

One valuable part of the Church's ministry is unseen to most of us, most of the time. It is the work of the Chaplains in the Prison Service. Every prisoner in England is seen at least once by the prison chaplain on admission to any penal institution. It is unseen work, and sadly, largely unknown - but it is a vital part of the Church's outreach and mission.

Each year (this year 20 - 26th November) Prisoners' Week attempts to focus the Church's attention on all those held in H.M. Prisons and those held prisoner, for whatever reason, throughout the world. This year, London and Southwark dioceses are jointly arranging workshops at Pentonville and Holloway with the London Community Gospel Choir - a black led choir which is world-famous for its sound and its work. The Choir also runs the People's Place Project be-friending all people on the basis of our Lord's recognition 'when I was a prisoner you visited me'.

We need to remember that each single prisoner is but one part of a family; each single prisoner represents perhaps parents, children, spouse, siblings. Just as these prisoners and their families share the burden of punishment so we, along with the victims of crime and their families, bear a responsibility for one another.

We may have penal institutions near us and in our diocese - Feltham Young Offenders, Wormwood Scrubs, Pentonville Prison, Holloway Prison - yet probably very few of us has any idea what it is like to be locked up awaiting trial or serving a sentence. Nor do many of us have experience of being the wife or husband or child or brother or sister of a prisoner. Fear, Remorse, Guilt, Loneliness, Frustration are deep-seated emotions felt by all involved in crime, be they perpetrator, victim, family or carer. Thank God for those who work in our Prison Chaplaincies, in the Prison Service and who work with victims of crime.

Try to use the prayer below during Prisoners' Week this year - or pray it now; in St. Paul's words 'I a prisoner for the Lord implore you':

'Lord, You offer freedom to all people. We pray for all who are captives in prison and for those who are affected by or involved in their imprisonment. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist. Support with Your love, prisoners, their families and friends, prison staff and all who care. Heal those who have been wounded by the activities of others, especially the victims of crime. Help us to forgive one another, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in His strength and in His Spirit, now and every day. Amen.'

Brian Leathard

Sunday Evening Services

After much discussion and review, the PCC has decided to stop regular evening services each Sunday. However, we do hope that during Advent and Lent and on other special occasions evening worship will take place at St. James's. If you feel particularly disadvantaged by this, then please speak to the Vicar or Churchwardens.

The Ordination of Betty Stewart as Priest

Last year, in the October magazine, Betty wrote of her belief that God had called her to be ordained; she knew it 'inside her'. She has also said that most of the important decisions in her life have been made as a result of, almost unrelated, events, such as the time in hospital following a serious car accident. She had leisure to think and decided to take a course in hospital management.

What will be the outcome of her latest experience of having a detached retina? It almost prevented her ordination as priest on 2nd October; but, because it was diagnosed too late to save the whole sight of her eye, she was able to wait a few days before the operation was done, and so go forward to ordination with the other candidates. God doesn't engineer these accidents, but continues to work in whatever circumstances we find ourselves.

It was while still in an angry and resentful mood that I accompanied Betty when she joined the Retreat at Wychcroft, but, as soon as we arrived, the peaceful and loving atmosphere was apparent. I was allowed to share in the Eucharist and the lunch which followed and became calm and the resentment left me. This was even more so with Betty, who seemed totally relaxed, as if there had never been any doubt that she would be ordained.

On the Sunday, a number of us from St. James's were in the large congregation which filled Southwark Cathedral for this historic occasion. The Rev. Stephen Lyon spoke, in his sermon, of the desirability of being the person God wants one to be and not who others think one ought to be, particularly apt in these early days of women's ordination as priests. Betty was one of the two women and three men being presented. It was a very moving moment when she came forward with Brian and Ian who, with the Bishop of Southwark and three other bishops, laid their hands on her head in consecration. The work of all the new priests was just beginning as the bishops prayed 'Give them wisdom and discipline to work faithfully with all their fellow servants in Christ'.

After The Peace, Communion was administered at a number of stations in the cathedral giving a real feeling that the congregation was participating fully in the service of ordination.

Our thoughts and prayers are with and for Betty as she recovers from her eye operation, and faces new opportunities in the service of Christ whom she started to follow when she was nine years old.

Jean Western

Study Group

A new study group has recently started meeting in the Church Hall on alternate Tuesday evenings. The group will be led by the members and consists of some prayer time, Bible study and discussion. Anyone is very welcome to join, details from Alan Taylor (979 7042).

GRAND BAZAAR

for Advent/Christmas

Saturday 26th November

11.30 am to 3 pm in the New Church Hall

Lunch will be served

Mulled Wine

Hot Chestnuts

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Books

Bric-a-Brac

China and Glass

Home-made Cakes and Preserves

Pots, Plants and Pretty Things

Children's Clothes and Toys

Ties and Scarfs

Bulbs and Pot Plants

Etc. Etc.

Tombola

Raffle

Many Side-shows

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DO COME

PROCEEDS TO CHURCH FUNDS

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Meantime, we need contributions for the above stalls. If possible, please bring goods to church, where they can be stored until the day.

All enquiries initially

to Eila Severn (979 1954) or Margaret Revis (979 4858)

God and the Big Bang

The second talk, 'Life', in the series 'Science and Faith', will be on Sunday 6th November at 8 pm in the Church Hall.

Subjects include how life started on earth, and the morals of genetic engineering, abortion and test-tube babies.

An Experience of Prayer

For some years I have started my day with a time of prayer and bible reading. I felt unprepared and ill at ease, undressed, if I missed this. At first I felt it was something I ought to do, gradually it became something I wanted to do and eventually something to which I looked forward with delight. It had become a habit in which I often found great peace and happiness. The habit side of it was my undoing for it lacked growth.

In times of great stress I found comfort, strength and understanding during my quiet time. Then one day I found I could not pray, concentrate or remember anything. I felt overcome by the sheer difficulty of prayer - it made me feel depressed. Was this the dark night of the soul I had read about? I wondered what was making me feel so low. Why was I finding excuses not to pray? How could I go to worship on Sundays and not give God quality time in the week? For a little while I did not even try to pray - I had to have a break. Gradually I took myself to my chair again and sat there thinking how inadequate I felt. The words of the disciples 'Lord, teach us to pray' came into my mind and I knew I had to say the Lord's Prayer slowly, thinking about what I was saying. That was all I could say. I thought of how an elderly friend had told me that the only prayer he could now say was 'Thank you, Lord'.

Thank you, Lord for bringing me back to the beginning when in my pride I had begun to think I knew where I was going.

'Lord, help us to listen to your promptings instead of trying to hog all the conversation for ourselves. Still our tongues and open our ears, and when it is our turn to speak, help us to speak from the heart. Amen.'

Janet Jeffries

Have you made a will? 70% of us have not! This means that many die intestate and are unable to ensure the good stewardship of their estate - their families often lose out and neither church, friends nor organisations they have supported in their lifetimes can benefit.

The Book of Common Prayer actually asks clergy to advise people to put their affairs in order 'for the quietness of the executors', and adds that 'if they are of ability, to be liberal to the poor'!

During November, for the one month only, 2,000 firms of solicitors will be offering to make wills free, while asking for a donation (£35 is usually the suggested figure) to the Will Aid charities - ACTION-AID, CAFOD, CHRISTIAN AID, OXFAM, SAVE THE CHILDREN and SCIAF. Not only do these charities benefit from the donations (in November 1992, under the same scheme, they received £924,000), but they and other charities, including local churches, benefited or will benefit from the legacies made.

Will Aid 1994 is sponsored by TSB and a free guide to will making, and the names of local Will Aid solicitors, can be obtained by phoning the TSB Will Aid Helpline on 091 417 6688 or calling at a local TSB branch.



Letter from Zimbabwe

3rd September 1994: "O'er heathen lands afar thick darkness broodeth yet . . ." we all sang lustily in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Bulawayo at the 8.30 am family communion service last week. Where were these heathen lands afar, I wondered? The packed cathedral, I estimated 200 or more, with perhaps 15 white people in the congregation, were a group with which I could feel very much at home. It was a real family service, the children of all ages joining in the singing, or if they were too young to read humming along with their parents. The service, an eclectic service from several churches but not unlike the ASB, was just under an hour long. To my relief I escaped without being welcomed, other than a friendly handshake from the Dean at the end.

We, have been in Bulawayo for just over a month now, and failing to get our expected university flat have rented a large house with a large garden, all in need of lots of attention. The property was built in the days of the old Rhodesia and is designed to be run with several servants. The interesting thing is that times have not changed all that much, and the surrounding houses all seem to have a complement of maids and gardeners, and most seem to have that most important accessory, a private water supply from a bore-hole in the grounds. Our house is surrounded by others with rich green gardens: we have only one or two magnificent trees, some attractive succulents, and one or two hardy plants growing in beds that are otherwise brown, dry and dusty. We went to see our landlord by invitation one evening to buy some furniture (the house was unfurnished). Visiting people is very different from any visiting we have done before. The disparity between haves and have-nots is very marked here, and unemployment is high. So, we are told, is the crime rate. Security is very tight; garden gates are always chained and locked, whether you are at home or not. Most people who own a good house keep at least one fierce dog in the grounds.

I think that this blatant inequality is probably the thing that is least attractive about the country. At 12 dollars to the pound, my net monthly pay of about 4,300 dollars puts us at the lower end of the rich. A live-in gardener will be paid about 220 dollars a month, a security guard about 450 dollars. However, 8 dollars (70p) will buy two excellent steaks, and 9 dollars two bottles of good beer.

We are still marvelling at the weather. Day after day of blazing sun and deep blue sky, and yet not overpoweringly hot. We are high here, higher than the top of Snowdon at 1,350m above sea level, and the breezes are cool. We have swum once, in the finest pool we have ever seen; 1.8 dollars each for entry!

Dick Wilde

The Early Church 14 Constantine the Great Part 2

Constantine's conversion to Christianity marks a watershed in church history. The Church became involved in political decisions in return for the emperor's protection.

In 312 the emperor attacked his rival Maxentius in Rome. Injudiciously, Maxentius issued from the protection of the city walls to fight, with the River Tiber behind him. Under pressure, many of his troops were drowned in the river. Christians believed that their God had given victory to Constantine. The emperor himself seems to have been somewhat unclear as to the difference between the christian God and the Unconquered Sun. However, the 'Chi-Rho' monogram, a christian symbol, appeared on his shields and standards thereafter, and on his coins from 315. He told Eusebius of Caesarea that some time before this he had seen the cross in the midday sun, with the words, 'By this, Conquer'.

Tertullian writes that many pagans imagined that Christians worshipped the Sun, because they met on Sundays and prayed to the East. In the 4th century, the birthday of the Sun God at the winter solstice, December 25th, was chosen as the date to celebrate the birth of Christ (the actual birthdate of Jesus is unknown). Christianity and Sun Worship were thus entangled and easily confused by the unlearned. Pope Leo the Great rebuked his flock for worshipping the Sun on the steps of St. Peter's, before entering the church to worship the true God.

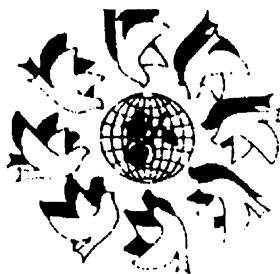
Constantine was not baptised until he was on his deathbed, but this was common practice, particularly if one's official duties included such matters as torture and execution. When he built a new capital on the site of Byzantium on the Bosphorus he built two new christian churches, but also placed a statue of the Sun God in the forum, bearing his own likeness, and erected another statue, of Cybele, the Mother Goddess.

The laws of Constantine included some Christian ideals - children, slaves and prisoners were better treated; a man could not be branded in the face 'because Man is made in the image of God.' Law courts were closed 'on the venerable Day of the Sun'. Gradually Sunday became a day of rest as well as of worship. But Constantine's reason for this custom was 'respect for the Sun', not the Son.

Stuart Ward

World Conference on Religion and Peace

The WCRP annual lecture in memory of Hannah Stanton and Gordon Wilson, 'Faith and Peace', will be given by Rabbi Dr. Norman Solomon in Birmingham Cathedral on Thursday 1st December from 6.30 to 8.30 pm. There will be a response from Canon Peter Berry, the Provost of the Cathedral. All are welcome and are invited to come early for Choral Evensong with the Cathedral Girls choir at 5.30 pm.



Confirmation 1994

Tuesday 11th October was a happy and memorable day for many; certainly for the eleven candidates who were confirmed by Bishop Alan Rogers, but also for those who shared in their renewal of their baptismal vows and joined the Bishop in the Confirmation prayer, 'Defend, O Lord, your servants with your heavenly grace, that they may continue yours for ever and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more, until they come to your everlasting Kingdom'. Bishop Alan, in his 87 years of life, must have been present at many such ceremonies, but to this service, despite his failing sight, he brought a strength and freshness which we all appreciated and enjoyed.



Bishop administers the Sacrement of Confirmation

Great also was the enjoyment of the excellent supper party in the Hall afterwards; thank you to all who provided the delicious food and especially to Diane's mother whose gift it was. Please keep the candidates in your prayers, as they move into the next phase of their Christian lives.

Margaret Taylor

Those confirmed were:

Diane Ballchin	Abigail Cammidge
Ashley Clifford	Jennifer Dale
Ewan Grucott	Enida Ighodaro
Matthew Horner	Jane O'Callaghan
James Ormerod	Romilly Taylor
Andrew Warrens	

PARISH NIGHT

Starting Friday 4th November

Every Friday 7 pm to 10 pm

For all parishioners - children, young people, adults of all ages

An opportunity to enjoy each other's company and fellowship

In the Church Hall

Come along - for part or all of the evening - bring your friends

Brownies

On behalf of the brownies I would just like to say how nice it is to be back in the Church Hall. We feel very much as if we have come home and intend to make full use of the facilities the hall offers.

As always the 3rd Hampton Hill Pack is very popular and has a very long waiting list. Now that we are back in the centre of Hampton Hill (and very much part of the Church now we are on the doorstep!) I intend only to take names on my waiting list of those whose postal address is Hampton Hill or who attend St. James's on a regular basis. Those who are on the waiting list already are not affected. I hope that this will make us more a community/church pack. I know that Brian has mentioned before how nice it would be to have a Rainbow pack at the church. It is something I would like to see so that as a Church we offer the full benefits that Guiding has to offer. Rainbows are for girls aged 5 - 7 and would feed into the Brownie Pack - if anyone is interested or wants to come and visit us now we are back home please do not hesitate to come along any Tuesday from 6.00 to 7.00 pm.

Lesley Brough

Around the Spire

The second annual Baptismal party went, if not quite with a swing, then with a good deal of laughing and talking, people making new friends and catching up on the news of older friends. The new hall was filled with Mums, Dads and children of all ages, the tea provided was much appreciated by everyone, and we hope that those who came will continue their ties with the Church.

The Garage sale at the Taylors' house raised a hundred pounds. This was a disappointing result in view of previous such sales but every penny raised is a useful addition to our income, so thank you to all who came and all who donated items for sale.

Ron Bridges, our Magazine Editor, has had his operation and is now back among us looking remarkably fit. Good to see you Ron. Margaret Bramall has also had an operation, on her knee, and already her walking has much improved but it will be at least a week before she will be home. Vera Bannister has also been ill lately, we send our love to everyone who is ill and hope that soon they will improve.

Alice Wallis's husband, Herbert, died a few weeks ago. He and Alice had been married for eight years. Our prayers and condolences to Alice, her friends and family.

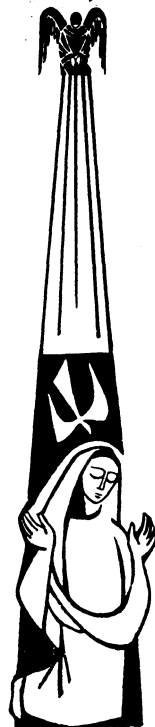
Ruth and Danny Clarke have now moved to Glasgow to begin their married life, so good luck to them in Bonny Scotland! Stella Walker has also moved, but not quite so far, only to a bungalow in Hampton. We hope, Stella, that you will be very happy in your new home.

Our intrepid Churchwarden, Ruth Mills, newly retired from her work at the Middlesex Hospital has embarked on a new venture. She has started a Theology Degree course at King's College in London which already she is finding stimulating and exciting. We look forward to hearing more about this in the future.

ADVENT LITANY

Lord Jesus,
you are the light of the world:
Come, Lord Jesus.
You are light in our darkness:
Come, Lord Jesus.
Son of God, save us from our sins:
Come, Lord Jesus.
Bring hope into the lives of all people:
Come, Lord Jesus.
Give your peace to all nations:
Come, Lord Jesus.
Be the joy of all who love you:
Come, Lord Jesus.
Bless us as we gather in your name:
Come, Lord Jesus.
Lord Jesus, stay with us:
Come, Lord Jesus.

*May Christ give us his peace and joy,
and let us share them with others.
All praise and glory are his for ever.*



AMEN

From the Registers - September

Baptisms

4	Brogan Daisy Carpenter	40 Hanworth Road
	Grace Katherine Hayler	117 Wordsworth Road
	James Michael Newton Savage	9 School Road
18	Harry John Taplin	21 Glebe Cottages, Twickenham Road, Hampton

Marriages

- 3 Trevor Philip Thorne and Sally Jane Zimmer
James Clifford Squelch and Joan Margaret Smith
- 10 Andrew Neil Foster and Helen Frances Zollo
- 17 Daniel Francis Bradley and Katherine Mary Parker
Adam Farrell and Lorraine Palmer
John Barton and Lorraine Rosaleen Robinson

Funerals

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| 21 | Doris Jenny Pomfrett | 20 Fitzwygram Close | Aged 86 |
| 23 | Christopher Edward Walter Potter | 62 Windmill Road | Aged 58 |
| 28 | Herbert Charles Wallis | 202 Uxbridge Road | Aged 82 |

Dates to Note

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|------|----|--|
| Nov. | 1 | All Saints |
| | 2 | 14.30 Women's Forum |
| | | 20.00 All Souls Memorial Service |
| | 4 | 19.00 - 22.00 PARISH FRIDAY, Church Hall. New Event. |
| | 6 | 20.00 'Life': Second talk by Stuart Ward on Science and Faith, Church Hall |
| | 7 | 14.00 Editorial Board, 19 St. James's Road |
| | 10 | 20.00 HCC Autumn Talk by The Rev. Garth Barber, Society of Ordained Scientists, 'God and the Big Bang: Can we know the mind of God?', Methodist Church, Percy Road |
| | 16 | 20.00 Women's Forum, 'Waiting for what . . . Advent Thoughts' Church Hall |
| | 24 | 20.00 PCC |
| | 26 | 11.30 Grand Bazaar for Advent/Christmas |
| | 27 | 18.30 Advent Service with the Archdeacon |
| | 30 | St. Andrew the Apostle |

Advance Notices

- | | | | |
|------|----|-------|--|
| Dec. | 1 | 18.30 | The WCRP Memorial Lecture in memory of Hannah Stanton and Gordon Wilson: 'Faith and Peace' by Rabbi Dr. Norman Solomon, Birmingham Cathedral |
| | 4 | 9.30 | Christingle Service |
| | | 20.00 | 'God - What do we mean?': Third talk by Stuart Ward on Science and Faith, Church Hall |
| | 5 | 14.00 | Editorial Board, 19 St. James's Road |
| | 7 | 14.30 | Women's Forum, Church Hall |
| | 18 | 18.30 | Carol Service |
| | 21 | 20.00 | Women's Forum, Church Hall |

