

September always seems to be to bring with it a very large 'Return to Normal' notice. It almost seems as if August has been a dream and now we awaken to what life is really like. If you have been on holiday, I hope you have enjoyed it and that you have returned safely and much refreshed for the days ahead. If you have not yet had a break and are about to get one, well lucky you!

It is a long time since I left school, but I can still remember being required to check that my pencils were sharpened, and all the other paraphernalia was in place on the Sunday night before term began. And my request to you in this letter is rather similar. I would ask you to check up on your resources for living the Christian life in your own context in today's world?

Several opportunities will present themselves in the coming weeks for personal and spiritual development which I very much hope you might wish to pursue. Here are some of them.

(i) **CONFIRMATION GROUPS** These will begin during September. The structure of the groups, timing and venues will depend upon the number and age-range of participants. **BUT STOP IF YOU THINK THIS IS NOT FOR YOU!** It may just be that you were confirmed a few, or even many, years ago. If so you have probably changed in all sorts of ways since then - your appearance, outlook, circumstances, experiences. Isn't it time for a spiritual M.O.T.? Why not take this opportunity to re-explore your commitment to walking in the Christian path? Confirmation will be celebrated here by the Bishop of Kensington on Sunday 7th December 1997 at 9.30a.m.

(ii) **NURTURE GROUP** This group will begin on Thursday 11th September at 8p.m. in the Hall. It will meet fortnightly and will be a structured but informal group in which we have time to worship, study, discuss and grow, both in our commitment to each other and in discipleship. It is open to people of any age who wish to share their experience and views. We hope to harvest ideas at the first meeting, but the theme, at least for the Autumn Term, will be 'Difficulties', perhaps difficulties in what we believe, how we interpret the scriptures or the church's teaching, or difficulties in living out the things we claim to believe. Any queries please to me in the first instance.

(iii) **PARENTING SKILLS** Hampton Council of Churches has for some time been aware that there is very little opportunity provided locally for all those who face the exciting and daunting tasks of being parents. We have therefore embarked on a scheme so that this autumn a single course will run ecumenically, with the possibility of repeating the course in the spring in individual churches as there is demand. The autumn term is an 8 week course beginning on 24th September. Anyone interested in this should be a parent of a 0 - 15 year old. There is no charge for this first course, but participants are asked whether they would be willing to facilitate such a course in the spring of 1998 in their own church. The course is based on your own experiences and there are no pre-arranged right or wrong answers. It is not a course for 'bad parents' or 'good parents', but for any parent who feels that (s)he could benefit from sharing experiences. More information from me.

(iv) **PARISH WEEKEND Absolutely not to be missed.** It takes place from Friday 31st October at 6p.m. until Sunday 2nd November at 4p.m. The venue is Wychcroft, the Southwark Diocesan Retreat House, in Surrey. It will be a super weekend and there is so much to be gained from it, both for us individually and for the benefit of our whole church community. All ages welcome! Please see Ruth Mills for more details.

So, with spiritual pencils sharpened by all these opportunities, may God indeed be with you.

Brian Leathard

ALBERT Schweitzer was once asked which he considered the most important of the ten commandments. 'Christ gave only one commandment,' he said, 'and that was Love.'

EXILES IN THE NORTH AISLE

I expect Brian's letter in the August 'Spire' made many of us to think how we might try in St. James's to do something more for our "Children in the Way". Their presence in the church is an opportunity for us if we can use it well. Our Sunday School, thanks to its leaders, offers a gentle introduction into our church services. I believe the arrangements we have made for younger children have not worked as well. Sitting in the nave I feel that the congregation and children in the north aisle are in a sort of voluntary exile because parents think they will be out of the way of others. Even stretching to exchange the peace from nave to north aisle feels to me like greeting a separate congregation.

There are suggestions for building a noise-proof section of the church for families with young children. There are two reasons why I do not like this idea very much. Firstly, the sense of exclusion would be greater. Even more important it would do no more than we do at present to help the children to grow into active participants in the service. We all come to church to learn and to grow, adults and children. Participation, in some way, is necessary for all of us if we are to follow the way. There should be a sense of special occasion for us all.

Perhaps people will think I have forgotten what it is like to bring young children to church. But I do remember my amazement in Bulawayo when I first went to the cathedral crowded with young families, where the sense of reverence and togetherness in worship was a strong emotional experience. I also remember talking to many of my students who would qualify their plans with phrases like: "If it is God's will". And they meant it. Their steady walk along the way had been started as babies and continued into adolescence.

Dick Wilde

GENERAL SYNOD 1997 - Issues in Human Sexuality

I went to York to hear the General Synod's debate on "Issues in Human Sexuality" on Monday 14th July. The Archdeacon of Wandsworth, Ven. David Gerrard, proposed the motion that *"This Synod:*

(a) commend for discussion in dioceses the House of Bishops' report "Issues in Human Sexuality" and acknowledge it is not the last word on the subject;

(b) in particular, urge Deanery Synods, clergy chapters and congregations to find time for prayerful study and reflection on the issues addressed by the report".

On the face of it this is boringly uncontroversial. Why should the General Synod spend two or three hours of its valuable discussion time, in heated argument about merely discussing a document that has been freely available to the whole church for the last six years?

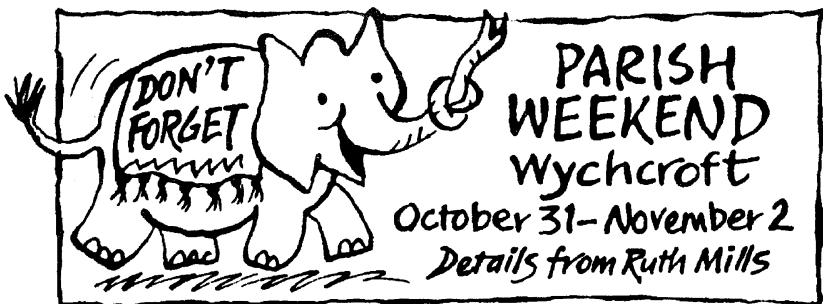
The report covers many aspects of human sexuality, but the most controversial and the only aspect that was discussed by the Synod, are those of homosexuality.

This roused a great many strong feelings both for and against homosexuality as a whole and practising homosexual priests in particular. The chairwoman of this very well ordered debate, warned all speakers, at the beginning, to temper their speeches with regard to the presence of the press and, more importantly, with regard to the strongly held beliefs and opinions of fellow Christians both within and outside the Synod.

I was so impressed with the real concern and love that was evident in nearly all the speakers, despite their strongly held beliefs. There were few who had closed their ears and hearts to the views strongly opposed to their own. I was also aware that there were two major motives of those opposing the further discussion of this document. One was that there was a fear that homosexuality would be officially accepted by the Church of England (the earnest hope of most of those supporting the motion as well as most of the homosexual Christians) the other was that there was a fear of conflict and dissension within the church, some feeling that the present situation, of closed eyes and keeping quiet about the many homosexual priests and congregation members, is a far safer option. The Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement are among those who feel that such two-facedness is not acceptable within the church. The L.G.C.M. maintained a presence outside the synod venue, demonstrating, with dignity, by singing hymns, gathered around their banner which declared that they were "praying for an inclusive church". Most sat in the public gallery during the actual debate.

I hope that St. James's church will find space for discussion of this document, or at least that its members will read it with their usual open mindedness, and whatever their conclusions, will not keep quiet!

Ruth Mills



CHARITY CHRISTMAS CARDS SALE

ALREADY?

After Parish Communion on Sunday 28th September

To promote your favourite charity's cards please contact
Janet Nunn

HARVEST SUPPER

This year we are having a Harvest Supper with a difference on **Saturday 4th October**. We are supporting Christian Aid with a Harvest Supper for India, and the money raised will go to projects which they support - £10 could buy 40 mango trees to protect the soil and provide fruit - £50 pays the running costs of a kindergarten for six months - £250 pays for two hand looms enabling women to learn a new skill and earn a living. So come and support Christian Aid and have an enjoyable and spicy evening together with an authentic Indian flavour! Our Harvest Festival will follow the next morning in Church at 9.30a.m.

ST. JAMES CHRISTMAS CARD

This year Christmas card shopping is made easy and convenient to everyone at St. James! We can avoid the pre-Christmas crowds by buying our own St. James card with all proceeds going to our church. The card captures much of the charm of St. James with a full colour scene of last year's crib setting taking in the chancel with its vaulted ceiling and stained glass window.

We have placed a good sized order to secure a competitive price so support is vital from church members to make this project a success. Finished cards will be on display and for sale from mid-September.

Gordon Tucker

ON BEING A MANAGING DIRECTOR OF HODDER & STOUGHTON RELIGIOUS BOOKS

When I was still at school a teacher was talking to me about careers. At the time I thought that I would like to be a teacher myself and he said, 'Well, it depends if you want a job or a way of life.'

I never did work out into which category he was placing his own profession! Nor did I become a teacher, but joined a publishing company after reading English at university. Publishing most definitely is a way of life, not least because there is always something that you should be reading - most of which activity inevitably takes place well outside office hours. So if you don't have a passion for reading you are sunk.

At Hodder & Stoughton, which started life as a religious books publisher some 130 years ago and which I joined 11 years ago after 6 years with Collins, the output is now very varied, ranging from popular fiction to children's books to medical reference works (who would have thought that **Microbiology and Microbial Infections** could be a bestseller?). Since 1996 'my' bit of the company has been the Religious Books Division. There are two distinct parts to the division: Bible and Liturgical Publishing on the one hand and general religious books on the other.

The Bible that Hodder now publishes exclusively is the New International Version, a translation that first appeared in 1978. Some 65 different editions are kept in print at any one time - pew editions for churches, cross reference editions, study editions, youth and children's editions, plus a range of so-called 'fine bindings', bound in leather. Maintaining stocks of some of the latter depends on the availability of Moroccan goatskins! Increasingly the Bible text and associated reference material is also produced in electronic form - from a simple disc to a £700 CD-ROM containing original Greek and Hebrew along with all English translations and some 25 reference books. Only for the serious (and wealthy!) student.

The general book side is blessed with a wonderful 'backlist' - books such as J. I. Packer's **Knowing God** or Jackie Pullinger's **Chasing the Dragon**, published some years ago but still selling strongly. With the market for Christian literature sadly flat we try to publish more books that, while written from a Christian standpoint, address topics in a non-religious way. Books on parenting and family issues for example, can reach well beyond a 'religious' market when approached in this way.

So what does being M.D. of all this entail? Well, it is a mixture of the special and the mundane. One minute it might be talking middle-eastern politics with Terry Waite and the next talking to the production manager about paper prices; one day it might be flying to Colorado Springs to meet with the International Bible Society, the next driving to the warehouse to check on the quality of our packing. There's a strong element of being an 'agony uncle' - both to authors and staff - and one has to combine this with keeping control over all the commercial objectives of a p.l.c.

As far as the relationship between one's work and one's faith is concerned I

guess my job is an unusual case. And - just occasionally - coming to St. James's and hearing Brian's and Betty's loving, compassionate Christianity is a welcome escape from Religion!

Charles Nettleton

"DOING THE LAMBETH WALK" - The Annual Conference of the A.P.F.

June 1937 - Statement to the Anglican Bishops of the Anglican Communion in June :

"This meeting of clergy and laity of the Church of England declares its passionate conviction that Jesus Christ would refuse in any case to employ the methods of modern war."

Following the presentation of this statement at Lambeth Palace, the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship was formed. At the conference this year we celebrated 60 years of peace-making endeavouring in that time to give Christians the opportunity to think deeply on this subject of pacifism. By 1978, the following statement was in the Lambeth Declaration:

"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."

Present members of the A.P.F. want to ensure that this declaration continues to be included at the end of next year's Lambeth Conference. It would be a great step if the word "ultimately" could be omitted.

I have been aware of A.P.F since 1947, when I married Gordon, my late husband. Looking back, as I was doing this year, I realise what a powerful organisation it is, and I marvel at all that has been achieved. Much younger members are now planning for the Lambeth Conference next year - writing to their bishops and speaking at Deanery and Diocesan Synods. They also plan - for the third time - to organise a pilgrimage from Southwark Cathedral to Canterbury, with members of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship from America. To keep abreast of events you can read them in the bi-monthly newsletter, called "Challenge" which I leave at the back of the church regularly.

Jean Wilson

This was my first encounter with the members of the A.P.F., and what a remarkable group they are! (Or rather, what remarkable individuals they are!) Whatever preconceived ideas anyone has about "pacifists" can be laid aside. Here are ex-soldiers, priests, doctors, teachers, playwrights, mothers, fathers, grandparents and, no doubt, great-grandparents. What they have in common is that they will not follow any ideas unthinkingly. They are enthusiasts and people of immense courage - It took quite a lot of that to be a conscientious objector in wartime as some of them were, and age has not dulled their convictions.

It is difficult to sum up the whole weekend. One of the outstanding sessions

was a talk, with videos, about the situation in Burma, including the persecution of the Karens. This is one of the many areas of conflict around the world in which both persecuted and persecutor are dehumanised and in which killing and torture cannot produce a satisfactory conclusion.

I needed Gordon and Jean's help to realise that pacifism was a practical solution to conflict, but talking to other members of A.P.F. and hearing of the group's 60 year history and individuals' routes to pacifism, has convinced me still further.

Will anyone from St. James's join me on next year's pilgrimage?

Ruth Mills

HELP NEEDED

Twickenham Library needs volunteers to deliver books to elderly and housebound residents each month. A delivery service already exists for the Borough's main residential care homes, but the Library depends on volunteers to transport books to other frail but enthusiastic readers at home. If you can help, even occasionally, ring the Library on 892 8091.

Advocates are ordinary people who offer friendship to a person with a learning disability, and who learn to represent that person's own interests as if they were their own. If you feel you could be an Advocate, contact Mary Rose at Bath House, The Embankment, Twickenham. TW1 3DX Tel: 892 6559.

Richmond Talking Newspaper has just celebrated its 900th edition. For 19 years volunteers have produced a taped version of the Richmond & Twickenham Times for blind and partially sighted people who have registered with Social Services. If you are interested in helping telephone 979 3987 or go along on any Friday to fortescue House Annexe, Stanley Road, Teddington at 7p.m. R.T.N. also welcome information about anyone who would benefit from this valuable service.



"Well wake him."

THE LAST NIGHT OF THE PROMS

WATCH AND SING TOGETHER

**SATURDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER AT 7.30P.M.
IN THE CHURCH HALL**

BRING YOUR OWN PICNIC SUPPER

COMMUNITY NEWS

Teddington Memorial Hospital

You may recently have received through your letterbox an appeal from the League of Friends of Teddington Memorial Hospital to build an interdenominational chapel and bereavement care facility. Our local hospital is unique in that it is the smallest N.H.S. Trust in the country. Many thousands of patients from the local community benefit from its services each year. This current project is considered a very high priority as the hospital does not have a chapel or any suitable area which can be used for worship, prayer or meditation, and it does not have a bereavement care facility where relatives can spend time with a loved one immediately after death. The amount required is £300,000. Cheques should be made payable to the **League of Friends Teddington Memorial Hospital**, and sent to The League of Friends, Freepost, Teddington Memorial Hospital, Hampton Road, Teddington. TW11 8BR

Bishop Wand School

An Open Evening for parents and prospective pupils wishing to enter the school in September 1998 will be held on Thursday 9th October, between 4.30p.m. and 8.30p.m. Visits to the school during the teaching day can be arranged at this time, or by contacting the school, which is our local Church of England Secondary School.

Sainsbury's

Sainsbury's petrol station has been granted permission to open 24 hours a day, contrary to the wishes of many Hampton Hill residents. The permission is at present on a temporary basis for nine months, after which it will be reviewed. In the meantime, the Hampton Hill Association would like to know of any disturbance, noise or other nuisance you experience as a result of this continuous opening.

Old People's Welfare Association

The Hampton Hill Old People's Welfare Association are holding a coffee morning on Saturday 27th September in the Methodist Church Hall, Teddington from 10a.m. to 12.30p.m. For information contact Mrs. Brooks on 941 3725.

AROUND THE SPIRE

We begin this month with an apology for a mistake in last month's 'Around the Spire'. It is, of course, Irene Williams who was married to Brian Broadhurst, and not Eileen.

Our warmest congratulations to Peter Horner who has attained a First Class Honours degree in Modern Languages at Oxford. Wonderful news! The Rowett family are also to be congratulated on their achievements. Andrea has now become an L.R.S.M. (Licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music) for the teaching of piano, and Nicky is now the Boat-man and a rowing coach at Jesus College, Cambridge. Well done to all these young people.

Rod, Kalina and Grace Hodgkinson are moving house (with unborn baby) to West Sussex, to be nearer to Rod's work at Gatwick Airport. Our best wishes to them for their future.

P.C. Adrian Norwell has taken over from P.C. Malcolm Hill as our neighbourhood beat officer.

Margery Orton's son Peter has recently married his fiancée Barbara in Wallingford, and John and Moya Meredith Smith's son Lewis, married Laurance in Toulouse this month. Brian travelled to France to take the service and preached part of his sermon in French!

St. James's day was a very happy one. We were very pleased that the Archdeacon and his wife Liz came, and even brought their bikes to beat the Parish boundary with us.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

SUMMER WORDSEARCH

GOING CAMPING

H	C	H	T	R	A	F	C	A	R	A	V	A	N
S	H	H	T	M	I	E	O	E	W	Q	X	F	G
G	A	K	Y	A	R	T	O	R	C	H	S	R	H
S	I	B	G	L	B	W	K	B	T	F	U	Y	M
T	R	A	I	L	E	R	E	B	S	X	N	I	S
A	P	T	N	E	D	I	R	E	O	N	S	N	A
I	G	A	M	T	E	N	T	B	J	U	H	G	U
M	Y	B	R	E	D	A	E	N	F	O	A	P	C
B	K	L	P	U	L	C	G	R	L	Y	D	A	E
S	L	E	E	P	I	N	G	B	A	G	E	N	P
D	K	U	G	T	R	U	C	K	S	A	C	K	A
B	N	Y	S	H	Y	R	G	F	K	E	R	F	N

Find the 18 camping
objects listed below:

AIRBED	SLEEPING BAG
CARAVAN	SUNSHADE
CHAIR	TABLE
COOKER	TENT
FLASK	TORCH
FRYING PAN	TRAILER
ICEBOX	
MALLET	
PEGS	
PLATES	
RUCKSACK	
SAUCEPAN	



FROM THE JULY REGISTERS

Baptisms

- 6 Adam Martyn Lovitt, 11 Wordsworth Road, Hampton
Pascale Elizabeth Pumphrey, 183 Hanworth Road
13 Jennifer Mary Shaw, 44 St. James's Avenue

Weddings

- 5 Jill Denton and John Goddard
Brian Broadhurst and Irene Williams
26 Daren Whalley and Sarah Kennewell

Funerals

- 1 Edith May Fleet, 8 Cross Street 84
10 David Adams, 88 St. James's Avenue 64

DATES TO NOTE IN SEPTEMBER

- 3 Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, 604
7 9.30a.m. Informal Service and Holy Baptism
8 **The Blessed Virgin Mary**
11 8p.m. Nurture Group begins, Hall
13 Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, Martyr, 258
7.30p.m. 'Last Night of the Proms', with refreshments, Hall
18 8p.m. Parochial Church Council
20 Saints & Martyrs of Australia & The Pacific
21 **St. Matthew the Apostle**
24 Ember Day
25 Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester, 1626
26 Ember Day
27 Vincent de Paul, Founder of the Vincentian Order, 1660
28 Charity Christmas Card Sale after Parish Communion (approx
10.45a.m.)
29 **St. Michael & All Angels**