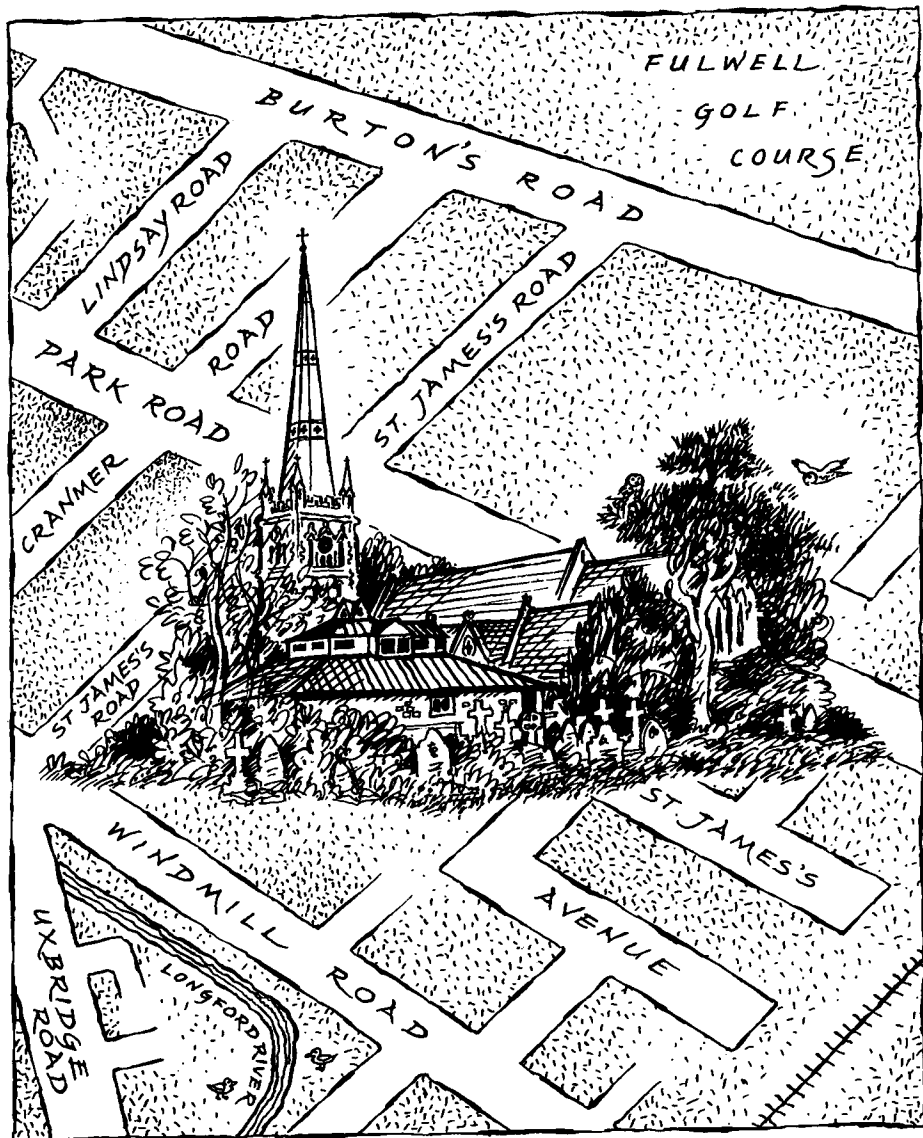


THE SPIRE

ST. JAMES'S CHURCH · HAMPTON HILL



JANUARY 1996

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Services

Sunday	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Parish Communion or, first Sunday in month, Informal Service
Monday to Friday	09.15	Morning Prayer
Tuesday	09.30	Holy Communion

On Sundays for the Young

(All Enquiries to the Vicar please)

9.15 - 10.15 am (except first Sunday in month and holiday periods):

Sunday School	(aged 4+)
The Young Church	(aged 11 to 14+)

7.00 to 9.00 pm:

Youth Group	(aged 13 to about 18)
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Baptisms and Marriages

Please contact the Vicar.

I can't guarantee you a hot tip for the National Lottery, nor for much else, but if you want a way to brighten up the dreary month of January I've got two absolute certainties.

First, a stunning exhibition is currently showing at the Royal Academy in Picadilly. It is open every day until January 21 1996. It is different to anything else I have ever seen there and it is truly mind-blowing in scope. It seeks to give a taste of the art, not of a single artist, nor of a single country, nor of a particular period. The clue is in the title of the exhibition, **Africa 95**, for it is about the art of a whole continent. The visitor travels (clockwise) around Africa and through time from a stone-age axe (a mere 1.6 million years old) to modern day pieces. Most of the exhibits are, strictly speaking, artefacts, items created, used and treasured for their place in everyday living. Some are of gold, lapis lazuli or crystal, while others of wood, bark, or leather. The unifying feature is that all the exhibits were created in Africa by Africans and for Africans.

Here in the middle of our own city, for the first time ever the artistic activity of the whole vast continent of Africa is available for us to see. Centuries of colonial rule and a euro-centred perspective have masked the ingenuity, skill and diversity of Africa's peoples. Have your horizons shattered by a visit to this exhibition.

Here in our own city the issue of race is still important too. London is a multi-ethnic, multi-faith, multi-cultural city and probably always has been. And yet we know that racial stereotyping still goes on, racist attitudes are commonplace, racial prejudice lies, all too often, just below the surface, waiting to be whipped up by political extremists. We have laws which make racial abuse and discrimination illegal. But good laws are not sufficient to make a good society or to make good people.

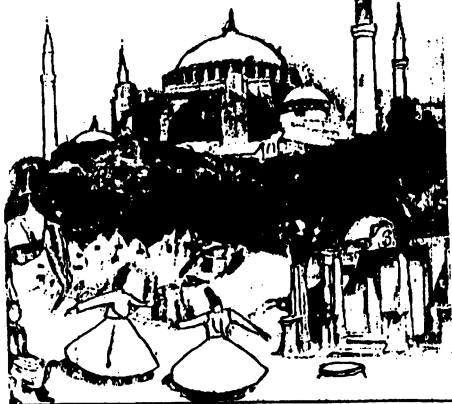
In January the church celebrates the Epiphany, when the visit of the Wise Men to greet the infant Jesus is marked. If ever the church wanted in its own calendar a multi-racial event, this must be a strong candidate. Jesus, a Palestinian Jew, born in the home city of King David, because of a census ordered by the Roman occupying powers, is visited by Wise Men 'from the East'. We believe that in Jesus God becomes human: this baby, boy and man shows us God. If Jesus is a window onto God, then so is every human being. If every human being is a window onto God then racism, in any form, is a foul stain on humanity and more. Racism is not only about the colour of a person's skin, but about accepting or denying God, in whose image and likeness we are all created. Let your senses delight in that at **Africa 95**.

And the second hot tip, '**We three Kings . . . a right royal bash**', our parish party will take place in the Church Hall on Saturday 13 January at 7.30 pm, tickets £3, to which you are warmly invited. Come in royal attire. Happy January!


ISTANBUL AND THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA

17-27 October 1996

With the Revd Dr Brian Leathard



McCabe Travel

 Britain's foremost
Religious Tour Operator

Further information is available from the Vicar.

Children's Corner - Calling all budding young artists

This month we are holding a COMPETITION. You may have noticed the special cover design on the Christmas edition of The Spire magazine. We also have a special cover at Easter and this year we are asking all our young readers to enter a design for the Easter edition.

The winning design will be used on the cover of the April magazine so this is your chance to see your talents in print. The theme of your design should be based around Easter at St. James's. We cannot print colours so a black and white drawing would be most suitable.

Your design should be on A4 plain paper. Please remember to put your name, address, age and telephone number on the back. To make sure we have plenty of time to print the winning design, the closing date for entries is Sunday 11th February. Please send entries to:

Carol Bailey - 75 St. James's Avenue, Hampton Hill.

We hope to see plenty of evidence of artistic talent in Hampton Hill and the surrounding areas.

A Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations

On the sunny bright autumn morning of 24 October, representatives of all the member countries of the UN and all the major faiths came together in Westminster Abbey to celebrate the first fifty years of the United Nations. The opening hymn, 'All people that on earth do dwell', was very fitting.



The following extracts from Archbishop Desmond Tutu's moving sermon speak for themselves and need no glossing:

I was a skinny teenager in 1945 when World War Two ended. A puny bag-of-bones youth despised by the girls and taunted by bullies. And then this skinny youth would take up physical training and - hey presto - in next to no time he was endowed with a physique that bodybuilders would envy, the girls fawning on him as he gave the bullies what for.

We could draw similar BEFORE and AFTER pictures of the world. Before 1945, there was the awfulness of Nazism and Fascism accompanied by the horror of the holocaust. And the devastation of war with saturation bombing of city after city - London, Dresden, Hiroshima and Nagasaki - a horrendous testimony of the depths to which we are able to sink in our inhumanity to one another.

Almost all of what was to be called the Third World was languishing in the shackles of domination. Nearly every African country was the vassal of some Western imperial state. Disasters, famine, epidemics, the scourge of polio, smallpox, cholera were the order of the day.

And then, in 1945, 'we the people of the world', we came to our senses. The UN rose as the proverbial phoenix from the ashes. The peoples of the world committed themselves to strive for peace - to work for community, for harmony, for reconstruction, for wholeness, for justice and equity and self-determination. It was a noble dream inspired and supported by ideals and aspirations espoused by the religious faiths of the world.

One country after another threw off the yoke of colonialism. Former enemies cooperated to help their erstwhile adversaries to their feet again. The UN established agencies which have more than justified their existence - UNICEF for children, UNHCR for refugees, FAO, WHO, UNESCO. Some other agencies - the World Bank and the IMF - have had a less favourable impact on those they have wanted to help.

The UN has not always succeeded in preventing conflict or establishing or maintaining peace, but the world would have been a great deal worse off without the UN. We must celebrate and give thanks for all that it has achieved. The world is different and better. The Cold War has ended.

Democracy has come to many places to replace authoritarian, totalitarian rule. Yes, we still have the ghastliness of Bosnia, Chechnya, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka,

Rwanda, Burma and Nigeria - but hey, we have successes in Kampuchea, we have a democratic and free Namibia.

Hey, I am from a country where we have the most spectacular victory of justice, of goodness and freedom, of love and laughter over injustice, oppression and racism. The UN was primarily responsible, with its Special Committee against Apartheid, for galvanising the world to oppose an awful system. If that were all the UN had done, it would be reason enough to justify its existence.

So let us go forth and celebrate this jubilee and hold before the world the dream of the UN, its vision for a world of peace, of equality, of freedom, of love, of caring, sharing, compassion, of laughter and joy. And using the Biblical Jubilee principle when debts and mortgages were cancelled and slaves set free, how about celebrating by cancelling the Third World foreign debt? And maybe the Security Council could be more representative?

Let us go forth to celebrate and give thanks - to know that it is indeed possible to celebrate diversity, to live as members of one family, the human family, God's family, in our glorious diversity because we are ultimately the rainbow people of God.

Margaret Hobbs

P A R I S H W E E K E N D

**Friday 2nd to Sunday 4th February 1996
at Fairmile Court, Cobham**

With Full Board from supper
on Friday to Sunday Tea

The Theme will be PRAYER

Special Programmes
for children and young people

Further details and booking forms from:
Ruth Mills (977 5165)



Three Months in South Africa

We were making our fourth visit to South Africa but the first since the democratic election and the official end of apartheid. It was towards the end of the winter - glorious sunshine over Johannesburg but distinctly cool nights and mornings. John had a financial assignment but our task was also to help prepare for a conference over Easter next year called "Healing the past - Building the future".

The world had watched the birth of democratic government in South Africa through the media and many believed that God had intervened in the lives of people to make it possible.

One of our black friends said "It would be folly if we failed to sustain the spirit that brought about these miracles. We have inherited a new country full of challenges and opportunities. We recognise that in spite of our differences we could live in harmony and show that there could be a new culture of living where respect for each individual is supreme, that we could differ and yet work together for the benefit of all our people." He and others believe that the planned conference could help "sustain the spirit".

The present needs and challenges are enormous. The desperate needs of millions for work and housing as well as good education must be met and may only be truly achieved as the moral and spiritual foundations continue to be built. The latter are vitally important, for as with the new democracies in Europe, crime and corruption are on the increase.

Perhaps the greatest need is for the healing of the hurts suffered on all sides and for forgiveness which will lead to true reconciliation and be the soundest basis for nation-building.

We were privileged to meet people from all the races, meeting again friends and making new ones. Our interest in this country grew some years ago when we got to know well a black leader of some thousands of his race in Soweto who was staying in London at the time. He courageously lived his Christian faith, believing that changing what was wrong in the world was best begun with the individual finding a change of heart first. He has died, but on this visit we were able to meet two of his sons and some of his grandchildren and even a great grandchild!

We worshipped in several Anglican churches, including a service in Johannesburg Cathedral (where the average congregation in recent months has fallen from 700 to 450 because of street violence and intimidation in the centre of the city) and one in a beautiful little church in a sugar cane area of troubled KwaZulu Natal. We participated in a day's retreat at a seminary. It concluded the following morning with a communion service conducted jointly by a retired Anglican priest and a Dominee of the Dutch Reformed Church, the sermon being given by an Indian, a Professor of Historical Theology. An inspiring and instructive memory of our visit to "the rainbow nation of God"!

Betty Rainbow

An event which took place quietly and with great dignity at the West London Synagogue on 18th October filled me with great thankfulness and joy. It was the Annual Inter-faith Service celebrating the 22nd year of the Week of Prayer for World Peace. I was invited to present the first four Gordon Wilson Peace Awards of £250 each.

Prayers were offered by representatives of several world faiths in their traditional clothing and languages.

Awards were made to a Peace and Justice Group from Edinburgh, the Chaplaincy at Lancaster University, a student counselling project in Oxford and the Life Foundation School of Therapeutics in the West Midlands.

Awards are guaranteed for the next two years and we are hoping that, with continued support for the WPWP and a good sale of leaflets, it will be possible to make awards for longer still.

Jean Wilson



PEACE FOR ALL PEOPLE
THE
GORDON
WILSON
PEACE
AWARD

Restoration work on the Church

Early in December, the scaffolding at the West end was dismantled, and we were able to appreciate the transformation now effected.

Partial renewal, coupled to skilful repair and cleaning of the stone mullions and framing, have revealed anew the beauty of the West window, and unobtrusive stainless spikes have been affixed to prevent pigeon roosting and its attendant problems.

At roof level, crisp new coping stones draw the eye upwards to the cross which (blown down and broken in a gale 10 years ago) is now set, cleaned and repaired, triumphantly atop the gable.

To complete the St. James's Road facade, repairs and cleaning after the arson attack have rejuvenated the West Porch.

The marble columns and intricately carved stonework of the South Porch have also benefitted from careful cleaning and restoration - and possibly highlighted a need to smarten up the door!

Elsewhere, a huge amount of repointing has been done, and crumbling red brickwork renewed, giving something of a patchwork appearance until natural weathering takes effect over coming months.

All this very necessary work has been well and skilfully done by Messrs. Boden and Ward under the careful guidance and expert view of our Architect, Roy Gosney, at a total cost of around £31,000 + VAT.

Jack Gostling

Friends of St. James's - An update one year on

Enclosed with this magazine you should find a leaflet about the Friends of St. James's. The Friends scheme was launched twelve months ago and now has about a dozen members. The scheme encourages local people to support St. James's in a practical way through regular donations. In return they receive information on how the church is using the money and also an opportunity to socialise with other friends if they wish to do so. Please read the enclosed leaflet and respond if you can. Any donations, however small or large, are always very welcome.

Andrew Craig

Letter from Zimbabwe

27th October. I am now more than half-way through my time in Bulawayo. The work has been, and continues to be, a real teaching challenge. This, my third semester here, has been the hardest yet. However, I shall be really sorry to leave Zimbabwe and my very rewarding, though often frustrating, work here at the new university. Mary will be less sorry, for although we have made good friends here and enjoy a comfortable life-style, we miss our family and other friends. Also, the difference between the rich and the poor is uncomfortably wide, as I have said before. The local paper occasionally prints letters of great bitterness about what is perceived as continuing racial oppression by the white population. These letters are happily rare, but counteract the general feeling of welcome which we get from the Zimbabweans we meet personally. I am beginning to get my own ideas straight on this difficult business of the apparent privilege of certain parts of the community. An entertaining education is reading novels by Africans: one of the best I have read is 'Anthills of the Savannah' by Chinua Achebe (obtainable in the UK).

Another source of unease is an underlying sense of approaching ecological apocalypse. Because of continuing poor rainfalls, the vast Lake Kariba is now unable to supply all the hydro power which Zambia and Zimbabwe need. Bulawayo power station has not got enough cooling water to run at full capacity, and local industry is suffering. This is just one aspect of an increasingly desperate shortage of water. The tropical 'spray forest' around the Victoria Falls is dry and dying. The mighty Zambezi is still a great torrent, but it is a shadow of its former magnificence.

The debate about how to raise the money for a pipeline from the Zambezi to parched Bulawayo and Matabeleland continues: I seriously wonder whether by the time it is started there will be enough water in the Zambezi to share. The prayers for rain are sincere enough, but my personal bewilderment about such intercessions is accentuated by the sort of pleas the leaders are making: 'please start praying now before the rainy season so that the rain will not be delayed . . .' The rainy season should be starting within a few days; unless it is at least normal this country will experience great hardship, as always the poorer people suffering the most. Our suffering will be confined to the trivial hardship of water rationing and a dead garden, and the consciousness of living in a hungry country.

Dick Wilde

**NEW YEAR PARISH PARTY -
CHURCH HALL**

We Three Kings a Right Royal Bash

Saturday 13th January - 7.30pm

Come dressed to depict a royal theme

Tickets £3 available in Church

All are welcome - do come

Life in a Probation Service Office

I work as an Office Manager for Middlesex Probation Service. The Probation Service grew from "Court Missionaries", volunteers whose role was to prevent those appearing in Court from being sent to prison unnecessarily and to try to assist offenders to change their behaviour patterns. They were unpaid and many undertook the work as a result of their Christian beliefs. Today Probation Services are a well integrated part of the Criminal Justice System. The officers prepare reports for the Court, giving background information, an assessment of the seriousness of the offence and risk of reoffending. Normally a proposal as to a relevant penalty is included. During their enquiries they discuss the offence with the defendant and have access to the crown Prosecution documents. Once the Court appearance is over the role changes to a supervisory one if a Community Sentence is imposed. Whilst care and assistance are still important elements of the job, the emphasis is now more on "control" as a result of the introduction of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 and National Standards for Probation Services. Anybody not keeping to the terms of their Order is taken back to Court for breach. If a custodial sentence is given the "home" (or outside) Probation Officer assists in sentence planning, liaises with families of serving prisoners and supervises those on Licence or Parole.

My own job is to ensure that the office runs smoothly and to organise the support staff. This can involve anything from assessing secretarial staffs NVQ work and carrying out staff appraisals to arranging for an engineer to come and sort out the burglar alarm after a power cut. I also have control of various budgets, which require a fair amount of book-keeping and ordering of supplies. I have to deal with all types of people from sales and work persons, Court staff and those employed by Local Authorities to offenders ranging across the spectrum of potentially violent, confidence tricksters and those simply unable to survive in a modern society without support and as a result find themselves in conflict with the law.

One of the things I most enjoy about the job is never knowing what each day will bring. Certainly working in a Probation Office cannot be called dull.

Gill Gostling

SPEAR

On Sunday 19th October, the Church Youth Club had a visit from David Christie, who is the Hostel Manager for SPEAR in Richmond. SPEAR stands for Single Person's Emergency Accommodation in Richmond, and it's the charity which the Youth Club are supporting this year. It runs a hostel for single homeless people in Richmond, but at the moment they only have twelve beds. While people stay there, SPEAR try to find them appropriate housing, help them to re-organise their lives and also re-establish them into society.

David was very interesting. He told us about the people he deals with and the kind of problems they have. He told us that almost anyone can find themselves homeless and once you are homeless it's very hard to get back into society.

He said the best ways to help are:

- * Donate money to SPEAR, and food, blankets and clothes to the hostel.
- * Volunteers are extremely welcome, but not until they are over eighteen.
- * Giving money to beggars is OK, but it is better to give them food.
- * Buy the Big Issue - it helps the sellers to get back on their feet.

We have already donated £24 to SPEAR by doing odd jobs at half-term, and next term we plan an Auction of Promises after the service on 3rd March. Please take part if you can so that we can raise much more for this needy cause.

Alex Rowley and Eleanor Parker

Around the Spire

At the beginning of November, Rosalie Meyerowitz became a grandmother again. Baby Michael is the first-born of David and Helen. David, Rosalie's younger son, has named his baby after his father. The family are all delighted.

Sadly, two of our parishioners are unwell - Kathleen Holmes has broken a bone in her foot and Roy Brooks is still in hospital. The news of Olive Wright is that she is back at Deer Lodge.

Our sympathy goes out to Greta Rostyn. Her mother, Helen Smith, has died. The old lady was well into her nineties - may she rest in peace.

There have been a very large number of baptisms. We hope that this will prove to be a good sign of the increase in attendance at St. James's church in the future!

From the Registers - November

Baptisms

5	Hollie Louise Hewitt	84 Kings Road, Teddington
	Amy Barbara Hewitt	84 Kings Road, Teddington
	Thomas Oliver Parfitt	125 Burtons Road
19	Erin Ray Probert-Lewis	79 Beresford Avenue, Hanwell
	Jack Michael David Nielsen	49 Staines Road East, Sunbury
26	Christopher Liam Nicholas Tasso	156 Uxbridge Road
	Georgia Annabelle Leigh Tasso	156 Uxbridge Road
	Kirsten Leeanne Wallace	18 Taylor close

Marriage

3 Rodney David Hodgkinson and Kalina Dunin-Brezinska

Funerals

1	Eva May Ross	14 Lindsay Road	Aged 95
1	Neil Anthony Turner	62 Haydn Avenue, Purley	Aged 45
14	Trevor Clwyd Parry	74 St. James's Avenue	Aged 79
24	Helen Penelope Smith	160 Twickenham Road, Hanworth	Aged 91
30	Walter James Hitchens	56 Wolsey Road	Aged 90

Dates to note

January

- | | | |
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| 1 | The Naming of Jesus | |
| 3 | 14.30 Women's Forum New Year Party, Church Hall | |
| 6 | The Epiphany of our Lord | |
| 10 | 14.00 Editorial Board, 68 Park Road | |
| 13 | 19.30 New Year Parish Party, Church Hall | |
| 17 | 20.00 Women's Forum Talk on United Nations, Church Hall | |
| 18 | 20.00 P.C.C., Church Hall | |
| 21 | Hampton Council of Churches 40th Anniversary, St. Mary's Church, Hampton - | |
| | 18.30 Super Songs of Praise, preceded by Tea at 16.30 | |
| 25 | The Conversion of St. Paul | |

February

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 2 | The Presentation of Christ in the Temple |
| 2 to 4 | The Parish Weekend |
| 7 | 14.30 Women's Forum Discussion, 'Bridging the Gap', Church Hall |
| 21 | Ash Wednesday |
| | 20.00 Parish Communion |
| 24 | Whist Drive |

COPY DATE FOR FEBRUARY ISSUE - 14 JANUARY