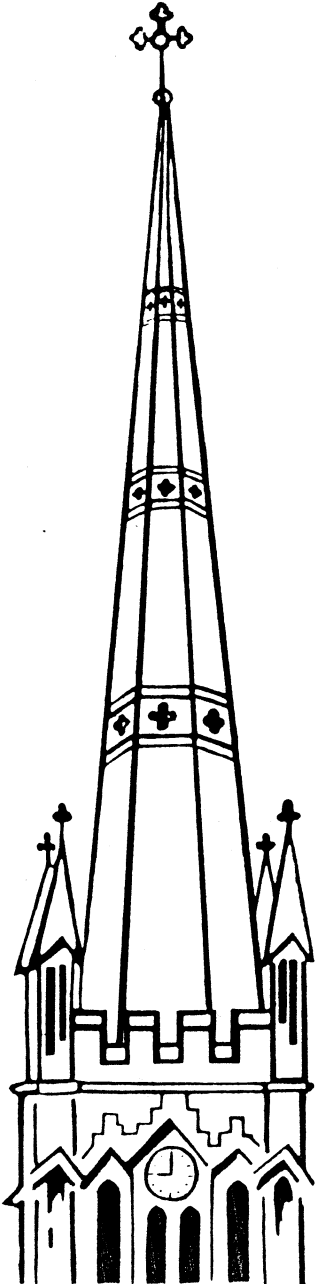


January 1992 ARCHIVES.

THE SPIRE

ST. JAMES'S CHURCH
HAMPTON HILL



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BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE RECORDER

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Services

Sunday	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Parish Communion or, first Sunday in month, Informal Service
	18.30	Prayer 'n' Praise or, first and third Sundays, Choral Evensong
Monday to Friday	09.15	Morning Prayer
Tuesday	09.30	Holy Communion
Thursday	19.15	Holy Communion with, first Thursday in month, Ministry of Healing

The Jays (children, aged 4+)

Sunday 09.15 - 10.05 and then in church (except first Sunday in month and holiday periods) Contact Debbie Nunn 979 3078.

Baptisms and Marriages

Please contact the Vicar.

The first time I took a funeral for a young man who had died from AIDS the coffin bearers were wearing rubber gloves. With family and friends I too could have wept at the tragic end to this gifted and promising life. Inwardly I wept for the deceased, for his family and for all of us involved in this death. Somehow, due to understandable fear and simple lack of knowledge, the coffin bearers, wearing those rubber gloves, symbolised our instinctive response - distance ourselves, stay out of it, don't be tainted with any stigma. That was almost seven years ago. All those who care for AIDS sufferers and their families today are much more sensitive, including our local funeral directors. But have we changed all that much at heart? At that funeral I felt that those rubber gloves had judged that young man - the only thing I could do was, at the commendation, to go over to the coffin and put my hand on it as I spoke his name. A small inadequate gesture that may have been, but at least it might go some way to restoring something of his lost humanity, and might restore something of our common inheritance as children of God.

The Bishops of the Church of England have recently published a report entitled Issues in Human Sexuality. It seeks to affirm that our human sexuality is part of God's good gift to us in creation, within his gift of human life. Our sexuality is an integral part of how we are - just as much as the way we think or the colour of our skin. If we are God's children then our sexuality is part of our Father's desire for us to live our humanity to the full. Yet, sexuality is certainly something we as a Christian community just don't want to talk about. When did you last hear it discussed in a house group, preached about from the pulpit or even written about in The Spire? Sexuality is certainly something about which there are many different views in the Christian tradition. There are, of course, no quick or easy answers.

Perhaps I should make plain that in talking about sexuality I don't just, or even primarily, mean sexual intercourse. No, I mean that whole deep area of our being which yearns for social, emotional and physical satisfaction. Our sexuality is an integral part of discovering who we are and in enjoying, accepting and honouring it, it is a means of growing towards the fulness of God. To talk in these terms puts the area of sexuality in our relationship with God and each other, for if we believe we are created in his image, then God is to be found and experienced in our sexuality as much, or as little, as in any other part of human life.

For that reason, if no other, we need to take a long careful look at our own sexuality and how we relate our faith and our knowledge of ourselves. When the HIV/AIDS infection issue forced the sexuality issue onto the accepted agenda of society, there was, to our eternal shame, a rigid attitude of judgement expressed in some parts of the Christian community. Such a misconceived judgement saw HIV/AIDS as a punishment, or at least a warning, from God that homosexuality was sinful. Let us hope that we have rid ourselves of any vestige of that argument, for it presumes a vengeful and vindictive God, not a God who is love and is to be known in and through human love. HIV/AIDS is now widespread in society, it is not a homosexual disease. In other parts of the world, such as central Africa, it has reached very high proportions, not because

of high levels of sexual activity, but because men, women and children are too poor to defend themselves. Unless we first address their poverty we cannot hope to tackle the disease.

But we can tackle ourselves. Judgement is God's, not ours. Nowhere in the gospels do we find Jesus exercising judgement on the vulnerable people who society had shunted to the margins or totally cast out. Indeed, when we do come to Jesus talking about judgement it is always a judgement of love, which is a call for compassion, for repentance, for a change in our doing and thinking - never a supposedly deserved punishment upon others. In the light of God's gift of life and his love for his whole creation, our sexuality is to be acknowledged, honoured and cherished. Ours is not to judge, but to deepen every part of our life in the mystery of God, who made each of us to discover ourselves in him.

Brian Leathard

AIDS/HIV

If indeed it was ever lost, the AIDS/HIV (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome/Human Immune-deficiency Virus) debate regained its profile in the media with recent events, such as the death of singer Freddy Mercury, World Aids Day, and the Bishops' Report referred to above.

AIDS was first described in the U.S.A. in 1981 amongst homosexual men. The HIV virus was first identified in 1983 and established as a cause in 1984. In the same year an antibody test was developed, allowing doctors to make a diagnosis of infection from a blood test. This also allowed, for example, blood donors to be carefully selected. At the present time, there are 4917 cases of AIDS in the UK, with 15,000 people HIV positive (probably an underestimate).

The HIV virus is, in fact, 'difficult to catch'; although highly virulent it is not very infectious compared to many other viruses, for example, measles, mumps or polio (against which we are immunised). It can be transmitted sexually by an infected person, from infected needles amongst intravenous drug users, from an infected mother to her baby via breast milk or in the womb, and, until 1984, from infected blood products such as a blood transfusion. Those at risk are the homosexual community, and promiscuous heterosexuals who practice unprotected sex; intravenous drug users, especially those who share needles or syringes, are at serious risk. It is not possible to transmit the HIV virus by kissing, embracing or holding hands. Transmission of the virus is even unlikely when infected blood comes into contact with a wound, for example as a result of injury in the school playground or on the football field.

It may take from two to six months to obtain a definite result from a blood test for HIV infection, and from five to twenty years before symptoms of AIDS itself appear as a consequence of HIV infection.

Human sexuality and health is not a new debate and other sexually transmitted diseases have preceded AIDS. Apart from medical research, the answer really lies in health education. The current message is of safe sex but the importance of the context of human sexuality within a caring and loving relationship cannot be overstated.

There are a variety of support groups; the better known include the Terence Higgin's Trust (071 242 1010), Body Positive (071 387 7324) and CARA (see below). People with AIDS/HIV need constant reassurance that they are still an accepted part of the community.

Dr. Jim Brockbank

CARA



(Care and Resources for People Affected by AIDS/HIV)

Despite its devastation AIDS/HIV infection has produced creative responses in many places. However, the Church has not always been able to share these positive signs. CARA was launched in 1988 to bring the resources of spirituality to bear on this problem by . . .

1. Providing pastoral care for people with HIV and AIDS; their relatives and friends; professional and voluntary carers.
2. Creating educational training programmes for people wanting to offer non-judgemental spiritual, emotional and practical support to those affected by HIV/AIDS.
3. Working with other agencies, irrespective of creed or philosophy, engaged in the care of people affected by HIV/AIDS.
4. Theological and spiritual reflection on the issues which HIV/AIDS present both church and society.
5. The practical use of resources, including buildings, in caring for people with HIV/AIDS.

CARA is supported financially by our parish as part of the Church's mission in our City. We also support the work in our prayers and thoughts.

Ring 071 792 8299 for further information. Donations may be sent to the Vicar, or direct to CARA, The Basement, 178 Lancaster Rd., London W11 1QU.

'See how they love one another'

During my work with AIDS patients (and all, so far, who have attended our department for treatment have been 'gay' men - for various reasons), I have seen the very practical love within the homosexual 'community' demonstrated to a degree that should shame many of us who call ourselves Christians. Many, of course, are Christians.

The main difference between treating AIDS patients and any other patients in our department is that the former are very well informed and very well supported. We used to need to provide an ear, shoulder or arm, but the homosexual community very quickly organised themselves to care for people with AIDS. Our patients often arrive with a 'buddy' - sometimes their life partner, of course, but at least as often it is a volunteer provided by a gay or AIDS help group. Most patients are clear about what they want and will discuss all aspects of their disease and treatment intelligently from a well informed base. It has been known for a patient to be a step ahead of the doctor with the latest (granted, fast moving) developments in the treatment of AIDS! The development of treatments has moved at an astounding pace, partly, it's true, from the great fear of this fatal disease, but also because of the united action of the homosexual community. The power of love and unity is evident.

All this doesn't mean we don't talk and listen to our AIDS patients - far from it. They are younger than most of our patients and often apparently fitter and brighter. Those we see (because of the catchment area) are often 'media people', intelligent, witty, artistic and very interesting. We used to have the occasional patient who was, understandably, very angry and would be aggressive and very unpleasant. This sort of behaviour doesn't seem to happen these days. Maybe they have worked through that in earlier counselling.

I think we treat these men exactly as we treat all our other patients. It may be that we still find it a bit strange to regard a homosexual partner in exactly the same way as a husband or wife but this is, I'm glad to say, accepted. We had, of course, treated homosexuals before AIDS, but hadn't recognised them as such - or if we had, regarded them as a bit odd (we do have some odd people as patients . . . also as staff!).

I feel the very good thing about it all is that all the staff have been made to face up to the fact of homosexuality and, having become quite friendly with several known homosexuals, have discovered how human they are and, usually, how likable.

When AIDS reaches the heterosexual community to any extent (as inevitably it will, unless promiscuity becomes unfashionable, though with an incubation period of ten years, it is probably too late), I wonder how they will feel, being supported by the homosexual care groups who, I'm sure, will be generous enough to offer help to all. The AIDS patients and their friends are teaching us a great deal about love and life.

Ruth Mills

A Prayer

Living God, source of light and life,
we come to you as broken members of your body;
Your strength is our strength,
Your health is our health
and your being is our being.
Grant us your wisdom in our work,
your love in our pain
and your peace in our hearts.

Send your blessing on all those working with CARA,
all those whom they serve
and give us the joy of everlasting love.

In the name of Jesus your son.

Amen.



Welcare

Richmond-upon-Thames Welcare has been going through a difficult time in the past six months. David Roos, their full-time worker and Team Leader, who came to speak to us about his work two years ago, has been receiving treatment for cancer and this has put additional pressure on the rest of the staff. Welcare has been fortunate in obtaining the services of Jennifer Allan as a part-time 'locum' to cover some of David's work. She has enabled the office to continue working at almost full strength.

Welcare supports at least 40 single-parent families in the Borough of Richmond at any one time and is partly funded by the Deaneries of Hampton and Richmond and Barnes. A new area of work has been the recent number of referrals of refugee families trying to settle in Britain after undergoing traumatic experiences in their own countries.

Thank you for your support for the project and your on-going prayers for the day-to-day work of the office and its staff.

* * * * *

Our thoughts and prayers are with Mona Gow at this sad time when the hostel she has been running for Welcare in Shepherds Bush for young Single mothers and their babies has been closed. Despite a continuing desperate need, Hammersmith Borough are withdrawing financial support for this work and placing the girls and their babies in bed-and-breakfast accommodation.

* * * * *

Shirley McLeish

For all of the many years that I was the Welcare parish representative, I knew Shirley. When I first met her about twenty-five years ago she was the part-time secretarial helper in the Hounslow office, and later she became a fully fledged Social Worker, work for which she had real feeling. It came as a great shock therefore to learn that she had died of cancer in her mid fifties. Whenever I saw her she was always cheerful and helpful, characteristics that epitomised Shirley and all that she did. Our condolences to her family and to all her colleagues.

Helen Taylor

Progress Towards a New Hall

Discussions have taken place with the Borough's planning officers over recent weeks, resulting in measures to protect the large oak tree near the car park, and some detail modifications of the proposed landscaping round the Hall.

Following these, Brian and I, in company with the Architect, attended the Planning Committee meeting on 28 November at which consent to the scheme, which is generally as shown on the plans displayed in the church, was granted.

Concurrently, we have had meetings at Diocesan House and on site to put in hand the necessary transfers of the land on which the Hall is to be built.

These involve, firstly, a Pastoral Measure under which, following various consultations, ownership of land presently forming part of the church curtilage will be vested in the P.C.C. Similarly, part of the vicarage land, corresponding roughly to the garage drive, will be transferred from the Parsonages Board to form the remainder of the Hall site.

This transfer, and the Planning Consent, are both conditional upon our forming a new garage access from the road along the southern and eastern sides of the vicarage garden. Some alterations to the vicarage will also be necessary.

The legal processes will probably take until well into the summer, and in the meantime, further discussions with the Architect over the construction design details and costs are being put in hand.

Jack Gostling

A Thousand Pounds by Christmas?

YES!

With one or two events still to come at the time of going to press - well before Christmas - well over **£1,500** has so far been raised by the various fund-raising events - coffee mornings, suppers and so on - held mainly in the homes of church members.

We do thank very sincerely all the hosts and hostesses for the work they put in to these events and for making their homes available in this way.

The Botanical Gardens, Jerusalem

It all started two years ago when I saw an advertisement in the Royal Horticultural Society Magazine, 'The Garden', for volunteers to go to work for two weeks in the Jerusalem Botanical Gardens. Some time went by before I applied and by then I was too late to join the first party of British people who went out in March 1990. I joined a waiting list and expected to go last March when the spring flowers are at their best.

In the meantime, quite by chance, we went on the church pilgrimage to the Holy Land in October 1990 and immediately fell under its spell, as so many have done before. Then came the Gulf War and the visit had to be postponed, so it was not until last October, at exactly the same time as the pilgrimage of the year before, that we actually departed for Jerusalem.

The journey itself was not uneventful. Five minutes after take-off, the Captain announced that we would have to return to Gatwick, as the aircraft's undercarriage had failed to retract properly, and make an emergency landing!

We arrived at our hotel nearly three hours late to a warm reception from the 'friends' of the gardens. Cards and flowers awaited us in our rooms, and a taxi took us to and from the gardens each day.

The fourteen of us, five men and nine women, worked six hours each day doing various jobs, labelling plants, weeding, planting, pricking out, digging and watering. The ground was very dry and stony and many Old Testament images came to mind when working the soil - 'the desert blooming', 'putting your feet on the rock', 'rejoicing on Mount Zion', and the vines, dates and figs that Christ knew so well.

After we finished work in the gardens, we either went back to the hotel for a rest and a wash or into the old walled city of Jerusalem. As it gets dark at about five o'clock, the time for seeing the sights was rather limited, but we managed to squeeze in visits to most of the main places of interest.

The 'Friends of the Gardens' were wonderfully hospitable and laid on all sorts of extras that we hadn't expected. The highlight for me was tea on a small terrace overlooking the Western Wall with the moon rising behind the Dome of the Rock. The second weekend we were away we went by coach with our guide to Galilee and stayed overnight in a Kibbutz - a very interesting experience. After Sabbath Eve dinner in the communal dining room, I started talking to a lady who I realised instantly came from the East End - she now teaches Hebrew.

Another memorable moment came when I put my hot and dusty feet into the River Jordan - the water was cool and clear with lots of fish, some quite large. A Baptismal Party sang 'As we are gathered, Jesus is here'! How right they were.

Helen Taylor

Around the Spire

Mrs. Eileen Bishop died on 28 November, aged 92, in New Westminster, British Columbia. Many 'old' parishioners will remember her family of daughter Sylvia Anne and son Rodney who was a Lay Reader for several years and founded and led the Young People's Fellowship. The Bishops' house in Uxbridge Road was often crowded with young people and Mrs. Bishop was always involved. Her ashes will be brought over from Canada to be interred in our churchyard in a few months' time. A notice of the service will be in 'The Spire' as her family will be delighted to see any 'old' friends there.

Congratulations to Moya Meredith Smith who, after her appointment last year as a Reader in the University of London, has now had a Doctorate of Science in her chosen field of Palaeontology conferred upon her.

The Rev. Bob Betia, the Filipino Baptist Minister who has been staying in our midst for the last three months has now returned home via Rome. He enjoyed his stay in Britain very much and went off full of ideas about worship and liturgy. At a farewell party held for him seven different nationalities were represented!

We welcome back Sara Butterfield who has been in Africa, including Lesotho, Botswana and South Africa, for six months or so. She has worked on various UN projects in the medical and educational fields and has enjoyed breaks in between, including roughing it in wild-life parks.



"I hardly think that's what was meant by an adequate follow-up in our financial campaign"

*(Reproduced from 'Good News', the magazine of
The Additional Curates Society)*

Margery Orton

No one, including Margery herself, is quite sure how long she has worked for this magazine, but it must be close on 50 years since she was first a member of the Editorial Board! She has now decided that the time has come to end her formal association with it, though we are assured of her continued interest. We are greatly indebted to Margery for her years of devoted service in all aspects of the production of the magazine, and we shall very much miss her at our meetings. Many, many thanks.

Women's Forum

The newly launched forum for all women at St. James's begins to meet this month on Wednesdays at Wayside.

Meetings so far arranged are:

at 2.30 pm on 8 January, 5 February and 4 March; and
at 8 pm on 15 January, 19 February and 18 March.

For further details, contact Janet Nunn, 979 6325, Ruth Melville, 979 6615, or Ramani Leathard, 979 2069.

St. James's Women's Tuesday Club

Meetings at Wayside, 25 St. James's Road, at 8 pm on Tuesdays:

January 7	Open Meeting
January 21	Swan Life Line
February 4	Bring and Buy Auction
February 18	Mrs. D. Smith - The Greek Islands - slides
March 3	Mrs. N. Nicholson - The British Legion
March 17	Mrs. A. Young - Around Hampton
March 31	Mrs. J. Biondi - Competitions

PCC and Open Parish Meeting

On Wednesday 29th January at 8 pm, in the church, the Rev. Preb. Ian Stanes, Officer in Mission, Ministry and Evangelism, Willesden Episcopal Area, will speak and lead discussion on 'Setting Goals and Strategies for a Parish in the Decade of Evangelism'.

From the Registers - November

Baptisms

3	Nathan Owen Kirby-Childs	2B Seymour Road
	Stuart Anthony McLaren	52 Wordsworth Road
17	Sara Sharp	12 Browning Close
	Luke Matthew Tournier	15 Traherne Lodge, Walpole Road, Teddington

Marriage

23 Thilo Rembert Rensmann and Helen Mary Lawrance

Funerals

8	Arthur Edward Garrod	33 Taylor Close	Aged 71
29	Herbert James Reed	15 Roy Close	Aged 81

Sunday Evening Services

From the beginning of January the pattern of Sunday Evening Services, which will continue to be at 6.30pm, will be as follows:

First Sunday in Month	-	Choral Evensong
Second Sunday in Month	-	Prayer and Praise
Third Sunday in Month	-	Service of Prayer for Healing
Fourth Sunday in Month	-	Open Forum - a short act of worship and time to think or speak together
Fifth Sunday in Month	-	Prayer and Praise

Dates to Note

Jan.	1		The Naming of Jesus
	5	09.00	Christingle Service
	6		The Epiphany of our Lord
		14.00	Editorial Board, 19 St. James's Road
		20.00	Taizé Service, St. Richard's, Hanworth
	7	20.00	Tuesday Club: Open Meeting, Wayside
	8	14.30	Women's Forum Meeting, Wayside
	15	20.00	Women's Forum Meeting, Wayside
	18 to 25		Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
	19	16.30	United Service, St. Theodore's Church, Hampton
	21	20.00	Tuesday Club: Swan Life Line, Wayside
	25		The Conversion of St. Paul
	29	20.00	PCC and Open Meeting, see above; Church



Advance Notices

Feb.	2		The Presentation of Christ in the Temple
	3	14.00	Editorial Board, 19 St. James's Road
	4	20.00	Tuesday Club: Bring and Buy Auction, Wayside
	5	14.30	Women's Forum Meeting, Wayside
	19	20.00	Taizé Service, St. Francis de Sales
		20.00	Women's Forum Meeting, Wayside
Mar.	7	16.00	'Dawnlight', Church
	8	19.00	'Dawnlight', Church

COPY DATE FOR FEBRUARY ISSUE: 12 JANUARY