

English is, so far as I know, the only language in which the major Christian Festival sounds anything like Easter. In every other language the word has some similarity to Passover, such as Pasch, Paque, etc. The word Easter therefore hides from us something of the origin and therefore the significance of what we are celebrating. For the word Passover suggests a movement, a happening, even if we do not know what that movement is but with Easter we have to search for a meaning which is by no means evident.

Events which have profound effects on mankind are relatively few in number and they are often connected with military victories of one kind or another. Long wars of attrition are amongst these events and if we use our imaginations the Passover comes into this category. For a long time the Jews had been making war on their Egyptian oppressors (do you remember the plagues of Egypt in the Bible?). The Passover was the culmination of that struggle for liberty, the final act in which God set the people free against all the odds. The Egyptian army was left helpless and defeated without any military contribution from the majority. There may have been a few skirmishes, but we have no record of them. All the Action is by God. This is the fact that Jews continue to remember to-day.

It is in this context that Jesus rose from the dead. The action is again all one-sided. No-one else has a hand in the affair. It is against all the expectations of the people of the time although the promises of God have been made quite clear. The Gospel writers tell us later that Jesus had often been pointing to the Resurrection but that the disciples had completely failed to understand what He had been saying. And Jesus timed the most momentous event in human history with all its consequences to take place at a time when those around Him might have expected something unusual to happen.

Just as the Passover liberated the Jewish people from their captivity in Egypt so the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead liberated once and for all (and therefore still liberates) every member of the human race from death and grants something completely new. The Passover gave the Jews the freedom they needed to go forward and journey to the Promised Land with a renewed Faith and Trust in God's complete powers. The Resurrection enables us to go forward in life free from the fear of death whenever it should come. It also gives us the knowledge that we have the companionship of the Risen Lord in all that we have to do.

Is it surprising then that we rejoice to the best of our powers when we become annually aware of the work of God?

This year we are changing slightly our plans for the preparation of Easter. Do please look at them carefully and see whether or not you might not change the habits of a lifetime. After all we have something to celebrate! Let us do so with all the energy at our disposal.

PRAY NOW - PAY LATER? (2)

Last month, we looked at the gap between our income and what it costs to have our own parish Church and our own parish Priest.

Like it or not, that gap, which has widened over recent years, indicates a measure of the value which our community has been putting on them.

Our Church and our Christian faith are a precious heritage to be cherished, preserved, and passed on for the benefit of succeeding generations. They are in every respect a sacred trust, of which we, the family of St. James, are currently the stewards.

At a time when we seem to have lost momentum and possibly our way, it is fitting that we should take a fresh look at our responsibilities and our resources.

In the Stewardship Renewal and Development Programme we will seek to do this, looking squarely at the challenges facing us at St. James, and trying to consider our response as individuals and families. By now, many of you will have received letters of invitation to take part in the Programme campaign.

We have every reason to be grateful to those who, through Stewardship, already give regularly and generously of both money and time, week by week. For these people, the Programme will perhaps be an opportunity to take stock afresh of our Church family, and of their own commitment to and involvement in it: in short, a re-appraisal and renewal.

On this, a special word to staunch supporters of former years who may now feel that they are less able to pull their weight, either physically or financially. Those few less ounces or few less pounds are not as important as our need to have you still with us, so that we can continue to draw on and share in your wisdom, love, and fellowship.

For others of you, the concept of Stewardship may be new, and possibly a little daunting. Despite this, we hope that you will, if you have not already done so, respond to the invitation with a willingness to explore this new concept with us, and see what it has to offer.

Whether we regard ourselves as old hands or as new recruits, the coming campaign will give us all an opportunity to re-examine our faith, our priorities, and our values. To help us in this there will be a two-pronged approach.

Firstly we are arranging to set out the messages of the campaign in a series of three discussion sessions. These will be held in small house groups, each group to meet once weekly on a convenient weekday evening over the three week period of the campaign.

We hope that a majority of people will welcome this approach, and will join a group to share in free discussion the many aspects of our needs and aspirations, and of our attitudes to Christian giving.

Alternatively, for those unable to do so, a team of visitors will be available, as in previous years, to visit people in the privacy of their homes.

Lastly, in case these "Pray Now - Pay Later" messages may seem to over-emphasise money and finance.

Often money represents the yardstick by which we have to measure what we would want to have, or do with our lives. So yes; our use of money is a significant aspect of Stewardship, and an important one. We have many blessings which we believe come to us through the love of God. We need to share those blessings with others, to spread God's love through a world which sorely needs it. Money is a necessary tool for the carrying out of that work, but it is only a tool.

Let us enter this campaign determined to look at our money openly, and let it take its rightful place in our minds. If we can do this, and put our Parish finances on a sound base, we shall then be able to concentrate on the wider aspects of Stewardship, and of our work here.

At the end of the day, our objective must be to ensure that the ministry of our Church is strengthened and enabled to grow, so that it may continue to meet and overcome the challenges of today's world.

Jack Gostling

LOCAL CHURCH CHANGES IN PERSONNEL

St. James's is of course part of the local church family and we owe it to ourselves to know what is going on in other parts. For the last four and a bit years our local Area Dean has been the Vicar of St. Mary's Hampton, Robin Rogers. His term of office was due to end in July this year but an early end to his tenure of office has been brought about by the move of the Vicar of St. Mary's Twickenham, John Gann who was also in charge of ordination candidates for the whole of the Kensington Area. So there has been a general shift round.

John Gann has become Vicar of Bridport in Dorset where he is now in charge of, I think, six country churches. In these days of groups of clergy and parishes he is now Team Rector of Bridport.

Robin Rogers has been appointed by the Bishop of Kensington to oversee the training of ordination candidates from the earliest days of their applications until they are finished with their post ordination training. A large and responsible job.

Timothy Higgins, Vicar of St. Augustine's, Whitton, is the new Area Dean. He has been at St. Augustine's since 1982, and we look forward to having him as the person to whom we look for help and guidance as and when required.

At the same time we have some changes amongst the women Deacons, as they will be when this is published. Kitty Platt has moved from St. Augustine's Whitton to St. Mary's Hampton. She has been appointed 'Dean of Womens' Ministry' in the Kensington Area. This job, of co-ordinating all the various part and whole time ministries, will be combined with working part time at St. Mary's.

In May Frances Foster will be moving from All Saints' Hampton to a new

post in Brentford where there have been some striking changes recently. It will be a great challenge and we wish her well. She has made many friends in the parish since she came three years ago and has become well known on television over the issue of the Ordination of Women.

In June we expect new curates to be appointed at All Saints and St. Augustine's to complete the local change.

THE MUSIC DAY - FEBRUARY 14th

On a raw damp morning about 150 people gathered in the Church Hall of All Hallows, Twickenham for a cup of tea/coffee before migrating into the Church. Thereafter we forgot cold feet and hands in a truly memorable experience.

The leader, Chris Walker, musical Director at the Roman Catholic Clifton Cathedral, Bristol, provided a remarkable mixture of humour, musical expertise, leadership, scripture and spiritual conviction which made for a stimulating and enriching day for all the participants. Probably about half the people there were from Church Choirs, from an 87 year old gentleman who had been a choir member for a remarkable 77 years, to 9 and 10 year olds. However the music was aimed at all from the talented to the enthusiastic, and was noted (no pun intended) for its strong yet easy to sing melodies.

Chris Walker's principal message was that music should directly support the theme of the service reflecting back or forward to particular points e.g. a lesson, the sermon, or the message of a particular Sunday. As such the chosen music could be traditional, modern or folksy. In all cases it is there to help to provide focus for our worship and an expression of the fellowship that is part of that worship. Chris Walker said that we should remember that the music should contribute to the welcome we provide for our visitors.

I would hope that St. James's will be able to use some of the music we learnt on this happy occasion. I would enthusiastically recommend another such day - although preferably when the weather is a little warmer!

Pip Rowett

A FAREWELL

I did not attend St. James's at 9.30am this Sunday the 15th February. Instead I went to St. Mary the Virgin's church in Twickenham where that delightful little church was completely full of people come to hear the Rev. John Gann preach his final sermon to that congregation before he takes off for Bridport in Dorset to continue his ministry there.

I thought how fortunate to be going to live in that charming little town so close to the sea, and then I thought even more about how fortunate were the people of Bridport to have Mr. & Mrs. Gann coming to live and work with them.

The church was quiet and expectant as Mr. Gann took up his stand at the base of the chancel steps and launched out on one of the loveliest sermons I've enjoyed.

He presented the Beatitudes, one by one and placed them in our contemporary world with its violence, greed and arrogance and with its great potential. His strong and fervent voice, touched sometimes by his endearing humour, extolled us not only to have precepts but to have vision.

Psalms were sung by the choir who were up in the balcony during the celebration of Communion.

Afterwards we moved over to the Church Hall which was scarcely big enough for the crowd. A welcome glass of wine and a nibble and some very good speeches and the presentation of various parting gifts completed the morning. A happy occasion with an element of sorrow at losing such good friends.

Alison Thompson

BARN DANCE

It was a very cold night, and as the snow began to fall it seemed unlikely at 7.30pm (the official starting time), that the Barn Dance in the Church Hall was going to "take off".

Our "Caller", Julia, who was the mainspring of the evening, had not arrived and the clock was at 7.45pm. The only people around were "helpers" who were busy putting up tables and preparing the food. There was an all-pervading smell of frying onions in the hall and a slight degree of anxiety at the possibility of a failure that evening.

Then Julia arrived and began to set up her equipment, while at the same time more and more people were arriving. The empty room was filling up - our hopes revived!

Soon the throb of music started and then the fun began! It was very energetic and most amusing to dance alternately with grown-ups and children of all ages, shapes and sizes. Skilfully led by Julia, laughter and fun soon broke down all reserves of shyness and a joyous feeling of communal pleasure was apparent.

After a while of vigorous dancing, we had a very necessary break for refreshments. Everyone welcomed a rest and some food and drink. Simple fare of hot-dogs and baked beans seemed to go down well with the fried onions. After the break and clearing away the dancing was resumed with tremendous enthusiasm and continued until a grand circle of "Good-nights" to one and all were exchanged at 11.00pm.

I know that there were some people who were in rather low spirits and who were persuaded to come to the Barn Dance. I hope they were cheered and heartened by the closeness and happiness of the evening. Occasions such as this, are surely a gift from God and a sign of His love and a means by which we can reach out to others.

Let us offer Him our thanks and praise.

Rosalie Meyerowitz

I AM THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE

We give praise that after praying the prayer of faith and claiming the Lord's promise and giving thanks that our prayers were answered we presently watched in awe and wonder the swelling recede from Violet Clark's crippled right hand and movement come to the paralysed right leg and the next day heard that speech and memory had returned and witnessed the truth of this.

Praise be to God for His promises and for answering our prayers for Violet. May he continue to hold her in the palm of His hand and bring her safely out of her trouble. In the name of Christ, Amen.

Pamela Atkinson and Margery Orton

OOPS!

Last month, in setting out how the costs of having our own parish priest are recovered through the C.F.A., I said that 90% of the Common Fund goes on paying and housing the clergy, and that our assessment reflects the full cost of employing and housing Nicholas.

From this, it could be construed that with a C.F.A. of £18,000 we therefore have a highly paid priest at around £16,000 plus p.a.

This is of course far from the case, and after discussing it with Nicholas, and to correct any possible misinterpretation, I feel I should first make it clear that the clergy cost element of our C.F.A. is around £15,500.

Secondly, this element includes the costs of Nicholas' N.H.I. and his housing, and of pension provisions for the clergy generally. In fact, his stipend represents just about one half of our assessed clergy costs.

Perhaps the lesson to be learned is that in trying to condense figures into readable articles, it is too easy to create misunderstandings!

However, we will be going very fully into various aspects of our finances, including how the Diocese collects and spends its money, in the house group sessions of the Stewardship Campaign starting on 26th April.

For a better understanding of this and other aspects of Stewardship, it could be very rewarding to take part in one of these groups, and I very much hope you will take the opportunity to join one.

Jack Gostling

THE SKREEN, Erwood, Builth Wells, Powys LD2 3SJ. Erwood (098 23) 210

Some of you may remember PAUL and CAROL INMAN from Teddington. They now help to run The Skreen, a place to which groups are welcomed for day or residential courses, meetings or retreats. In addition, residential workshops are held at The Skreen for individuals and families, on a variety of themes centred upon Christian spirituality and wholeness. In a setting of creative simplicity and natural beauty, The Skreen offers a place to search, to explore, to discuss, to share, to worship and to be at peace with oneself and with God.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|---------|---|
| 12th April | PALM SUNDAY in addition to our usual services there will be a distribution of Palm Crosses at all services | | |
| Monday | 10.30am Holy Communion | 8.00pm | Compline and address |
| Tuesday | | 8.00pm | Holy Communion |
| Wednesday | 10.30am Holy Communion | 8.00pm | Compline and address |
| Maundy Thursday | | 8.00pm | Holy Communion and Fellowship Meal - Agape |
| Good Friday | 10.00am Children's Service | 12 noon | Three Hours' Service |
| | | 8.00pm | Reflective Worship |
| Easter Eve | | 7.00pm | Preparation for Easter Day |
| | | 9.00pm | Church open for private Prayer for one hour |
| 19th April | 8.00am Holy Communion | 6.30pm | Evensong |
| EASTER DAY | 9.30am Parish Communion | 8.00pm | Prayer 'n' Praise |
| | 11.30am Informal Service for parents and children | | |

A HUNDRED YEARS OF THE PARISH MAGAZINE

It seems to have passed unnoticed that our parish magazine has now attained centenary status. The first issue was published in November 1884 and it appears to have been published regularly ever since.

Looking at the early numbers, one might be forgiven for thinking that they were recent issues, though the style of the presentation and the yellowing pages would give the game away. But the subject-matter is very familiar. During the first year or so of its publication, the magazine registered complaints about the unfair Parish Assessment and included appeals for more generous giving by the congregation. There were repeated references to the scarcity of work and to the hardship experienced by some in the excessive cold of January 1886. One article discussed the correctness of the name "Hampton Hill" and another the problems arising from Sunday Trading in the village. Plus, ça change

The parish matter was published in association with a centrally produced "Parish Magazine" with articles about the Christian religion, "short sermons" (several pages long), much poetry, many illustrations and a long-running serial ("Countess Helena" in 1885 and "An Heiress against her Will" in 1886). This part also had articles of present-day interest on such topics as Disestablishment and Church Unity.

It all makes very interesting reading. Archive copies are available for most of the 102 years of monthly issues but, owing to the shortage of storage space in the church, access to them is not easy. We have bound volumes from November 1884 to the end of 1932 and also for the three years 1952 to 1954 when something like the present format was adopted together with the title "The Spire". Loose copies are available for the intervening years 1933 to 1951 and from 1955 to date except for the period January 1937 to February 1950, though we do have a complete set for 1943 and a copy for January 1948, and except also for the June and October issues of 1961. This is both odd and a pity.

Until recently we had larger gaps but, thanks to a considerable collection given to us about a year ago, some of those gaps have now been closed or reduced. If any reader has any copies that we do not have, we would be very

pleased to hear about them. Also, if any readers know that the magazine was not published at all in certain months or years, we would be pleased to hear from them too.

The original aims of the magazine were set out clearly in the first Editorial of November 1884. They were to record parish events, to give statistics and financial statements of parish institutions, to give notice of services and other parish events and "to give the Vicar an opportunity of communicating with his parishioners as occasion may require". These aims have not changed very much but the way in which they are achieved has changed a great deal with the times. It will of course continue to do so but let us hope that, so long as the magazine serves a useful purpose in the parish, it will go on for many years yet.

Ron Bridges

PROMISES 11

"Man lives by every word God utters".

In writing to the Thessalonians about the hope and the necessary discipline of a faithful Christian life Paul ends his letter "May God Himself make you holy in every part and keep you sound in spirit, soul and body, without fault when our Lord Jesus Christ comes. He who calls you is to be trusted, He will do it".

No one living can be as holy as the Son of God but as we are called to be sons and daughters of God we are to exercise our wills to aspire to holiness and to seek Christ's guidance to achieve this. We are heirs to the promises of God but we have to take up our inheritance in knowledge, belief and trust, through prayer and study. Paul uttered a warning of "justice on those who refuse to acknowledge God and on those who will not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.They will be cut off from the presence of the Lord and the splendour of His might." In Christ's own words "Take note of what you hear - the measure you give is the measure you will receive, with something more besides. For the man who has (steadfastness, faith, generosity, knowledge of God) will be given more and the man who has not will forfeit even what he has". One cannot stand still on the way that is God's, to stand still is to fall back. In a school the aspiring and assiduous student forges ahead, the complacent or lazy one falls behind into mediocrity.

We have to want with all our heart, mind and spirit to know God, through knowing Jesus. He himself has told us "Blessed are those that hunger and thirst after righteousness" and He has promised us "They shall be filled".

Paul prays that Christ's followers may be accounted worthy of His calling "so that the name of the Lord Jesus may be glorified in them" and they may show forth "the love which springs from a clean heart, a good conscience and a faith which is genuine". There cannot be any of us who do not from time to time have qualms of conscience about our Christian progress and about how far we fall short and we have Paul's words to make us listen to the voice of our conscience. "It was through spurning conscience that certain persons made shipwreck of their faith".

The Hebrews are urged "not to be lazy but be like people who through faith and perseverance are inheriting the promises". If we do our part each day

"making our approach in sincerity of heart" our Lord will help us because "the Giver of the promise may be trusted". But you need endurance if you are to do God's will and win what He has promised for if a man shrinks back I take no pleasure in him".

The Hebrews are constantly reminded of Old Testament characters in the face of seemingly impossible odds, Abraham, Gideon, David, Samuel and the prophets and all those who heard the word of the Lord and obeyed it in trust, "through faith they saw God's promises fulfilled".

Margery Orton

GENERAL SYNOD

Some one recently commented that the Church of England was in the news again in a remarkable way and seemed quite surprised that an issue it was debating should command public attention. Quite why this should be so is not clear to me. Perhaps we have become used to expecting bland statements that do not seem relevant to the majority of people. Actually the track record of the General Synod has not been at all bad. Inevitably there are issues which are of a 'domestic' nature and which one would not expect would stir the blood of those who are not Christians or members of the Church of England. But, to name but three, the General Synod has commanded wide respect for its debates on the Nuclear Bomb Issue, South Africa, and Faith in the City. The present session was dominated by the build up to the debate on the Ordination of Women to the Ministry and received wide public attention. The Bishop of London had been much in the national news for months over his various statements concerning the issue and many were trying to make him a bogeyman. In the event the debate seems to have been remarkably one-sided. The decision to consider legislation for ordaining women to the priesthood was carried by a much larger majority than most people thought would be the case. The bishops and the Laity both voted by more than two thirds in favour. The clergy were only just a whisker below this figure, and it seems likely that when legislation is proposed in a few years time (apparently not much before 1990) the clergy will vote by the same majority as the other sections of the Synod. Interestingly some days after the event a letter appeared in the Independent from a Roman Catholic monk at Ealing Abbey making it plain that no-one should presume that there will never be women priests in the Roman Catholic Church. There was much going on beneath the surface he suggested which could change things in the same way and perhaps rather sooner than most people expected. One matter that did not attract much attention was that there appears to be as much difficulty for the Church in a depopulated countryside as there is in the over-crowded cities. Poverty was extreme in many areas and much needs to be done to revitalise Christianity in what used to be considered the backbone of English Christian life. Perhaps we in Hampton Hill need to take note of that too.

AROUND THE SPIRE

It came as a great shock to the congregation of St. James's that Ellen Dore had died, suddenly in hospital. Although she had been ill for a couple of weeks her death came quite unexpected. Her cheery figure will be much missed at the front of the Church and around Hampton Hill. We all send our love and condolences to David at this time and hope that he may feel some comfort from our support.

Another old Hampton Hill resident also died recently, Mrs. Elsie Lambourn

née Underdown, the last of the Underdown family who were all born and brought up in Wolsey Road. Mrs. Lambourn also died very suddenly and will be much missed by her many friends and neighbours. Her sister-in-law, Mrs. Virgo was at the funeral and was very interested in all that was going on at St. James's, where she was once a member of the PCC before moving to Hinckley in Leicestershire.

Violet Clark has unfortunately had to go into hospital again but seems to be making good progress. Jack Humphreys, husband of newcomer Nesta, is also in hospital recovering from a brain operation. Remember all these people in your prayers, and any other people who you may know who are in need of support.

DATES TO NOTE

| | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|--|
| April | 2 | 20.00 | Annual Parochial Church Meeting |
| | 4 | 10.00 | Churchyard Working Party |
| | 6 | 20.00 | Stewardship Committee |
| | 8 | 20.00 | Music and Ministry with Healing Service |
| | 12 | | PALM SUNDAY) |
| | 16 | | Maundy Thursday) |
| | 17 | | Good Friday) <i>SEE SEPARATE SCHEDULE</i> |
| | 18 | | Easter Eve) |
| | 19 | | EASTER DAY) |
| | 23 | 20.00 | First Meeting of New P.C.C. |
| | 26 | 09.30 | Opening Service for Stewardship Renewal Campaign |
| | 27 | 20.00 | House Group Leaders' Briefing (1) |
| | 29 | 20.00 | House Group Leaders' Briefing (2) |
| | | 20.00 | Hampton Council of Churches |
| May | 2 | 10.00 | Churchyard Working Party |
| | 3 | 09.30 | House Group Leaders' Commissioning |
| | 5 | 20.00 | House Groups Leaders' Briefing (3) |
| | 6 | 20.00 | Stewardship Supper |
| | 10 | 16.30 | United Service at Methodist Church Percy Road |
| | 20-23 | | Christian Resources Exhibition at Sandown Park |
| | 31 | | Stewardship Thanksgiving Service |
| June | 4 | 20.00 | Stewardship Supper and Discussion |
| | 6 | 10.00 | Churchyard Working Party |
| | 15 | 20.00 | Confirmation at St. James |

FROM THE REGISTERS - Funerals

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|-------|----|-----------------------|-------------------|---------|
| March | 3 | Elsie Gladys Lambourn | 26 Holly Road | aged 74 |
| | 10 | Ellen Selina Dore | 232 Uxbridge Road | aged 75 |

SEARCHING *for that home with no sorrow* Canon Ken Sharpe of Coley, Halifax tells the parable of the grieving woman who visited a holy man in China and asked him to help her overcome her sorrow. He told her to get a mustard seed from a home that had never known sorrow, and it would banish her grief. The woman could find no such home. Instead, whenever she visited she was told of the tragic things that had happened there. On hearing each tale, she asked herself, "Who is better able to help than I, who have known so much sorrow?". She became so involved in easing the grief of others that she forgot about her search for the mustard seed which, in fact, HAD driven the sorrow from her life.