

We can't live without making choices. Some choices are of greater consequence than others. The choice of breakfast cereal or what to wear is much less important than the choice of, say, career or partner. Some choices involve us individually while others involve our whole family or indeed a much wider community. Again some choices seem to be genuinely free choices, where we ourselves can choose, whereas other choices seem to have been forced upon us.

In a pluralistic society - of many faiths and races - we find people approach the same problem or dilemma from radically different standpoints. Even within the Church's family a most bewildering variety of views exists, be it in the field of politics, economics, sexual ethics, abortion or divorce. Indeed one leading American ethical scholar has described the current diversity of opinion in Christian ethics as 'a virtual wasteland'.

In this issue of 'The Spire' you will find an important article dealing with an area of choice which faces our generation for the first time. Never before have we been in a position of choice to use the building blocks of human life in these new ways. Now, medical science is able to use tissue, eggs, genes, sperm, both in research and treatment, in ways which have a profound impact upon human life. This requires us to make choices - what is acceptable or unacceptable, what is in keeping with our understanding of the sanctity of all human life, what is in keeping with our desire to heal and undertake research to enable greater healing for all human suffering.

This is just one vast and complicated area of choice. We have a contribution to make from our Christian faith. Our contribution will probably not be black and white - for much of the time we make choices among unclear things. We so often find ourselves trying to maximise the good and minimise the bad.

But I'm not convinced we are in a virtual wasteland - far from it. A long time ago, St. Augustine told his hearers to 'Love God and do as you like'. That may seem an extremely liberal piece of advice or a recipe for disaster. The point is that loving God also means loving neighbours. If we love God and do as we like, we are not entering a hopeless muddle - but rather so ordering our living that all our choices become choices for generous sacrificial love. That is easy to say but costly to do.

Brian Leathard

OPENING OF CHURCH HALL !

Sunday 4th September - at about 10.45 am, after the 9.30 am service

Do come and join in the celebration and see our new Hall

Eggs and Ethics

The field of reproductive research and treatment is emotive. Many people have very strong views about it. At one level, there is often a 'gut reaction', the instinctive feeling that something is right or wrong, and often this first response will stand the test of time. At another level, we can consider new ideas against the framework of our existing moral and religious beliefs to try to reach a reasoned conclusion.

Recently the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), the national body which regulates research and treatment using sperms, eggs or fetal tissue, produced a consultation document on the possible use of ovarian tissue. This has been widely circulated, not only to doctors, scientists and politicians, but also to representatives of religious and cultural groups and it is available to the general public. The document describes the uses to which this tissue could be put in research and treatment and the possible ways that ovaries could be obtained. It asks for comments on the ethical implications of these uses, even though many are still so early in their scientific development that they are not of immediate practical concern.

The use of ovaries and the immature eggs that they contain involves a number of important ethical issues in the fields of organ donation, abortion and genetic manipulation. Eggs and sperms are special tissues because they contain genetic material which will influence future generations. Both sperm and egg donation are legal and are practised in this country. The donors are guaranteed anonymity and any children born are not entitled to know the identity of the biological parent, only that the sperm or egg was donated. Donor eggs are in short supply partly because egg donation requires medical procedures and carries some small risks to the donor. In other respects, egg donation should be considered by the same criteria as sperm donation.

Donor eggs and sperms are used to treat women who do not produce eggs of their own or whose partners are sterile. They may also be used when the couple carry serious hereditary disorders which would be passed on to their natural children. Couples are offered these techniques only when other available treatments have been considered. They receive lengthy counselling so that they understand the legal and ethical issues involved.

Eggs and sperms are also used in research, especially into inherited disabling diseases. Here the resultant tissue is not allowed to survive and continue growing, so there is no hereditary implication. In examining whether this is an ethical use of the donated cells, should eggs and sperm be treated differently from any other tissue?

The HFEA document asks us to consider the ethics of obtaining eggs or ovaries from three sources, firstly, a live adult woman who no longer needs them, secondly, from a woman who has died and thirdly, from a fetus following the termination of a pregnancy. In the first two instances there are already safeguards which are applied to other organs,

such as kidneys or bone marrow. The ethical dilemma is whether ovaries should be treated similarly.

The use of fetal ovaries has scientific, psychological and emotional implications and is the area of greatest controversy. The genetic material is untried and in theory, one fetal ovary could produce millions of eggs and hence children, seriously upsetting the genetic balance of the population. There are worries about the effect on resulting children if they ever knew or suspected that their mother never existed. There are serious ethical difficulties in deciding who has the right to agree to fetal tissue being used. The possibility of using fetal eggs provoked such a strong adverse reaction that there is already legislation going through the Houses of Parliament to render this illegal.

The document also asks about ethical uses of donated ovarian tissue. Should it be used in research and if so in what fields? There are already strictly enforced legal constraints on the use of eggs and sperms in research and many people believe that ovarian tissue must be protected in the same way.

There is a wide agreement that discoveries of new ways to treat illnesses and relieve suffering are morally good as long as they do not harm others in the process. The document asks how ovaries and eggs should be used in treatment. Ethical judgments in this area often confuse selection of the *conditions* to be treated with selection of the *people* to be treated. Traditional views of infertility have resulted in its being regarded as a judgment rather than a disability. Childless couples are thought of as causing their own problems and receive little sympathy or support in the community. Should help be denied to those who do not conform to specific moral standards (in marriage or in their sexual behaviour)? Where should the boundaries be set? (If we believe that elderly people should not be refused medical treatment on grounds of age, should we deny a post-menopausal woman her only chance of motherhood?).

Almost everyone when asked has an opinion on these topics. Most of us are still at the 'gut reaction' level. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to look a little more closely at the reasons for our feelings and to examine them in the light of our beliefs. Perhaps the HFEA has performed a valuable service in bringing these dilemmas into the open.

Janet Taylor

Since this article was written, and after consideration of 10,000 responses to the consultation document, the HFEA has ruled that eggs take from aborted fetuses and dead women should not be used for the treatment of infertility but may be used for research purposes. It amplified this statement by saying that it had no objection in principle to the use of eggs or ovarian tissue from dead women for treatment but said that more consideration of the question of consent was needed before it could agree to such use.

The authority agreed to the use of eggs or ovarian tissue from consenting live women for treatment.

Letter to the Editor

Church Lighting

St. James's Day was extremely hot. The church was bathed in sunshine and, as usual, all lights in the church were blazing. As we tried to keep cool, I wondered how many kilowatts of power we were using.

I remember that we used to have a notice above the switches saying 'switch off during sermon'. If we must have all the lighting during the service, could we not revert to this practice and economise with just a bit of electricity?

Most of us try to keep down our electricity bills so why not in church? Perhaps the PCC might consider this.

David Nunn

Bazaar - Church Hall - 26 November

This event is being organised owing to the additional expenses incurred by the church this year, and the Women's Forum have been asked to organise it. We would very much appreciate everyone's help - from ideas for stalls, volunteers to run stalls or assist, to making goods to be sold or helping on the catering stand, in fact any contribution that anyone feels able to make. We want this to be a fun event with interesting stalls and possibly games. The starting time is to be 11.30 am with light lunches being served, and the anticipated finishing time is 4 pm.

Please do help, everyone is most welcome whatever their role. Offers can be made by signing the list in church, or by contacting any member of the Women's Forum Committee, eg Eila Severn (979 1954), Ruth Mills (977 5165) or Ann Collins (941 9806).

Jar of Grace

A few pence in a jar - 'a Jar of Grace' - at each meal time can work wonders. It is hoped that arrangements will be made for the 'Jar of Grace' labels to be available again this year and for the sums collected to be brought together for sending on to UNICEF.

Last year's Jar of Grace Campaign organised by UNICEF raised £175,000 which is now being used to prevent vitamin A blindness in children in a number of countries. Literally these pennies will ensure that millions of children will keep their sight.

Money raised through this year's campaign will be spent on UNICEF's education programmes working towards the goal to be reached by the year 2,000 that all children everywhere receive at least basic education.



The Early Church 12 Before Constantine 2

The problem of lapsed Christians troubled the Church in the 3rd century ad. In Rome, the learned priest Novatian held the traditional view that the Church had no power to forgive those guilty of murder, adultery and apostasy, but could only intercede for Divine Mercy. The conflict grew between those who viewed the Church as a society of saints, and those who said it should be a school for sinners. Fortunately for us, the latter view prevailed under Cornelius, Bishop of Rome 251-254. But many still held that baptism was invalid if given by schismatic priests, 'How can he who lacks the Spirit confer the gifts of the Spirit?'. But Stephen, Bishop of Rome 254-6 declared that baptism in the name of the Trinity was valid wherever given, and depended not on the sanctity of the minister but on the correctness of the form. Stephen fell out with Cyprian of Carthage on this point, and both adversaries condemned each other heartily, Stephen referring to Cyprian as 'the Antichrist'. The dispute is notable because it is the first known occasion when the Bishop of Rome asserted his primacy over other bishops by referring to the text, 'You are Peter, and on this Rock I will build my Church'. For Cyprian, all bishops were equal, just as all apostles were equal. After their death Rome and Carthage reluctantly agreed to differ; Carthage finally abandoned its position 55 years later.

Cyprian was martyred during the persecutions of the emperor Valerian. But the Roman Empire was fighting to survive against persistent invasions by barbarian hordes, and persecution was not systematic. In 260 the Emperor Gallienus granted an edict of toleration, and restored confiscated churches.

In 284 Diocletian became emperor and, in response to barbarian attacks, totally remodelled the Imperial Civil Service. Currency, defence, taxation, and prices were all reformed. The Empire was divided between two 'Augusti', who each had an assistant 'Caesar'. Diocletian and Galerius ruled East of the Adriatic, and Maximian and Constantius (father of Constantine the Great) ruled the West. The Church was about to suffer a great persecution.

Stuart Ward

Rwanda

The splendid sum of £1,064 was collected at St. James's for the special Christian Aid Emergency Appeal for relief work in Rwanda at the St. James's Day lunch, at a soup lunch on the following Sunday, 31st August, and from the parish over that period. After each of the two Sundays, the money collected was handed in to Christian Aid on the following day.

Many, many thanks. This will purchase 2,150 re-hydration bags or 21 family shelters or blankets and mats for 100 families.

GOD AND THE BIG BANG

Science and Faith at the end of the 20th Century

Three talks by Stuart Ward

1. Sunday 2nd October **THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE**
2. Sunday 6th November **BEGINNINGS AND ETERNITY**
3. Sunday 4th December **GOD - WHAT DO WE MEAN?**

At 8pm in St. James's Church Hall

The talks are given by agreement with the teenage club,

THE GREY BRANCH

All are welcome, but especially the older teenager.

Bishop Wand School

There will be open evenings for prospective parents at this Church of England School on Thursday 6th October and Tuesday 11th October between 6.30 and 9.00 pm. The address of the school is Layton's Lane, Sunbury-on-Thames, and the telephone number is 0932 787537.

Beware

One of our elderly parishioners was recently asked by a young man claiming to be from the Water Authority to turn her water off at the main because some work had to be done. Then, while she was doing this, he entered her flat and took a substantial amount of cash.

Another elderly and handicapped lady we know had left the ground-floor door to her first-floor flat open because of the hot weather (she suffers from asthma) and a young man ran up the stairs by the stair lift, entered her bedroom where she was using a nebulizer with her eyes closed, as they have to be in those circumstances, and made off with a wad of notes!

We cannot be reminded too often of the need for all of us to take extreme care to prevent strangers from entering our homes without making very thorough checks as to their identity and purpose.

Mrs. Lessie Mills

I was very sad when I was told that my old friend Lessie had passed away. I felt I had lost a very long standing friendship, looking back very many years.

Lessie, with her husband, Leo, was one of the founder members of the Old People's Welfare group which has done so much to support the elderly in Hampton Hill over the years. But she was also one of the great workers undertaking so many jobs in the background, which so many of us take for granted, such as the care of the altar linen, mending, washing and ironing it, no mean job; seeing to and arranging the flowers which are there to be admired every Sunday; and cleaning the church and polishing the brasses. She was always ready to make tea and wash up, doing endless jobs, working quietly in the background, always smiling and happy to do these jobs for the church she loved.

For many years Lessie helped regularly with the Old People's Home at Hampton Court, and she set off every day on her bicycle through the park. She was also a member of our Ladies' Choir and very much enjoyed singing with us at many concerts, and I remember when her bicycle was stolen from the churchyard during one of our rehearsals. I've no idea how she got to Hampton Court after that but I wouldn't put it past her if she walked most of the way so as not to let down her friends. Lessie really was a most reliable and loving friend of us all.

Many years ago a group of M.U. members, including Lessie, under the guidance of Doris Gloyns, made all the blue cloth kneelers for the church using old cut-up nylon stockings for the filling. It was a very boring job, but Lessie still smiled, and, I expect, made tea for us all.

She will be remembered by all who knew her, and sadly missed. R.I.P. my dear friend. Our sympathy goes out to Ruth and all the family - they have lost a loving mother.

Vivienne Prentice

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS '94
♦ 10th & 11th SEPTEMBER ♦

These Heritage Open days offer free admission to interesting buildings of all types, uses and ages throughout the country.

Our Church, including the spire and Hall will be open under the scheme from 11 am to 4 pm on Saturday 10th September.

The Open Days are co-ordinated by the Civic Trust and supported by the Department of National Heritage. This is a response to a Council of Europe initiative, and the same thing will be happening on about the same weekend in twenty-six European countries.

A Visit to Canterbury

The coach leaves the church at 9 am on Saturday 24th September for this trip to Canterbury. During the visit, the Vicar will take a service in the Jesus Chapel of the Crypt for those who would like to attend it, and there will be a guided tour of the cathedral.

If you would like to go, please add your name to the list in church or let David Lloyd (979 2964) know. Further details are available from him.

OPEN HOUSE

In Church or Church Hall

Now

MONDAYS AND FRIDAYS

10.30 am to 12.00 noon

Come and join us for a
coffee and chat



Around the Spire

Congratulations to Lesley and Jamie Mortimer who celebrate their Silver Wedding Anniversary at this time.

Hello and welcome to the Vicarage's new neighbours, Chris and Fiona Hodges and their daughters, Elizabeth, Helen and Lucy. We hope they will enjoy living in Hampton Hill and becoming part of the local community. Welcome also to David and Margaret Taylor's latest grandchild, Lydia May, born to their eldest daughter Helen and her husband Paul, and a sister for Jack.

Charlotte Badger, daughter of Miranda and Edward and granddaughter of Tina and Michael Bunce, was recently baptised. We send them, and big sister Carrie, our love and good wishes.

Happy Birthday to all who celebrate their birthdays at this time, but especially to those who have what is sometimes termed a 'significant' birthday - Jack Gostling and Hal Severn in particular.

Soon we say 'goodbye' to Terry Baldwin and his family who are moving to Southend. Terry has been PCC Secretary for the past ten years, a post which he has filled quietly and conscientiously. He has also contributed many hours' work in and around the church doing various jobs, all of which we thank him for. His daughters, Angela and Jennifer, will be missed too in Sunday School and Junior Church. Best of luck to you Terry, Sue and the girls in your new home. Come and see us sometimes.

We also send our good wishes to Mary Swatland, who, after living for many, many years in Hampton Hill, has moved to the West Midlands where she is near to her son.

'Margot', the ladies fashion shop in the High Street will be closing down soon. Elsie Whittle has run the shop for many years and feels that it is now time to put up the shutters. Enjoy your new found leisure, Elsie.

From the Registers - July

Baptisms

3	Jessica Rosemary Bowie	20 Taylor Close
17	Ludovic William Hopkinson	189 Uxbridge Road
	Eleanor Rose Lawrence	48 Wordsworth Road
	Hannah Leigh Strachan	26 Ormond Drive
	Jonathan Sharp	204 Uxbridge Road
24	Charlotte Emily Badger	51 Park Road
	Imogen Rose Cole	29 Monks Crescent, Addlestone
31	Hannah Sophie Eleanor Doyle	59 Wolsey Road
	Rosalie Mary Elizabeth Doyle	59 Wolsey Road
	Kane Oliver Rowe	20 Byron close

Marriages

9	Anthony George Bennett and Mary Louise Boyce
16	Jason David Price and Justiena Susannah Ling
	Jason Karl Vaughnley and Samantha Jane Butler

Funerals

1	Edward Brown	40 Myrtle Road	Aged 81
8	Ivy Winifred Collins	32 Fairlight	Aged 85
15	Charles Frederick George Sturgess	29 Rectory Grove	Aged 82
22	Hilda May Worland	105 Laurel Road	Aged 84
29	Eileen Smallwood	10 Uxbridge Road	Aged 82

Interment of Ashes

31	Derek Hyde	40 Connaught Road
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Dates to Note

Sep.	4	10.45	Opening of New Church Hall
	5	14.00	Editorial Board, 68 Park Road
	8		The Blessed Virgin Mary
10	11.00-16.00		Heritage Open Day, Church, Spire and Hall open to public
18	19.30		'The Really Big Chorus', Albert Hall
20	20.00		PCC
21			St. Matthew the Apostle
		20.00	Women's Forum
24	09.00		Visit to Canterbury
25	15.30		Baptismal Tea Party
26	20.00		Properties Committee, 21 St. James's Road
27	20.15		Stewardship Committee, 16 Cranmer Road.
29			St. Michael and All Angels



Advance Notices

Oct.	2	11.00	Betty Stewart to be ordained priest, Southwark Cathedral
		20.00	'The Physical Universe': First Talk by Stuart Ward on Science and Faith, Church Hall
	6	20.30	Finance Committee
	18.30-21.00		Open Evening for Prospective Parents, Bishop Wand School
	8		Harvest Supper } Please note these new dates
	9		Harvest Festival }
		11.00	Women's Forum AGM
	10	20.00	HCC AGM, St. Richards
	11		Confirmation at St. James's
	18.30-21.00		Open Evening for Prospective Parents, Bishop Wand School
	12	20.00	Deanery Synod
	13	20.00	PCC
20-30			Holy Land Pilgrimage (Details from the Vicar)

COPY DATE FOR OCTOBER ISSUE: 11 SEPTEMBER