

Sex and sexuality seem back on the church's agenda, as well as the wider agenda of the secular press, representing the views and assumptions of society. It is very hard to hold together in any meaningful way the two issues, one of the woman with the multiple pregnancy, in this case eight fetuses and her decision to continue the pregnancy. Over against this has been the case of the widow who has gone to law in order that she may receive, by artificial insemination, the sperm taken from her husband while in a coma. Her husband subsequently died, and yet, it would seem that the couple's desire had been to start a family, prior to the sudden meningitis, which was the cause of the death of the husband.

There seems to be a rumpus developing over the decision of Southwark Cathedral to host a service marking the twentieth anniversary of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement. Southwark claims it is right to allow Christian people the chance to express their thankfulness to God, both for their own understanding of themselves and for the love and support they have received from others, while feeling alienated and excluded by many, both inside and outside the church. Alongside this goes the continuing debate over the issue of the ordination of homosexual men and women to the priesthood.

Like the wise consultant in the former case, I don't think it becomes us to judge specific cases. It is surely not the role of the press to become arbiter of what is, and what is not, acceptable to society. Traditionally, I suppose the church has been one element in our society which has played a part in forming moral and ethical attitudes. However, the church cannot simply expect everyone to listen, just because it is the church which speaks. Surely it is incumbent upon all of us to use the resources God has given us to inform ourselves and come to a position which is based upon the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I think there is a real danger that we, as the Christian community, have abrogated responsibility for this. We claim, these matters are too difficult, science has advanced too quickly for us to make any contribution to the issue. But that simply isn't good enough. Elsewhere in this edition you will find two perceptive poems written by children at a local church primary school, Archdeacon Cambridge's. One of the pieces asks, pointedly, in the context of famine, What if you were there? Indeed, what if you were there, in the pain, in the confusion, in the struggling to make a right decision?

After all, our faith itself rests on a very great risk, namely that God becomes human in the birth of Jesus. And what a birth - to a young unmarried mother away from home, in unsanitary surroundings, who then has to flee for fear of persecution. Not exactly the moral high ground, but it is where our faith is rooted. Or is it? Think about it before the Christmas rush overtakes you!

Brian Leathard



GREETINGS FROM NORTON

As I look out of my new kitchen window the view I see is very different from the one which greeted my eyes in Park Road. I see a tractor slowly and methodically going backwards and forwards across the field at the end of our garden, sowing the winter wheat. Alan has had a long chat with the driver over the hedge; he is one of our new neighbours.

"Neighbours" was the theme of the Sunday readings on September 15th, the day we said farewell to all our many friends at St. James's. It was a very appropriate theme and all the hymns, the sermon and the readings themselves said all there was to say about our many years at St. James's and the life of the church and its people which we know and love so much.

At the reception in the Church Hall afterwards it was so difficult to say all the things we wanted to say: chiefly thank you for the wonderful champagne breakfast, the little maple tree which is already looking totally at home in its smart new pot and most especially for the cheque for nearly four hundred pounds which we shall spend on our new garden when the time comes. Thank you also to all the people who sent us cards, entertained us in the last few hectic days, gave us flowers and presents and lots of happy memories to take away with us.

So what's it like here? Well, I can safely say it is totally different. Very few aeroplanes although there are some military ones from Mildenhall, very little traffic (best of all no 'traffic calming' measures) and plenty of apples, plums and damsons in our own garden and in those nearby. We have a postbox virtually outside the house which is very handy and the papers and milk are delivered as usual (order from the garage). Bury St. Edmunds is our nearest 'large' town which has everything, including, of course, a cathedral. Stowmarket is nearer and that is an attractive smaller town which houses the Museum of Anglian Rural Life. We've promised ourselves a visit.

We have already had a few visitors and hope we receive many more especially from Hampton Hill. The kitchen boasts the most wonderful Aga which I am very much looking forward to using in the service of my many (I hope) guests. We are more or less straight after two weeks although there are still plenty of jobs to do.

Thank you all again for all your good wishes and don't forget to come and visit us any time. Love to you all.

Helen Taylor

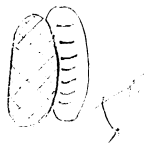
HARVEST POEMS

These two poems were written by pupils of Archdeacon Cambridge Church of England Primary School for their Harvest Festival.

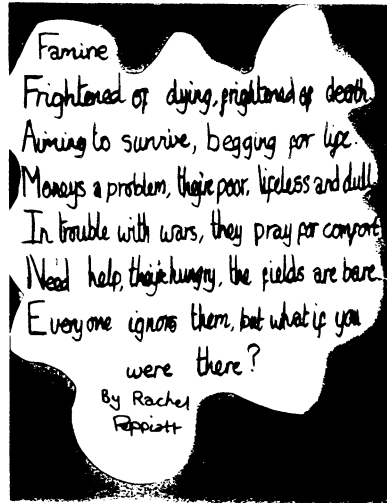
FAMINE.

Torren Brome

Children crying thirsty for a drink,
adults always trying to think,
they just don't know what to do,
bare fields, crops dying children needing food,
families need shelter they are very poor,
Government helping trying to make a law,
this needs to stop,
we can't have it any more..



Harvest.



HAMPTON COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AUTUMN LECTURE

The Stewardship of Creation

by Sir Ghillean Prance, Director of Kew Gardens

on WEDNESDAY 27 NOVEMBER at 8 p.m.

at HAMPTON METHODIST CHURCH

All Welcome

ONE YEAR ON

As I write this it is exactly one year since I left the diocese of Southwark and returned to my home area. When it was first suggested to me by my Vicar at St. Mary Magdalene's Church, Wandsworth Common, that I should do this, I was reluctant to do so. I had originally thought I would never be able to officiate in the diocese of London, and to do so at St. James's Church was beyond my wildest dreams. For ten years the main part of my ministry had been as a member of the chaplaincy team at Springfield Hospital - a large psychiatric hospital in Tooting, and during this time I had done little parish work. I enjoyed what I was doing and felt committed to it.

Ian, my Vicar, told me one morning after a weekday celebration of Holy Communion in the Parish Church, that he and Brian had talked about my future and if I cared to join him for a glass of sherry he would tell me what they had decided! What a cheek, I thought, but a glass of sherry would be nice! I enjoyed my sherry and listened carefully to Ian. He was an old friend and I had usually taken his advice. I said I would think about it. A few days later Brian telephoned me - there was no "messaging about" here - I knew what I had to do!!

Although I was thrilled at the prospects of returning to St. James, I have to admit that I was scared as to how I would cope. Services in a psychiatric hospital are short and informal with mixed congregations - Anglicans, Free Church and often Roman Catholics worshipping together. These were always celebrations of Holy Communion and the only other services at which I officiated were funerals!

I need not have worried - I had a wonderful welcome back and have received so much help and encouragement from Brian and from everybody. I have enjoyed being part of the community again and have experienced the privilege and joy of officiating at weddings and baptisms. I have also had the opportunity of celebrating and preaching at St. Mary's, Hampton, during an interregnum and at St. Richard's, Hanworth, during their Vicar's holiday.

Being back at St. James's has been a homecoming for me. I feel happy and settled in my ministry. I still get the occasional "butterfly in my stomach" but I remind myself of the words on a card given to me by a very dear friend at the time of my ordination "I can do all things through Him who gives me strength."

Betty Stewart

HAMPTON FUEL ALLOTMENT CHARITY **GRANTS FOR THE YEAR 1997**

Grants are available for the relief of hardship, for the sick and handicapped, education, recreation and leisure and other charitable purposes.

Application forms, to be returned by 31 December 1996, are available from the Vicarage. All matters will be dealt with in confidence.

CHILDREN 'S CORNER

On 24th November it will be the last Sunday in the Church's calendar, the Sunday before Advent Sunday. My mum used to call this Stir Up Sunday because the Collect for the day begins Stir up:

"Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people: that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works may of thee be plenteously rewarded: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen".

What I remember is that this was the day we all "stirred up" the Christmas cake and pudding mix and were given the spoon to lick.

If your Mum is not quite ready to make the Christmas cake and pudding then here's a simple recipe for you to try which needs lots of stirring;

Mini Christmas Pudding; Put into a bowl;

$\frac{1}{2}$ tin of condensed milk

$\frac{1}{2}$ packet of crushed digestive biscuits (small packet)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of coconut

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of chopped cherries and dates

1 tablespoon of cocoa



Stir and stir until everything is mixed well. (It's very sticky.) Roll into pudding shapes (round ones), then roll in chocolate sprinkles, crushed nuts or toasted coconut and decorate with snippings of green angelica.



FLOWERS IN CHURCH



The Church flowers are chosen and arranged each week by a group of members of the congregation on a rota basis - one's turn comes round about once a month, plus festivals. We are a small group and have recently welcomed some recruits to swell the number of our "flower people". Flowers are paid for by donations from various sources:

Weddings are normally covered by gifts from the participating families whilst for major festivals money and flowers are usually provided by generous gifts from the congregation. Several people give regularly to mark special occasions: anniversaries of births, marriages, deaths and we are always glad to put special arrangements anywhere in Church - font, altar, near Book of Remembrance, etc.

If you would like to give either flowers or money to commemorate something important to you or to express thanks for some blessing received - the birth of a child, recovery from illness, another happy year of marriage, please give your contributions either to the Vicar or to Ruth Gostling, the Flower Group Treasurer. If you need more information, speak to either Eila Severn or me.

Margaret Taylor

Wedding flowers will now be the responsibility of Coryn Robinson. Please ring her and discuss the necessary arrangements, payment etc. 979 6786.

Final Letter from Zimbabwe

Sunday 15th September: Quoting from a Zimbabwe national newspaper "At the time of Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 . . . the educational level of Mugabe's (incoming) government was far higher than that of the preceding Smith government. Nowadays another statistic seems more relevant: Smith's government bequeathed its successor a zero debt, but Zimbabwe now has debts totalling 60% of GDP . . . Unemployment was under 7%, it is now estimated as high as 40%. Social services . . . are deteriorating, often to the point of collapse . . ."

What has happened to Zimbabwe? Over the past two years we have ourselves seen a steady decline in living standards, and a sad tendency for a black racism to be propagated from politicians, who having failed their country, say that the problems are due to the greed, or even the malice of whites. A report from a speech by Joshua Nkomo, the vice-president: ". . . AIDS was brought into Zimbabwe by white people who intended to wipe out the black population and take its land and its wealth . . . they have the knowledge of its origins and how it can be cured but they just do not want to share that knowledge."

As the country's debts pile up, economies are made, but never in governmental spending. Another quote: "As Mugabe's presidential motorcade tears screaming to the airport, not a few remember Smith, when he wanted to go to the airport, would simply drive himself there without so much as a chauffeur for company." Smith's political policies were intolerable, and there is no wish from black or white to return to the injustices of his regime. However, the reckless extravagance of the new one-party state has been a very poor exchange for the white racism.

Personally, I have nothing to grumble about. A university teacher's pay is good. It is about a quarter of the UK salary for an equivalent position, but then prices are very modest here too, as I have written before. But there are some very dedicated workers here, of all colours, who are not so well rewarded. There is an academically excellent girls' school, St. James's Mission School, 50km from Bulawayo, in the middle of nowhere. Here 600 girls are given an education up to 'A' level standard, and it is quite an inspiration to visit the school and to see the steady improvements being made by staff, with very little to help them except their skill and determination. One of the teachers was recently imprisoned on a passport technicality, occasioned by the failure of the Immigration Department to give him a work permit. But they work on, with very little complaint, getting the satisfaction of a job well done. A good St. James's spirit, I think!

Dick Wilde



KILLED BY A TIGER - Memories of South India



It was a round trip to end all round trips. From Madras on the East coast to Cochin on the West coast and back again. In between, Mysore and its palaces, the hill stations of Ooty and Coonor, the game sanctuaries of the Western Ghats and the temple towns of Madurai, Trichy and Tanjore. We were transported in style by the ever-willing Anil, a Syrian Catholic from Kerala. He carefully manoeuvred his shiny black Ambassador round a million potholes, through herds of goats and oxen, over mountain passes and across barren plains. While adhering strictly to the first principle of Indian driving - never give way - he successfully avoided colliding with cows, chickens, dogs and cyclists and the tide of humanity which threatens to engulf the unsuspecting visitor in every Indian town.

The south of India largely escaped the waves of invasion which shook and shaped the rest of the country. Ancient sites and wonderful examples of medieval art and architecture still survive. So, too, do some of the oldest churches in the whole subcontinent.

The roots of Christianity in southern India go back a long way. Tradition says that Thomas the Apostle went there as a missionary and was martyred in Madras in AD78. A relic of this saint is venerated in the Roman Catholic cathedral of St. Thomas, built on the site of a church which the Portuguese erected when they came to Madras in the fifteenth century. Certainly, the Syrian Christians of Kerala were known to have existed as early as AD190 when an emissary from Alexandria reported that they had a copy of the Gospel of St. Matthew in Hebrew.

One of the most interesting features of the churches we visited is the way in which they reflect the history of European colonization. St. Mary's in Madras, the oldest Anglican church in India, still lies peacefully within the battlements of Fort St. George, completed in 1653 as a stronghold for the British East India Company. Consecrated in 1680, it served generations of Company employees and their families whose lives and deaths are recorded on the memorial tablets which line its walls. "Killed by a tiger", "succumbed to a coup de soleil", countless wives and children who went to an early grave, tea estate managers, district commissioners, chaplain after chaplain - all with Oxford degrees.

In spite of its specially reinforced roof, constructed to withstand bombardment, St. Mary's looks every inch a typical English parish church. It must have been a source of great pride to Elihu Yale, the Boston-born English merchant who was one of its most prominent benefactors and whose generosity also extended to the university which now bears his name.

(to be continued)

Lesley Mortimer

AROUND THE SPIRE

The season of "mellow fruitfulness" is very welcome after the long hot summer and we were glad of some rain. The Harvest Festival theme was one of "water" which brought home to all of us the great importance of this element in our lives. The service was very lively and stimulating and the "silver trail" raised £230 for the charities SPEAR and Welcare. The Harvest supper was a great success with delicious food; we are most grateful to Tony Cavan for the bread.

Several people in our parish are in poor health. We hold them and those who care for them before God in our prayers. Ron Metcalfe is in St. Thomas' Hospital awaiting chemotherapy. Roy Brooks, who needed surgery after a fall, and Hettie Burgess are both in the West Middlesex Hospital.

Ida Wills and Margaret Waldron, both of St. James's Avenue, have died. Margaret left her husband Vince and children Matthew, Sarah and Alison. We send our sympathy to all those bereaved.

There were about 50 people at the presentation of the cheque for £2550 for the Hannah Stanton Memorial Fund to Professor Dennis Goldberg, president of the Community H.E.A.R.T. Fund.

We are happy to report that Catherine Jones is home from hospital. Another bit of good news is that Janet Taylor has passed her M.B.A. with distinction. Rodney Taylor is sitting his M.B.A. at the moment.

We congratulate Angela Horner, assistant Brown Owl, on her engagement to Chas Wodehouse. Best wishes to them both.

The pumpkin competition was won by Geoffrey. His pumpkin weighed 50 lbs! Ruth and Judith's pumpkin was a close runner-up at 47 lbs.

The final piece of good news is the birth of a second daughter to Paul and Tracy Clark. She was born on 18th September and is to be called Sophie Alexandra Stuart. Best wishes to you all.

ORGAN FUND

AUTUMN EVENTS

UNDER MILK WOOD

Saturday 16 November at 7.30 p.m. in the Church Hall.

D.I.Y. presentation of Dylan Thomas's masterpiece by parishioners.

Tickets: £5 (conc. £3), including light refreshments, from Tel: 979 3748.

RECITAL

Saturday 7 December at 7.30 p.m. - 10, Percy Road, Hampton.

Liz Butler, soprano, accompanied by Geoffrey Bowyer, piano, with soloists from Richmond Adult and Community College's "Masterclass for Performers".

Admission £5, including light refreshments, from Tel: 979 0600.

FROM THE SEPTEMBER REGISTERS

Baptisms

- 29 Isabel Nettleton, 66 Tudor Road, Hampton
Matthew Carson, 11 Sherwood Road

Weddings

- 7 Richard Pryce Thomas and Joanna Syzmanska
14 Gary Robert Taylor and Anne Elizabeth Dowling
Kevin John Bushnell and Janet Pauline Bayton
28 Nicholas George Barker and Natasha Louise Fitzgerald

Funerals

- 4 Albert Henry John Gossage, 33 Weldon Drive, West Molesey 80
6 Charles Frederick Fennimore, 62 Gresham House, Walpole Road, Teddington 81
17 Jessie May Branch, 11 Byron Close, Sunbury 72

St James's Parish Church Hampton Hill

VOICES OF WOMEN IN CHURCH

A Series of Evening Conversations
on the Four Sundays in November
6.30pm at St James's Hampton Hill

- 3rd November - Ms Vivette Ferguson
Headteacher, St Luke's Church of England
Primary School, Islington
10th November - The Revd Ulla Monberg
Dean of Women's Ministry
Kensington Episcopal Area, Diocese of London
17th November - Mrs Mary Johnston
General Synod Member for
the Diocese of London
24th November - The Revd Claire Wilson
Curate of Belsize Park

Everyone is welcome to attend

GRAND CHRISTMAS BAZAAR



**Saturday
23 November
11 am - 2.30pm
St James's Church
Hall**

**Stalls Refreshments
Christmas Gifts
All the Fun of the Fair**

See you there!

DATES TO NOTE

| | | |
|-------------|---------|--|
| 1 November | 8 pm | Commemoration of the Faithful Departed |
| 2 November | 7.30pm | Autumn Concert in Church in aid of Organ Fund |
| 3 November | 6.30pm | Voices of Women in the Church I. |
| 10 November | 10.45am | Prayers at Churchyard War Memorial after Parish Communion |
| | 6.30pm | Voices of Women in the Church II. |
| 16 November | 7.30pm | Under Milk Wood performance in aid of Organ Fund |
| 17 November | 9.30am | CONFIRMATION SERVICE at St. James's by Michael, Bishop of Kensington |
| | 6.30pm | Voices of Women in the Church III. |
| 20 November | | St. Edward, King of East Anglia, Martyr 870 |
| 23 November | 11-2.30 | GRAND AUTUMN BAZAAR Church Hall |
| 24 November | 6.30pm | Voices of Women in the Church IV. |
| 26 November | 8 pm | P.C.C. |
| 27 November | 8 pm | HAMPTON COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AUTUMN LECTURE The Stewardship of Creation by Sir Ghillean Prance Hampton Methodist Church |
| 29 November | | Day of Prayer for the Missionary Work of the Church |
| 30 November | | <u>St. Andrew the Apostle</u> |
| 1 December | 9.30 am | Advent Sunday - Christingle Service |

COPY DATE FOR DECEMBER MAGAZINE: 10 NOVEMBER

R.N.L.I. and B.M.Y.C.

invite you to a
FOLK EVENING
with

SPADGER SAM

at B.M.Y.C. Ferry Road, Teddington
on **SATURDAY 9th NOVEMBER**
at 8p.m.

TICKETS including Buffet Supper £4.50

For further information contact Jill Denton on 0181 287 7438

