularly for the 13-30 age group but there is something for everyone. Why don't you come along, any Sunday, 8 pm - see you there.

Paul Revis

(Part II)

Remember the notice announcing the start of Prayer 'n' Praise in the September magazine? Well, Prayer 'n' Praise is well and truly under way now, offering a new style of worship and music in an informal service every Sunday at 8 pm. An electric guitar, piano and percussion instruments make for a bright, cheerful and welcoming atmosphere.

There is no set "order of service" - or "taker" of service! This means it can be freely adapted and changed in response to the needs and suggestions of those attending: including possible future "export" to other local churches.

DO YOU NEED AN EXTRA LIFT IN YOUR WORSHIP?

SOMETHING DIFFERENT AND FUN?

You may feel self conscious, as the British so often do, about doing something new - well, so did we! However, our faith, to be a living faith, needs to find expression in different ways. I believe that those of you who enjoyed the fun and fellowship of our harvest supper, could find in Prayer 'n' Praise a fresh means of developing that faith. Why not join us and find out?

Pip and Fiona Rowett

TURKISH DELIGHTS

There can be few experiences to match standing on the walls of ancient Troy with the wind gusting unseasonably across the valley of the Scamander. True, the site is aptly described as "a ruin of a ruin". The German archaeologist Schliemann uncovered layer upon layer of civilisation dating from the 4th century AD right back to 3600 BC. But nothing can take away the feeling that one is standing on the stage of one of the greatest dramas of all time - the Trojan War, an event which exerted an almost unparalleled influence on western culture courtesy of the poet Homer.

Turkey is a very large country, as you quickly discover when you get down to the nitty-gritty of working out a manageable holiday itinerary. How to fit in some of the main classical sites and Istanbul? The solution was to make a round trip, starting from the Aegean port Izmir. We drove through Pergamum, Assos and Troy to Istanbul and then back to the coast via Bursa and Ephesus.

In Pergamum - a splendid site, and so it should be for it rivalled Athens as a cultural centre in its day - one was made aware how well the ancients understood the correlation between spiritual and physical well-being. At the Asclepion, the sanctuary of healing, the priests of the god Asclepieos were the "doctors" who cured the faithful with medicine and exercise, but also with music, drama and worship. At Assos we marvelled at the massive walls which once encircled the town where Aristotle lived. Then via Troy we crossed the Dardanelles, recalling the love-stricken Leander who drowned while swimming the Hellespont to see his love, the priestess Hero.

Istanbul is a stunning capital. Its situation, straddled either side of the Golden Horn, is a delight to behold. Every way you look the skyline is dotted with multiple minarets bearing eloquent testimony to the might of Islam. High on a hill stands the Topkapi palace containing some of the most fabulous treasures on earth as well as some of the most sacred relics of the Muslim world. To watch pilgrims paying honour to relics of the Prophet Muhammed is to see a side of Islam which I had little idea existed. Further insights were gained simply by being in a place where daily life is quite literally punctuated by reminders to religious faith and observance when the muezzin calls the people to prayer.

We visited only two Christian sites the entire holiday. Aya Sofia in Istanbul, the great basilica built by the Emperor Justinian in the 6th century AD, must rank as one of the most impressive monuments in Christendom. Although it has long since been turned into a museum and its interior has been further disfigured by the addition of huge ceiling medallions bearing Qur'anic verses, to see the gold mosaics, the great dome rivaling St. Paul's, to walk in the galleries where the empresses worshipped is quite magical. Also guaranteed to cast a spell are the ruins of Ephesus and the neighbouring town of Selcuk where the Apostle John is said to have lived his final years and whose purported burial spot is marked in the basilica. For three years St. Paul lived in Ephesus, preaching the Gospel, converting the citizens from their worship of the mighty goddess Artemis to the living Christ. We know from Acts 19 vv 24ff that his influence was so great that the local silversmiths, who made cult figures of Artemis felt their livelihood threatened and started a riot. The theatre into which the mob surged still stands today, restored to its former glory. How can one describe what it feels like to sit on the topmost row of seats and look out over the marble-slatted streets, the temples, the market place where Paul once walked No less than Troy this great city witnessed events whose repercussions changed the world.

Lesley Mortimer

GOD'S PROMISE - 6

God is Love. He has given us His promises great beyond price that we may rest in them. Jesus speaks of times when followers of His will be persecuted. We know this to be true of people of our day in other countries. Even in our own they are often mocked and jeered at but Jesus tells us that He himself will give us power of utterance to witness to Him and that by standing firm we will win newness of life for ourselves and for others. "He who puts faith in the Son has eternal life" and again "whoever drinks the water that I shall give him shall never thirst any more. The water that I shall give him will be an inner spring always welling up for eternal life." "Streams of living water shall flow from within him". Jesus

offers us this water for our refreshment; do we avail ourselves of it enough? Do we turn the tap on? How many times a day? Many times? Seldom? Never? How do we turn the tap on? In turning to Jesus in prayer, in worship, in reading the Bible and other works of God-experience, in quiet contemplation, in works. Even the Samaritan woman had heard that the promised Messiah would "tell everything". Jesus told her, and tells us, "I am He who is speaking to you now". Do we believe him and thus listen to him enough to let him change our lives, or has His word "found no home in us". "I am the bread of life" he says to us "whoever comes to me I will never turn away". This is a promise of God.

Jesus describes himself as being the light of the world and assures us "No follower of mine shall wander in the dark, he shall have the light of day". Do we believe this? Is it our experience sometimes? If not, perhaps we are not really followers, only bystanders. If we really are Christ's disciples, following His words, opening ourselves to the teaching spirit, keeping in prayer and thought-communication with Him and the Father we are promised "you shall know the truth and the truth will set you free". Do we feel free?

What are the first priorities of our days? We are promised that if we put the Kingdom of God first, all else shall be added unto us, "I am the door" Christ tells us "Anyone who comes into the fold through me shall be safe - I have come that men may have life and have it in all its fulness if you have faith in me you will see the Glory of God". All around, in the great things and the small and in one's fellows. It is a promise of God.

Margery Orton

C.C.G. CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

St. JAMES' HALL, SCHOOL ROAD

Saturday, 22nd November from 10.30am

As usual many of the stalls and money making activities will be in the hands of St. James' people who would all welcome gifts. Now is your opportunity to help C.C.G. who do so much to help the people of Hampton Hill and Hampton. Please support: Bric-a-Brac (not Jumble, please): Vera Bannister

Cakes: May French, Margaret Leatherdale

Christmas Presents: Margery Orton*

Nearly New Clothes: Freda Moses

Tombola: Roy Brooks, Roy Clements, Herbert Moses

Gifts for Raffle: Hannah Stanton

Groceries: Marie Martin

Will and Way - Donations - Shelagh Clark

* There will be a Coffee Morning on Thursday, 13th November at 30 St. James' Road, 10.30 - 12, to collect Christmas Presents. C.C.G. Christmas Calendars and cards will be on sale. There will be a Raffle. Refreshments will cost 30p. It's usually a very enjoyable social occasion so do come along.

EDWARDIAN EVENING

On Saturday 29th November at 7.30pm in the church hall, there will be for your delight and entertainment, an Edwardian Extravaganza. This occasion will feature items of musical, comical and theatrical talent by members of the parish. Enjoy the melodic warbling, laugh at the cavorting of your friends and mine and join in the choruses of well known oldies.

Come one, come all dressed in the costume of the day, if you can. Seek out those Edwardian style clothes and enhance the atmosphere with your presence.

Light refreshment for your delectation will be served during the interval.

So roll up, roll up and purchase your tickets from the social committee and have an enjoyable evening. Tickets will be £2.50 if you partake of alcoholic beverages and £1.50 if you partake of non-alcoholic beverages.

Margaret Revis

THEATRE OUTING

The social committee would like to organise a theatre outing for sometime in the new year or soon after. We have tried to get tickets for one or two of the more popular shows, without success. If anyone has an idea of a show that they would like to see, not necessarily in the West End, please let us know.

Please make a note that the Barn Dance is on March 7th 1987.

Margaret Revis

GARAGE SALE

Each year the Church allocates part of its Stewardship money to various Charities. One of these is Bishop Wand Church of England comprehensive School in Sunbury. This is a Church Secondary School catering for children from the Hampton and Spelthorne Deaneries and as such we have always felt it right to help support it financially.

In order to relieve the burden on our Stewardship money, however slightly, some of the parents of children at Bishop Wand who are also members of our congregation have decided to hold a Garage Sale on Saturday November 8th from 10am - 3 pm at 68 Park Road and the money received will be used as our Stewardship contribution to the school.

If you have any items suitable for inclusion in a Garage Sale, including China, Bric-a-Brac, home-made jam or cakes, these will be gratefully received in the week preceding the sale. Any large items left unsold will have to be returned at the end of the day. Please support this endeavour by donating articles for sale and also by coming along and having a browse around - hopefully refreshments will also be available.

Helen Taylor, Hilde Bucknell

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

October	19	Jane Ann Barnard	5 Byron Close
		Annabel Jane Mayer	34 Princes Road, Teddington
		Edward Michael Phillips	73 Park Road
		Timothy Richard Oliver Yates	28 Burton's Road

Funerals

September	30	George Alfred Charles Smith	17 Eastbank Road	aged 79
October	1	Doris Emily Kemmis	34 Westbank Road	aged 85
	10	Mabel Edith Hazell	74 Pigeon Lane	aged 61
	16	Minnie Kate Denness	18 Fitzwygram Close	aged 78
	17	Elsie Theodore Lay	8 Greenwood Lane	aged 88

DATES TO NOTE

November	1	All Saints Day	
	4	20.00	Tuesday Club
	5	09.30	Magazine Committee
		14.30	Mothers' Union AGM
		20.00	Good News Group
	6	19.45	Stewardship Committee
	8	10.00	Garage Sale for Bishop Wand School
	12	20.00	Music and Ministry - including Healing
	16	11.00	Stewardship Committee
	18	20.00	Tuesday Club
	19	20.00	Good News Group
	20	19.45	Stewardship Renewal - Mr. K. Griffiths from London City [Mission]
	22	10.30	Community Care Group Bazaar
	23		Stewardship Sunday
	24	20.00	Archdeacon's Visitation of Parish
	29	11.00	Teddington Hospital - Dedication of Plaque commemorating [opening of new facilities]
		14.30	Scouts Christmas Bazaar
		20.00	Edwardian and Victorian Evening in Parish Hall
December	4	20.00	P.C.C.
	6	10.00	Leaf Clearing in Churchyard
	9	20.00	Properties Committee
	10	20.00	Music and Ministry - including Healing