

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, when accused of dabbling in politics instead of shepherding his flock, countered his critics with these words

"I don't know which bible people are reading when they say Christianity and politics don't mix."

And now, I wonder, who remembers the names and faces of the men and women who propped up the apartheid regime in South Africa? Who can forget the name and face, let alone the irrepressible laughter of Desmond Tutu.

Tutu was surely right in his claim. The Christian church believes that the world is made by God, for God's glory and for the fullness of life of all God's children - irrespective of race, wealth, position, religion or any other factor. Christianity is firmly rooted in God's world but it is not trapped or circumscribed by it. Our ministry to the world is to be both pastoral, in standing alongside those in need, as well as prophetic, challenging the forces which seem to go against God's purposes.

To that extent Christianity is deeply embedded in politics - in the good of the 'polis', for the well-being of the whole community. That is why internally, in the Church of England, we don't have priestly, or any other, caste which decides policy or practice, but the whole of our church community is represented in synods and councils, male and female, lay and ordained, young and old, rich and poor, black and white. This month we elect our new Churchwardens and Parochial Church Council for 1997-1998. This will take place at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 20th April at 11am, straight after Parish Communion. This itself is an important sign that what we do in worship and what we do outside it must be profoundly connected, if our worship and our lives are to have any integrity. Please come along on that date, that we might hear a review of what has happened in the life of our parish, taking the opportunity to thank those who have borne responsibility on our behalf. We also wish to look forward with plans for the future and a vibrant and lively council to bring these plans to fruition.

And of course, 1st May 1997 is both another opportunity and responsibility for us as members of the Christian community, to express our views in using our votes prayerfully, responsibly and in accordance with the demands of the Gospel. It is not my place as Vicar to try to influence you in the way you vote, either for the Churchwardens and PCC, or at the General Election. However, I do firmly believe that it is part of my role as Vicar to urge you to use your vote in accordance with your conscience and informed by your faith. I very much hope you will wish to participate in the debate in Church on Sunday 27th April at 7.30pm.

General Election 1997

It is in the nature of Christians to wish to avoid conflict, and not to want to parade their difference. Politics and the General Election are therefore regarded by many as "un-Christian", and certainly not suitable subjects for discussion groups, let alone prayer. If you feel like that, you may have been surprised to see the full page notice in last month's issue about the Diocese of London's *What Local Churches Have to Offer - A Guide to Action* for the General Election.

As we finish our service each Sunday by praying "Send us out in the power of your spirit to live and work to your praise and glory", does it occur to us that this includes how we vote? We know it includes helping the blind man across the road, checking on our elderly neighbour and giving a friend a lift to the shops. We, hopefully, also know it includes how we conduct our lives and what we feel strongly about. But how we vote? Is our democratic right to vote a gift from God? Remember the joy on the faces of black South Africans as they queued for hours, and sometimes days, in the heat, to exercise that right for the first time in their history.

When we pray for God's Kingdom to come on earth, aren't we acknowledging that we have to confront the world as Christ did? Politics is simply people going about their public business and if you don't think the Gospels are political, then perhaps you should read them again.

Whatever your political views, and however exasperated you are by all the media hype and back-biting in this extended general election campaign, can I urge you to spend some time over the next few weeks considering carefully how you will vote. Discuss the issues with your family, friends and neighbours and yes, please pray about it too. Encouraging open and honest debate is not necessarily confrontational, and gives us many opportunities to witness to God's love.

Thankfully the Church does not, as it is often urged to, stay out of politics. In 1986 the Church of England published the controversial *Faith in the City*, and 8th April the Christian Churches together are publishing a report *Unemployment and the Future of Work*. Several Christian groups have prepared "briefings" to enable us to focus on the issues, and copies of some of these will be available at the back of the church for you to borrow.

As an afterthought, if anyone would like to join a discussion/prayer group to prepare for the Election, I should be pleased to arrange it.

Elizabeth Gossage

The Arms Trade

The United Kingdom is a major player in the international arms trade. Government policy is to encourage, with substantial sums of public money, growth in the export of military equipment. Groups such as the Campaign Against the Arms Trade argue that this direction should be reversed.

Christians approach this issue from a variety of standpoints. The Quakers state unequivocally that they believe the arms trade to be morally wrong, and they go on to argue: "It encourages governments to seek military solutions to political problems and adds to suffering in any resulting conflict. Even if the weapons traded are never used the resources spent to manufacture and buy them are diverted forever from essential human needs such as food and health care". These concerns are not without substance. Somalia, for example, spends twice as much on arms as it does on education and health combined. Two-thirds of UK arms exports go to third world countries.

Christian pacifism can be traced back to the early Church. Tertullian stated, "Christ, in disarming Peter, ungirt every soldier.". Origen agreed that it was impossible for Christians to follow mosaic law in killing their enemies. However, from the battle of Milvian Bridge and the conversion to Christianity of the Emperor Constantine, new doctrines justifying war under certain circumstances, and when waged in prescribed ways, came to be adumbrated. The concept of a just war implies a right to self-defence, but limits the use of violence to a proportionate response aimed at combatants and not used indiscriminately.

These principles are incorporated in the UN Charter and international agreements such as the Inhumane Weapons Convention, of which the UK is a signatory. The UK has also agreed to abide by criteria governing arms exports proposed by the European Union, the permanent Face of the United Nations and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The Government is obliged by these bodies to consider the consequences of arms exports on existing armed conflict, the human rights record of the purchasing government, the effect on international tension within the recipient country, and the technical and economic capacity of the recipient.

Regrettably the process by which these criteria are applied is opaque because of official secrecy. The outcomes can be highly questionable, such as the decision to sell Hawk jets to Indonesia. Senior officers are also questioning these decisions on purely prudential grounds. For example General Sir Hugh Beach, Field Marshall Lord Carver and Admiral Sir James Eberle, in a recent letter to the national press, stated: "There are compelling military reasons for tightly regulating arms sales to regions of tension and instability. The 'boomerang effect' has resulted in European troops facing weapons supplied by their own governments. ... By freely exporting the same weapons used by

our own forces we are arming potential future opponents and so have to develop more new equipment to retain any technological edge."

The just war argument is becoming increasingly threadbare. There have been 82 conflicts, as defined by the UN, in the last three years, only three of which were between nation states. The predominance of intra-state violence has been accompanied by a preponderance of casualties amongst civilians. According to UNDP, at the start of this century 90% of war casualties were military; today 90% are civilian.

In 1930 the Lambeth Conference first declared: "War, as a method of settling international disputes, is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ.". In 1978 the following statement was added: "Jesus through His death and resurrection, has already won the victory over all evil. He made evident that self-giving love, obedience to the way of the cross, is the way to reconciliation in all relationships and conflicts. Therefore the use of violence is ultimately contradictory to the Gospel."

At a recent ecumenical meeting attended by our MP, I argued that Her Majesty's Government should reverse course. That the Defence Export Services Organisation be closed, Export Credit Guarantees withdrawn and the export licensing process be made much more transparent. That support should be given to revamping Protocol II of the Inhumane Weapons Convention covering land mines and to ratification of Protocol IV banning laser weapons designed to blind people, as well as to extending the scope of the UN weapons register. I am not sanguine that any of this was taken on board.

John Gossage

The Vicar and Churchwardens of
St James's Parish Church Hampton Hill
are pleased to invite you to a
General Election Debate

in Church on

Sunday 27 April 7.30pm - 9.00pm

with following Parliamentary Candidates for the
Twickenham constituency

Dr Vincent Cable (Liberal Democrat)

Mr Toby Jessel (Conservative)

Ms Eva Tutchell (Labour)

Questions for the Candidates should be sent to
The Vicarage, St. James's Road, Hampton Hill
in writing by Wednesday 23 April at 12 noon



3rd Hampton Hill Brownies

Come along and Sing for your Supper! Well actually for a New Organ Pipe for the Organ in St. James's. The Brownies are holding a sponsored sing in the Church on **Tuesday 6 May** from 6.00pm until 7.15pm. We hope to sing for a total of 40 minutes and sponsors are being sought to sponsor the 40 minutes as a whole ie 50p or a £1.00 if the Brownie sings for the total of 40 minutes! We will be singing songs from Songs of Fellowship, Old Brownie Favourites and some Popular Music so please do come along and support us - we need as many voices as possible to fill the church. **All are welcome!**

You are invited

St James's Church Women's Forum

We hope the interesting and varied programme for the Women's Forum from April to October 1997 will encourage you to come along to the Wednesday meetings as often as possible.

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm, and the third Wednesday of the month at 8.00pm. There are no qualifications needed for membership! Just come along to any Wednesday meeting. **ALL AGES ARE WELCOME.**

We would like to encourage more younger members, and would consider starting our afternoon meetings at 2.00pm to enable Mum's to collect children from school, if that would be helpful.

We always try to produce a varied and stimulating programme. If you have any suggestions which would help us to provide what you would like, please give Wendy Baker a ring on 979 3654.

Programme

April	2	Talk on Gardening - Sue Adams
	16	Fair Trade Shopping
May	7	Church Music Today - Air your Views
	21	Church Music Today - Talk
June	4	Life as a Nun - St Mary's Convent
	18	A visit to the Theatre
July	2	Invitation Service
	16	Summer Party
Sept	3	Holidaying in Hong Kong and the Far East
	17	Life and the Church in Hong Kong
	21	Baptismal Tea Party at 3.30pm
Oct	1	A Lighthearted Quiz Afternoon
	12	AGM at 11.00am
	15	Family Support in AA

Organ Appeal Update

Our appeal for "Organ Donors" in February's magazine and also mentioned in the local press, has had an excellent initial response. We have received £4,000 since the beginning of February. This included £210 for a retiring collection at the Byrd Mass and about £700 for the G & S evening on February 22nd. The remainder, over £3,000, has been from Pipe sponsors. We already have sponsors for all the 16 ft Pipes, but there are plenty of 8ft, 4ft, 2ft and 1ft pipes left! Why not sponsor 1ft or 2ft pipes for each member of your family?

6 people have given money via Gift Aid from which we will recover income tax that they will have paid. Details were mentioned in February's magazine. We must point out that it was wrongly stated there that 2 or 3 people could combine to do this. Please note this can only be done by the person actually paying the tax and providing the gift aid payment.

The Appeal currently (March 17th) stands at £9,600 and we shall recover a further £490 tax from those giving via Gift Aid. A big thank you to all those who have contributed. By the time you read this we will have performed the "Messiah from Scratch" on Good Friday. We raised just over £1,000 when we did this last year. If we can improve on that this year we could, with you Pipe sponsorships, be very close to our Appeal target of £12,000 by the end of April.

A water colour painting of St James's Church, by Pril Hinckley is being raffled in aid of the Organ Fund. The painting can be viewed in the Church. Tickets are available from Jack Gostling (979 3748), Pip Rowett (892 4736), Pril Hinckley (979 0528) and from Scruples, the hairdressers in Hampton Hill High Street.

Jack Gostling and Pip Rowett - Treasurers for the Organ Fund Appeal

FAMILY PARTY

Saturday, April 19th at 6.00pm

in St James's Church Hall

**An evening of enjoyment for
everyone - of whatever age**

FOOD

ENTERTAINMENT BY PROFESSOR FUMBLE

Juggling and Conjuring

WASHBOARD CHRIS

One-Man Band

TICKETS: Adults £5.00, Children under 12

£3.00 from Stuart Ward

ALL PROCEEDS IN AID OF 'SAVE THE CHILDREN'

United Nations Association, Twickenham Branch

The UN looks forward to welcoming Sir David Hannay as the Guest Speaker at the Annual General Meeting on Monday, 12 May 1997. The venue is: The Windsor Room at St Mary's Parish Church Hall, Twickenham at 8.00pm. The topic is: The UN - An Agenda for Reform.

Until his recent retirement from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Sir David was the UK's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. He is presently undertaking a special assignment in Cyprus.

Over a long and distinguished career in the FCO Sir David has served in Teheran, Kabul, Brussels twice, (latterly as Ambassador to the European Union), Washington and London.

The UNA Twickenham branch feels honoured that Sir David has found time in his busy schedule to come and talk to us. His talk will provide a valuable opportunity for people to gain an insight into the future working of the UN. We hope there will be a good audience to hear Sir David speak. Everybody is welcome.

Margaret Hobbs

Scout Group News

Our Cubs now have something in common with the Queen! In the same week as the Queen opened a site on the computer internet, so did our Akela, with a page of news and interest for our Cubs.

The Scouts will be on Easter Camp as you read this. An exciting programme has been planned for them. I just hope its not too cold at night.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the Venture Scouts took part in the "Southern 50", a walk of 50 miles in 24 hours. Only one member of our teams completed the full 50 miles - well done Sarah!

Preparations for Fun Sports Day continue with plans for a treasure hunt, and an evening pig roast - watch this space. Our Group will also be taking part in the Hampton and Hampton Hill Carnival, with a stall and a space in the procession.

Finally, our new HQ is getting closer, thanks to the Hampton Fuel Allotment Trust. Building work is expected to start in April with a possible completion in September.

Paul Fitchett (941 7186)

R.N.L.I.

Coffee morning in the Church Hall on Saturday 26th April from 10.00am - 12 noon. Books - plants - Bric-à-Brac etc.

Jill Denton (287 7438)

Around the Spire

The recent lovely spring weather has not only brought out the daffodils and buds, but also the dusters and mops! St James' has had a wonderful spring clean, and many willing hands turned out to help on 14th and 15th March. It makes such a difference to have the Church spick and span. Many thanks to all who gave their time and energy, and particularly to Jack Gostling for organising the spring clean and for providing the delicious bread pudding!

Another vote of thanks is due to Brenda and Ted Smith for organising a very successful Quiz Evening on 8th March. It was most enjoyable.

News of Helen and Alan Taylor from Suffolk - Alan is already very involved in their church, although he will not be licensed as a Lay Reader until October. They have invited us to visit their new home in July, so maybe we could plan our Summer outing around that invitation.

We are very sorry to hear of the death of Sylvia Maxted. Many people will know "Mrs. Scrimshire", her shop in the High Street. We send our sympathy to her husband Ian and daughter Sarah, and remember them in our prayers.

Catherine Jones' ashes were interred in the churchyard on Palm Sunday and many were there for the ceremony.

A date to note is Sunday 11th May, at the start of Christian Aid Week, when Karen Oon-Buffin will be preaching at Parish Communion on behalf of Christian Aid.

Please also remember our APCM on 20th April, after Parish Communion at which David Vanstone, the Area Dean, will preach. This will be followed by a bring and share lunch. Please be there!



**CHRISTIAN AID WEEK
11th to 18th MAY 1997**

**Collectors needed - if you can help
please contact Margaret Taylor 977 1342**

FROM THE FEBRUARY REGISTERS

Funerals

3	Catherine Jones, 19 Bayleaf Close	90
7	Ada Bridle, 3 Roy Grove	93
10	Vera Weedon, 4 Fisher's Court, Teddington	81
14	Dorothy Georgina Merry, 15 Laurel Road	91

Interment of Ashes

3	Hettie Burgess
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Visit to Richmond by Singers from Fontainbleau

Cantanti Camerati is to host, at St James's Church, a group of 47 singers and their relatives from Richmond's twin town in France from Saturday 17th to Monday 19th May. There will be a joint Spring Concert, in aid of the Organ Fund, on the Saturday evening at 7.30pm, and a Reception with refreshments on the Sunday evening including jolly items from 'Just a Song at Twilight'. Please let David Taylor or Geoffrey Bowyer know as soon as possible if you could kindly host one, two or three people for the two nights (B & B and perhaps a meal). We need to make the Entente Cordiale truly cordial by welcoming these charming guests with open arms. Thank you.

Geoffrey Bowyer

Baptism Visiting

Do you like meeting new people? How about the chance to welcome them into St James's? We need volunteers to join our merry little band of people who visit families who have asked for Baptism. These visits are always extremely pleasant and need not last more than about half an hour. Frequency, of course, depends on how many volunteers we have, and also the time of year - there are more requests during the fine weather. Training will be given! Do ring me if you are interested.

Debbie Nunn (979 3078)

That Vital Lift

Drivers are desperately needed for the Neighbourhood Care Scheme of the Hampton and Hampton Hill Voluntary Care Group.

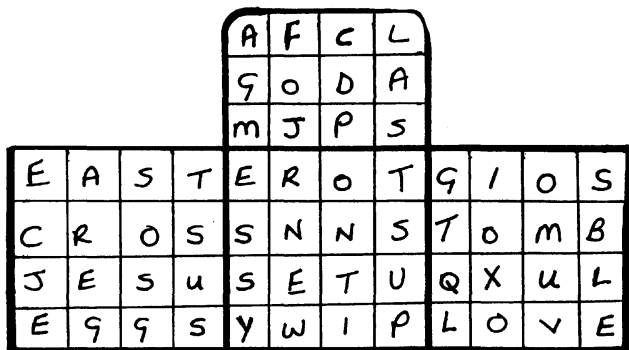
Interested in giving it a go? Ring VCG Co-ordinator Deirdre Curran on 0181 941 3902.

Dates to Note

- 7 Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary
 8 Saints and Martyrs of the Americas
 9 William Law, Mystic, Non-Juror, 1761
 16 Kensington Episcopal Area Synod at St Peter, Staines
 If you would like to attend please contact Churchwardens
 Women's Forum meeting - Fair Trade Shopping 8pm
 20 9.30am Parish Communion Preacher:
 The Area Dean of Hampton, The Revd. David Vanstone
 11.00am **Annual Parochial Church Meeting**
 followed by Shared Lunch
 21 Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1109
 23 George, Patron Saint of England Martyr 4th Century
 25 **St. Mark the Evangelist**
 26 10am onwards Church Hall Spring Clean
 27 7.30pm-9.00pm **General Election Debate** at St James's
 29 Catherine of Siena, Mystic 1380

COPY DATE FOR MAY MAGAZINE: 13th APRIL

JUNIOR WORDSEARCH



LAST SUPPER

GOD

JESUS

CROSS

EASTER

LOVE

TOMB

EGGS

NEW LIFE

PONTIUS PILATE

CRUCIFY