

One of the marks of the very early christian church, that is of the days immediately after the first Easter Day and Pentecost which followed, is that the Good News was being spread by very ordinary uneducated people. It amazed the onlookers that the unlettered Apostles were able to speak and preach, heal and convert all manner of folk. There were rich and poor among the first disciples, but predominantly the underprivileged of one kind or another. Among these were some influential women. Influential men seem to have been much thinner on the ground! What does seem to be clear is that the Good News spread very fast and throughout all the known world. It gave the hearers a new vision of life (and death) and a new courage to speak up about social injustice and the way all men and women ought to live. It challenged the accepted standards of the day and made quite a few enemies amongst the powerful. It is interesting to see how the same thing is happening to-day, and how christians in all parts of the world are challenging unjust regimes in every continent. We here in this country ought to give a great deal of time and prayer to the local situation. The Bishop of Stepney has challenged the government on its social policy very bravely. How far ought we to challenge if not denounce the recent Budget which appears to do very little if not nothing at all for the underprivileged? Is it not the calling of christians, following the example of Jesus and the early church, to say 'enough is enough' when we see the government of the day obviously protecting the well to do and making the lot of the underprivileged even harder to bear?

Many of you will have heard the announcement of March 13th that I have been appointed as Full Time Chaplain to the District and Edith Cavell Hospitals in Peterborough. The job starts on 1st June and so our last Sunday in the Parish will be Pentecost, 22nd May. There will be time enough to say our goodbyes in due course. Let me tell you a little about the post. It is a new appointment; up to now the District Hospital has been served by a team of part-time chaplains. Owing to the expansion of Peterborough itself to a population of about 150,000+, it has been necessary to build a new Hospital, the Edith Cavell, about a mile away. When it is going at full steam the two units will have 1,100 beds and 2,000+ staff. There is a Chapel in each Hospital and a team of part-time chaplains including two Roman Catholics (one a nun) and Methodist Minister. Some of the curates from parishes in the City also help out. In due course it is hoped to have an assistant anglican. The normal range of illnesses and diseases is catered for, there is a Maternity Hospital and an Accident Unit. There are also two permanent translators on the staff, one for Italian and another for Urdu! Peterborough itself has a magnificent Cathedral, the Nene Valley Railway (like the Bluebell Railway), an RSPB bird sanctuary at Peakirk and glorious countryside nearby. So perhaps there is scope for a Parish Outing in the future! (There is even a large shopping precinct - Queensgate - which is a bit like Kingston under one roof). Travel time is about two hours up the A1 or 50 minutes by train from King's Cross.

We hope that we shall see some of you when we have had time to settle in.

Nicholas Chubb

Annual Church Meeting

This will be held in the Church Hall at 8pm on Wednesday April 20th. As this will be the last AGM with Nicholas as Vicar we hope that as many people as possible will attend. There will be no separate reports for each group but the Vicar will endeavour to incorporate as many of the activities connected with the church as he can in his report.

It will also be necessary as well as the usual P.C.C. elections to elect a new Churchwarden as Eila Severn's five year term of office has now come to an end. Obviously the new Churchwarden together with Lesley Mortimer our other Churchwarden elected last year, will have quite a few decisions to make on our behalf and in consultation with us over the next few months.

Only members of the parish whose names are on the Electoral Roll are eligible to vote at the AGM. If you wish your name to be added to the Roll please ask Jennifer Lloyd for a form.

Not Strangers but Pilgrims

There will be a Special Service on Sunday April 10th at 4.30pm in our church to which everyone participating in the Lent Groups (or anyone else who would like to come) is invited. Any ideas which have been forthcoming from the various groups for further development will be collected after the Service when refreshments will be served. Come and help further the cause of ecumenism in Hampton Hill.

Helen Taylor

ROCK GOSPEL CONCERT

MICK TRUMAN AND THE TRAVELLERS

SATURDAY MAY 7th

7.30 - 10.00 pm (approx.)

ST. JAMES'S CHURCH

A Meditation

Have you ever been locked out? Your home is there but you cannot get in - you have mislaid your keys. Each key has a different function. One opens the door to your dwelling place, one to your garage, one to the padlock on your bicycle, one to the lock on your suitcase - there are so many different kinds of keys.

Consider the House of the Lord. There it is, in it lie the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven but you have mislaid the front door key; maybe you had it but you've lost it or even left it in the House and some one will have to break in for you and enable you to enter; it will need determination and often the help of a neighbour to gain entry. But oh, the relief when you are safely inside. It is awful being locked out. The House is our home and we are restless until our anxieties are relieved and we are inside once more. "God has created us for himself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Him".*

What about your other secondary keys - the keys to your mobility, the keys necessary for your journey - maybe the one for the drawer in which you keep your birth certificate, your passport, or the key to your jewel box or safe deposit.

As your house and key so the House of God and the key of the knowledge of God. As a child you were given it, growing up you mislaid it, in middle life you earnestly sought it, asking, knocking, seeking until, blessedly, you found it and with it the other keys as well, some of which were never in your possession before, keys opening doors to vistas you had never realised were there at hand, beautiful places of green pastures and still waters; keys to the answers to your greatest needs; keys to unlock the puzzles of life, the medicine chests of belief, confession, forgiveness, healing, discipleship - even fullness of life itself - the key to the knowledge of God.

Consider your key ring. How many keys are there on it? Perhaps none. Perhaps you are homeless and lost - the Lord will find you and give you the key to His house and you shall find that other keys shall be added to your empty ring. Not only yours. Perchance neighbours and friends will entrust their keys to you or come to you for shelter when they have mislaid their own.

On your key ring there is a key that may be as yet invisible to you. You may have to make your way to the House of God before it starts to manifest itself to you, just an outline at first, insubstantial, but becoming ever more real until you greet its familiarity with joy and use it to open the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven which is always close at hand waiting for you to enter.

Margery Orton

* St. Augustin of Hippo

Spring Clean

Did you notice how sparkling, fresh and bright the church was on Mothering Sunday? Probably not, because we all tend to take these things for granted. It wouldn't be fair for me to claim much credit for the clean church but I happened to remember to go and join in for a couple of hours on Saturday for a Special Spring Clean. About fourteen to fifteen other adults and some children had been there for most of the day and had worked unstintingly from the top of ladders, under floor grilles, inside cupboards and in all other accessible and inaccessible places (and a couple of sixpenny pieces were retrieved which may give some indication as to when the last major cleaning occurred).

At the end of the day there were three dustbins full of everyday dirt outside the church, plus enough debris (or perhaps they're treasures!) to temporarily fill the garage at Wayside. The participants were flagging by 5.30, not only from the enormous amount of energy expended but also because many of them were fasting for World Vision. Perhaps keeping busy helped them to forget their hunger pangs! We have all certainly benefited and hopefully won't have to search out all those buckets, mops, brooms and tins of polish for some time to come.

Coryn Severn

Yvonne and Michael Childs

It was good to have Yvonne and Michael with us again on the first Sunday in March. They had come to receive a tribute from their many friends at St. James' in appreciation of their loyal service to Scouting for so many years.

A really beautiful photograph of St. James's Church, handsomely framed and inscribed - all the work of Dick Waltham - was presented to them by Nicholas to their obvious pleasure.

In saying "thank you" Michael told us that he had come to live in Hampton Hill when he was twelve. "Then", he said, "I was slim and single, now I am neither!" Judging by his and Yvonne's happily beaming expressions there were no regrets.

In a serious vein he described his lifelong adherence to the Scouting Movement as his "hobby" and said that he hoped that St. James' would never withdraw its support from the cubs and scouts and would continue their close and supportive association in the future - that would be the very best gift he could possibly receive.

Margery Orton

"Your life is the only Bible many people will ever read".

Bishop of Taunton

Missions to Seamen

We rarely ever come across a seafarer yet we have to depend on them to bring our foodstuffs, raw materials, oil and other essential cargoes from across the world to our shores. They also deliver our exports which are vital to our economy. They need our help.

Seafaring makes us think of something romantic or exciting but it is often just the opposite. Seamen are attacked by missiles in the Gulf, sometimes have to go for months without pay, maybe the ships they sail on are not comfortable or safe and there are always so many perils on the sea. Seafarers can be stranded in foreign parts, problems and anxieties arise and they have no friends or family near to help and support them.

About one and a half million people earn their living at sea, all from different lands, and with different cultures and creeds. The Missions to seamen's worldwide network enables their staff "to be there". The Anglican Church proclaims the love of God, supports those in difficulties and offers friendship and a welcome at the port's mission to all nationalities; a Rumanian seafarer has said, "You mean Jesus can really be with me on that old and dirty ship?".

I wonder if we as a community could do something to raise some money to support this Mission. A Fête? A Coffee Morning? Any help would be very welcome. There is one thing that we can all do and that is to say a prayer for the Missions to Seamen.

"Dear Lord, remember with your mercy and love all those who care and proclaim your Name. May they faithfully preach Your Word, help the seafarers to know You as their God, and to know that You can be with them anywhere. In the name of Christ, Amen".

Violet Clark (Hon. Sec.)

Womens World Day of Prayer

March 4th and another Day of Prayer - and this time it was from Brazil and the theme was "Doors".

I went along to the new Roman Catholic Church of St. Theodore at Hampton for the afternoon service. It is a small very modern church, light and attractive and with chairs to sit on which are more comfortable than pews and of course more movable when necessity arises.

Father Scally gave a speech of welcome and then departed and the ladies took over.

With good clear readings and some modern hymns we came to the sermon by the Rev. Pat Wardle from the United Reformed Church of the Elephant and Castle and she enlarged upon the theme of Doors, for going out and for coming in, for opening in welcome or for shutting for seclusion. A very pleasant person.

It was an interesting afternoon and good to see so many of my friends who had made the journey over from Hampton Hill to join in.

Alison Thompson

Healing Service

Reviewing the whole matter of our monthly healing service the group which has been at the centre of it made a recommendation to the P.C.C. which was accepted at the last meeting. From now on there will not be a service on a Wednesday evening once a month. Instead the healing ministry will be an integral part of the Parish Communion on alternate first Sundays in the month when the Communion is in the evening. The first of these will be on May 1st. There will be no Prayer 'n' Praise on these Sundays since the parish Communion will be at 6.30pm. The Music will be from Spirit of Praise, our 'Rainbow' Song Book.

FLOWER FESTIVAL
at
TEDDINGTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
6th & 7th MAY

(See the flowers from St. James)

Christian Resources Exhibition

Once again the Christian Resources Exhibition is being held at Sandown Park, this year from 18-21 May. Those who have already visited it will need no encouragement to come again and see the vast array of material available on a wide range of subjects from Bibles and Books to Computers and Videos. Missionaries and Nuns, Retreats, Healing ... almost everything of relevance to the Christian Community. Entrance Fees are: Adults £2.50 Children & OAPs £1.50 including 100 page Handbook. See you there? Also lectures on wide ranging issues - three every hour on the hour from 11.00 to 4.00pm.

Olive Alderson

The Church was full, really full, for the memorial service on 3rd March for Mrs. Alderson whom many knew as the Headmistress of the Junior School. There were not only parents and children and teachers from the school but also many representatives from the schools in the Borough and officials from the Council. The Acting Head Teacher and another head gave splendid tributes to Olive as a colleague, Jack Gostling as Chairman of the Governors read the lesson and the Vicar gave an address. Prill Smith and Gillian Rae led a choir of children who sang delightfully two songs well known to the school.

Mrs. Alderson's daughter Helen played a Bagatelle by Gerald Finzi on her clarinet.

The retiring collection for the Prince Francis Ward Comforts Fund at the Middlesex Hospital raised £367.14, an indication of the affection and esteem in which Mrs. Alderson was held. Altogether an inspiring occasion rather than a gloomy one.

Betty Stewart

Betty is now a SPA. Those letters stand for 'Southwark Pastoral Assistant' and Betty was commissioned in Southwark Cathedral on 8th March, after having trained for two years in many aspects of Ministry. She works primarily at Springfield Hospital which is why we do not see so much of her now. The Cathedral was full for the Eucharist in which the commissioning took place and the service was a happy blend of the old and the new. We wish her every happiness in this new ministry and assure her of our prayers as she works among the patients and staff.

T.V. Appeal

In last month's Spire we mentioned briefly that the Church had decided to purchase some equipment on which we could show Video Cassettes in Church with a large screen which would enable a large number of people to see what was being shown. Thanks to many people's generosity we are well within reach of our target of £700. At the moment of going to press something over £500 has been donated. We are most grateful for this and we hope to complete the project quickly. Then we will be able to show some very worthwhile videos on a wide range of christian subjects. We have already bought 'Then and Now' in which David Watson expounds the Faith. There is also considerable scope for hiring full length films as well as showing recordings.

Mother's Union Report

Our first meeting in 1988 fell on January 6th and as this was Epiphany Day the Vicar gave us a very interesting talk on this subject. He explained how the geographical position of the countries around the Mediterranean came under the influence of two differing empires - the Roman and the Byzantine. Thus the beliefs and practices of the people were also influenced. Very little is known of this until about the 3rd Century after the Birth of Christ.

In February we were entertained with slides and a talk by Mr. Bailey about Nigeria, mainly around Freetown. As in many parts of Africa there is an acute shortage of water around Freetown and the women have to walk many miles to fetch it. There is a charity now called "Water Aid" which is endeavouring to sink more wells, which is worth supporting.

At our March meeting we heard about the "Princess Alice Hospice" at Esher. Mrs. Jean Deane spoke of the wonderful and comforting work done by the nurses and voluntary staff at this hospice which was opened about 3 years ago by the Queen Mother. It is not a long-stay hospital, as patients come and go as necessity arises.

On March 30th the annual Austerity Lunch was held in support of Christian Aid. Lunch was served at 12.00 and 1.30 pm. There was a raffle and a Bring and Buy Stall.

At 2.00pm following the lunch there was a short M.U. meeting with a report on A.I.D.S. by Margaret Letherdale.

Hettie Burgess

Scout Group News

THE SOUTHERN 50 CHALLENGE This event was publicised in the February edition of The Spire. The result was quite gratifying as out of about 80 teams entered, our first Team came about 30th. Congratulations to Sampson and Alban Low, Peter Brittain and Colin Hucklesby. All 4 members of the 1st team completed to course.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- A.G.M. — Friday 20th May
Fun Sports Day — Saturday 9th July
Car Boot Sale — Mid August
Barbecue/Barn Dance — Saturday 10th September
Firework night — Saturday 5th November

CHURCH PARADES These are always held on first Sunday in the month at The Informal Service. As a sponsored Group it is the duty of every member of the Scout Group to attend.

Doris Childs

Around The Spire

News of the following weddings have come to our notice. Sandy Taylor, youngest child of David and Margaret Taylor is to be married to Andrew Dooley on Saturday 16th April; and Joanna Lawrance is to be married in May to Andrew Bush. Joanna is the youngest daughter of Margaret and Tony Lawrance. We wish all these young people joy and happiness in their marriages and hope that they and their families enjoy a truly festive day to remember.

The Lawrances also celebrate the arrival of a second grandchild, a boy this time, to be called Joshua. He arrived on March 1st and is the son of Susan and Derek Skelton. Congratulations to them all.

From the Registers

Baptisms

March	6	Natalie Amy Atkinson	13 Wolsey Road
		Lee Alexander Armstrong	26 Wordsworth Road

Wedding

February 27 Paul Graham Dawkins & Sherina Dawn Wedge

Funerals

March	1	Kenneth Tisdall Poulton	2 Cranmer Road	aged 80
	9	Ferdoon Nanaboy Jungalawalla	8 Burton's Road	aged 69
	10	Cyril Turner	Laurel Dene	aged 91
	16	Brian Michael Patrick	70 Pigeon Lane	aged 51

PENTECOST

22nd MAY

Services:

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Celebration Service

**'He's Alive' with Liturgical
Dancing**

Please Note: As this will be Nicholas and Susan's last service at St. James's we do hope everyone will make a special effort to come and celebrate their ministry among us and give them a good send off to their new venture in Peterborough.

Dates to Note

- April 7 20.00 Stewardship Committee
10 16.30 Special Service for Lent
Group participants
17 18.30 Prayer'n' Praise restarts
20 20.00 Annual Church meeting
22 20.00 Hampton Council of Churches
23 10.30 Hampton Deanery Lay Training Day at
SS. Peter & Paul, Teddington - "Joint Care in the Community"
- May 1 18.30 Healing Ministry at Parish Communion
3 20.00 Properties Committee
7 10.00 Churchyard Working Party
11 20.00 Liturgical Committee
12 20.00 Parish Communion for Ascension Day
15 16.30 United Service for Christian Aid Week
16-21 Christian Aid Week
22 Pentecost
18.30 Celebration Service including Liturgical Dancing
Nicholas' last service

*The Christian on his knees sees more
than the philosopher on tiptoe.*

Dwight L. Moody