

THE PEOPLE NEXT DOOR FINAL REPORT FROM THE HAMPTON AREA

The following report was placed before a special meeting of the Hampton Council of Churches on June 5, 1967, at the Congregational Church.

During the seven weeks preceding Holy Week, approximately sixty-five members of all the denominations represented on the Hampton Council of Churches met in six House Groups to take part in the programme of study and action "The People Next Door". This was organised by the British Council of Churches and was supported by all the major denominations in the country. The aim was to bring together Christians from different Churches into small groups, led by laymen, in which, by discussion and action together they can gain fresh understanding of the mission to which they are called to-day.

As a result of these meetings the following recommendations were agreed and are put before the Council of Churches for further study, discussion and eventually action. We believe that if some of these recommendations are implemented we shall have taken a visible step forward towards really working together and taking the mission of the Church in our situation seriously.

1. **Inter-Communion.** It was recommended that we should proceed with Inter-communion at a local level immediately and that this should come before Unity. Initially all services to be denominational and open to all "Church Members." It was realised that the implementation of this mainly concerns the Anglican Church.
2. **Combined Services.** These should take place at regular and more frequent intervals and be held at the time of the normal Church Service. In the first place these should be denominational but opportunities should be taken for experiments in worship and eventually become inter-denominational. There should be times for questions, either instead of a sermon or after the service and later a revised format of services.
3. **Joint Mission and Social Work.** It was felt that if the resources of all the Churches were pooled they could be used more effectively for this work.
4. **Joint Sunday Schools.** This again would be more effective with resources pooled and possibly reduce the amount of travelling for the children.
5. **Joint Church Magazine.** A joint Church Magazine was felt to be one of the best and most practical ways of demonstrating 'ecumenism'. The probable result would be a better and more interesting magazine and the financial burden upon individual Churches would be much reduced and it would allow funds to be released for more urgent needs.
6. **Interchange of Pulpits** — to enable us to obtain different viewpoints and as a first step towards a Group Ministry for the area.
7. **Joint Youth Work.** The combined resources of the Churches could produce some effective sustained Youth Work which is perhaps the chief social problem of the area, to the extent of opening a Coffee Bar.
8. **Lay Training.** This would enable us to be more effective "personal counsellors" when the opportunity arose.

9. **Joint Training for The Ministry.** That a period of the training for the ministry should be spent in the college of another denomination. This would help to break down the barrier of "denominationalism" and encourage the growth of more *Group Ministries*. Besides the above suggestions our existing ecumenical activities must not be neglected but indeed vigorously supported. These are:

Christian Aid

Women's World Day of Prayer

United Drama Group

Good Friday Service

It was not our intention to discuss how these conclusions should be carried out and certainly it would have taken too much time. Nevertheless we sincerely believe that given a real desire on the part of the various churches to see these schemes in action, ways and means can be found. We would not underestimate the difficulties, the prejudice and the stubbornness that must be overcome but it seems clear that the Holy Spirit is moving among us in a quite wonderful way and guiding us to rebuild the Church for its task of service and mission in to-day's world.

Discussion took place on each recommendation and the two ministers not present, Mr. Parkinson and Mr. Hailey, sent their written comments on the report.

Generally the Anglicans were not in favour of Inter-Communion until official permission has been given by the Bishop. There was, however, a minority who felt that, until Inter-Communion was permitted, no one would take the Anglican Church seriously in its desire for unity and closer working relationships with the Free Churches.

There was a large majority in favour of combined services at normal service times and there is hope that in time a common mind and a common policy may be reached on this issue. Item 3 was thought to be a good idea with several projects to go at. Anyone interested in helping in St. Mary's emergency help scheme would be warmly welcomed; also with the Methodist Church's services in St. Mary's Hospital. There was not much support for Joint Sunday Schools or for a joint church magazine.

The interchange of pulpits suggestion became lost in a maze of Anglican customs and permissions.

Joint Youth Work should be encouraged and any helpers for the Oldfield Youth Club coffee bar would be welcomed.

The Council's Prayer and Discussion group is looking into the possibility of holding a series of discussions and talks on the Christian and his encounters with agnostics, atheists, humanists, etc.

On Item 9 it was thought by some of the Clergy that this already exists, and group ministries are not to be encouraged anyway.

The last four or five items were dealt with rather hastily owing to lack of time.

It might be thought that reaction to the "People next door" course has been less enthusiastic than it might have been, but it is asking a great deal in two hours and one sheet of paper to instil into non-participants the vision and hope that this course has created.

A.R.T.

NAIL and JONAH

Looking back, it seems to me that very little has been said in these

pages about "PROJECT NAIL" (New York, Africa, India, London).

Back in the autumn there was an impressive Diocesan meeting to launch this. I want to give some impressions of the play "Jonah" that ended this meeting. This play was not a great success because, thanks to a peculiar amplifying system, very few in the huge Central Hall could hear it, and quite a lot of people couldn't see it either. This was a pity because it was an inspired play, and very much to the point so that I am glad to have been one of those near enough to the front to be able to see and hear the young professional actors, singers and dancers in this lively performance.

The Lord wanted Jonah to go to Nineveh. But Jonah didn't want to. Maybe he didn't want to go anywhere for the Lord but the Lord would keep on so, and Jonah said he'd go to Tarshish, then. But the Lord had said *Nineveh* and we all know what happened when Jonah set out for Tarshish so that he eventually landed up in Nineveh. As he would better have done in the beginning (as David Kossoff might have said).

This story was set as a parable for modern times in several scenes interspersed with a sung commentary.

The waiting people of Nineveh were represented by a chorus of unbelievers, many coloured, ribald, profane; hungry or overfed; ignorant or sophisticated; robust or sick; all bewildered "Crying against the wind" for help; while Jonah—the Establishment?—the old hide-bound Church?—too inward-looking, too doctrinaire, and maybe too stuffy, to hear the cry, to communicate the message—the good news of its Master.

In one school room scene the teacher is so occupied with his higher mathematics as to be quite oblivious of the fact that his unruly class with its crude jokes, are children asking "What is the meaning of life?"

At another time the policeman is holding up the traffic—the chorus is now transformed into skidding scooters and fast cars of modern city life, dying of its drugs, its own poisons—and one of the travellers on the road is taken ill. He and his friends appeal to the policeman for help quickly, but while he is consulting his rule book to see how to call the ambulance, the poor man collapses and it is the members of the chorus who improvise a stretcher and carry him away as the policeman is still trying to remember how to get the traffic going again.

And after each scene the poor forsaken chorus sings so passionately "If this is the best you can do, for God's sake leave us alone!"

Jonah's disobedience brought trouble to him and his travelling companions and they threw him to the whale till he was brought back to obedience. So this drama moved to some cataclysmic disaster and Established church was thrown overboard. The few survivors tried to build themselves up in their own strength but there is nothing but toil and sorrow for them until a tiny worn remnant of humanity humbly pick up two charred logs of the wreck of the world and nail them together as a Cross high on a hill where it draws all people to the revelation of God.

The chorus raises its now praising voice to sing "Nail it home! Nail it home! Help us to nail it home."

LAUREL DENE FETE — SEPTEMBER 9

Matron is holding this fete to raise funds for her old people. The men of the parish have been asked to run a bottle stall and the ladies a cake stall. We are running a coffee party at Wayside on August 2, there will be no charge for admittance but bottles and promises of cakes will be gratefully received. If you cannot come to the Coffee Party but would like to support this effort your contribution will be accepted at 21, St. James's Road (979-3748).

R.G.

THE YOUNG WIVES' GROUP

The A.G.M. of the Group was held on May 31 at Wayside. Prayers were led by our President, Mrs. Brunt. The events of the past year were reviewed by the Chairman, Mrs. Bellingham, who thanked all her committee members for their help and support, particularly those who, like herself, were retiring from office.

The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were presented and approved. The Badminton Club is in need of new members in order to reduce the cost per head, and anyone who is interested should contact Mrs. E. Knight, 87, Uxbridge Road (979-6258).

The following new committee members were elected and welcomed:
Chairman: Mrs. K. Brooks, 81, Park Road 979-1983
Vice-Chairman: Mrs. J. Jackson, 14, Cardinals Walk, Hampton

979-7657

Entertainments Officer: Mrs. J. Mitchell, 80, St. James's Av. 979-2225
Catering Officers:

Mrs. N. Pusey, 73, St. James's Avenue 979-3567
Mrs. G. Lea, 13, Chelsea Close 979-7069

The Committee members carrying on for their second year of office are:

Secretary: Mrs. E. Knight, 87, Uxbridge Road 979-6258

Treasurer: Mrs. J. Keogh, 32, Parkside 977-3166

Registrar: Mrs. N. Mackenzie, 11, Lindsay Road 979-7048

After much discussion it was unanimously decided to abandon the annual childrens' party which covered all age groups, and replace this with a party for the very young children and an outing for the older children. It was also suggested that a party be held for members and their husbands. The price of coffee and biscuits is to be increased to 6d. as it has been found that the old charge of 3d. is insufficient to cover the cost of refreshments and heating of Wayside. It was also agreed to start fortnightly coffee mornings for mothers with babies and toddlers, and members are invited to come along and bring friends and neighbours who may be interested. The meetings will be on alternate Thursday mornings at 10.30 a.m. at Wayside, and the next one will be July 6 (then July 20 and so on).

On June 14 we held our annual tea party for all the babies in the parish who have been baptised during the last year—and their mothers, of course! It was a lovely afternoon, and with Mr. and Mrs. Brunt we were delighted to welcome the young mothers and all the beautiful babies and lively toddlers who turned up. We were pleased to find that quite a few of them are interested in coming regularly to our Thursday coffee meetings, mentioned above.

J.B.

HAMPTON HILL OLD PEOPLE'S WELFARE COMMITTEE

HOLIDAYS? The H.H.O.P.W. Committee invite the old age pensioners of Hampton Hill to their Annual Holiday which this year will be at Eastbourne September 30—October 7. Priority will be given to those people who have not had a holiday for two years. Financial help will be given.

If you are interested and would like further details, or possibly you know an elderly person who would like a holiday, write to me, Mrs. L. Mills, 40 Oldfield Road, Hampton, or get in touch with any member of the Committee.

L.M.

THE CHOIR BOYS' CLUB

The small billiard table at Wayside needs to have its cover renewed. Is there a volunteer, preferably with previous experience, who is prepared to do this job? Assistance given if required.

We can always find a use for club pastimes such as dominoes, chess, skittles, and more billiard cues would also be very welcome.

R.J.C.D.

THE VALUE OF SILENCE

One of the recommendations to be stressed in the People Next Door Report for the London area is that there should be much more use of silence in corporate worship. Many groups thought that there is far too much doing and speaking in our present liturgical forms, and far too little silent waiting on the Spirit.

At St. James's we do have a main period of silence in every service, but it is not a long one, and perhaps it should be lengthened, and the number of such periods increased. But in our own times of private prayer we have full and free scope to make the period of wordless and attentive silence as long as we like, and we can begin to do this right away, without waiting for the many approvals which hold up liturgical reform. There is no room this month to speak of the great spiritual value of silence—but we can increasingly discover this for ourselves.

THE MOTHER'S UNION

Our meeting on June 7 was of an informal nature, and we had a general discussion and exchange of ideas for our Sale in October. The weather was fine and we were able to enjoy Mrs. Rockliffe's garden, also the delightful tea which she had prepared for us. One of our proposed stalls is to be a "Treasure Chest" and if any of our friends have any unwanted pieces of costume jewellery Mrs. Rockliffe would be pleased to accept them. With the jam-making season upon us we would also be very grateful if helpers could set aside just one jar of preserve to help the Mothers' Union in their efforts.

P.Y.

OUTING TO CHICHESTER—June 14. Woke up, glorious sunshine, thought "Oh, good—M.U. outing." Bit worried over being a non-member going "by herself"—needn't have been—everyone so nice, friendly and jolly—even the coach driver who really was a poppet. "We are now on the Michelham by-pass," he announces, "called by all us coach drivers 'Policeman's paradise,' they lurk behind every twig down here."

Stop for coffee, eat sandwich lunch en route and are met outside bell-tower by smiling Capt. McLean (husband of M.U. Diocesan President)—great honour!—and are shown round pleasant, intimate Norman

Cathedral; admired (or did not admire) its modern Piper and Sutherland additions; (overheard various people saying doubtfully "Well, the colours are lovely!") Enjoyed the cloisters, the Dean's garden with its pleasant soft pink Tudor walls, the quiet Chantry and Vicars' gardens in Canon Close and waved a regretful farewell to our kindly and gracious hosts. Crocodiled with all speed to Shippam's Potted Meat Factory—could we be in the same world?—and met "leg removers," "breast cutters" and "gut stretchers," not, as one might have expected pagan torturers, but pretty, white-clad girls skilfully helping steamed chickens to become "Supreme," and pork sausages to be suitably confined by skins. All the workers happy, harmonious and very hygienic. NEWS FLASH!—If you haven't, up until now, been able to tell the difference between Shippam's and Marks and Spencers' potted meat, it's not surprising, because there isn't any—only the label!

Tea and creamy cakes at a nearby cafe, a short ramble around and home via lovely Midhurst. Many thanks Mrs. Oliver, Mrs. Rockliffe and the M.U. for a delightful day.

M.O.

SMALL ADVERTISEMENT

HAYLING ISLAND—SEA FRONT: Large (22ft.) three-roomed, four-berthed CARAVAN, across the road from the beach, in 'select' site. Mains water; flush lavatories; own garden! milkman and paper-boy call daily; near to small shopping-centre. Available most of July, August and September. Enquiries to Mrs. Orton (979-5868).

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- July 11.—2.30 p.m. Editorial Board (52, Park Road).
" 17.—4.00 p.m. Holy Communion in St. Anne's Chapel (The Lady Eleanor Holles School).
" 18.—8.00 p.m. Sunday Teachers' Meeting (Vicarage).
" 19.—8.00 p.m. Parochial Church Council (W).
" 20.—8.00 p.m. Stewardship Committee (106, Park Road).
" 25.—ST. JAMES'S DAY: PATRONAL FESTIVAL. 7.00 p.m. Parish Communion; 7.45 p.m. Parish At Home—ALL INVITED (Vicarage Gardens—Wayside if wet).

Sept. 15—19.—PARISH WEEKEND.

N.B.—SERVICES AT LAUREL DENE: The Y.P.F. lead one on July 9, and the older members of the church another on the following Sunday, July 16, at 5.15 p.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS: The last meeting of the session will be on July 16. The new year will start a little later this autumn because of the Parish Weekend. Family Service, September 24, 9.30 a.m. All departments of Sunday School at usual times on October 1.

BAPTISMS

On May 28 at the Parish Communion:

Susannah Marie, Adrian Mark, Jonathan Stephen and Nigel David Richards, 44, St. James's Road.

On May 28, in the afternoon:

Terry Robert Luff, 46, Myrtle Road.

Linda Rosemary Thompson, 193A, Uxbridge Road.

Catherine May Wodehouse, 20, Parkside.