

A LITURGICAL CONFERENCE POETRY AND DANCE IN WORSHIP

This Conference was held in Stepney at the Royal Foundation of St. Katherine from October 26-29 1971, and was organised by Fr. Mark Tweedy of the Community of the Resurrection.

In several parts of England dance is being introduced into worship as an expression of joy and gladness, praise and adoration. I have seen it myself in Westminster Abbey. Friends of mine have seen it at a wedding in Coventry Cathedral, where the dancers led the bride up the aisle, and then the bride and bridegroom to the altar; my friends admitted that they had been sceptical beforehand, but were completely converted by this charming and delightful accompaniment to the wedding. Friends have also seen dramatic dancing incorporated into a service held in the Bristol area.

I was prepared therefore for the experiments in dancing as an expression of worship in the chapel of St. Katherine in Stepney this last week. These were led by Margaret Stevens, who directs an enthusiastic dance group in Reigate. At Evensong the Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis were danced most beautifully. A dance, slowly and reverently performed, with lighted candles held high by the dancers, was a joy to watch. The participants at the conference were drawn into the dancing at the end of each evening session, and everyone shed their inhibitions and thoroughly enjoyed themselves, expressing their joy in worship and their caring for each other in dance and mime.

Anne Ridler, whose published work is well known, led the Conference on the poetry side. She and others read her own poems, and others by Auden (the dramatic Christmas sequence "For the Time Being"); and by Gerard Manley Hopkins and by Herbert. We all participated in "Let all the world in every corner sing" with a triumphant chorus of "My God and King". It made a gorgeous innovation.

Father Kallistos Ware from the Eastern Orthodox Church spoke on worship, and Canon Jasper of Westminster, Chairman of the Liturgical Commission, summarised the present position and told us what is happening along these lines in America. We were told of a Liturgical Study Workshop which is to be held in Coventry Cathedral in early March 1972. This sounds most exciting and if anyone is interested in attending this I will gladly obtain particulars for them.

H.S.

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(As a postscript to Miss Stanton's interesting article, we would mention that we have just received notice of a book published by SCM Press at the end of October—"Leave it to the Spirit", by John Killenger, Professor of Preaching and Literature in Vanderbilt University. This is a book which apparently

develops in some details some of the points she makes. The blurb reminds us that to the world of the twentieth century, the world of Freud, Picasso, Stravinsky, technology, nuclear war, permissiveness, the Church brings a liturgy from the days of Brueghel and Dürer, crossbows and armour, witches and inquisitions and crusades. How significant is it still? The Mass or Eucharist, Dr. Killenger argues, is unsurpassable as one design for worship but, like other historic forms, it becomes oppressive when it is maintained as an exclusive mode. Old art still has power to move men, but new visions need new creativity. So, too, with worship.

The book emphasises that possibilities for new worship are tremendously rich—far richer than indicated by those who merely tamper round with older types of service. Games, the dance, drama, story, music, realization of our physical nature can bring new and authentic insight and vitality into the life of the Church.

One of the tasks and opportunities of the Church in the “seventies” is to give its worship real life, and enable it to have meaning as well as mystery to people who now find it cold and formal and boring—and to do this without lapsing into false and forced modernity or antiquated liturgiological sterility. Conferences such as those mentioned above, and suggestions in books such as this—discussed and experimented with at parish level—may help us to come to that deeper and more life-enhancing level of worship which we are seeking, and bring us into a richer fellowship with God and one another.—Ed.)

THE PARISH HALL

As often happens, the results of a great deal of work which has been going on largely unnoticed for some weeks, have now become apparent almost overnight.

The new electrical wiring and lighting, and the new heating system, came into operation within a few days of each other; and now a very good start has been made on the redecorations by the completion of the entrance hall, cloakrooms and vestibule.

This latter was accomplished entirely by volunteer labour—for three weekends a force of twenty-four men (including members of the Hampton Hill Association and the B.P. Scout Group) worked in relays to produce a striking improvement, while eight ladies not only kept them supplied with tea and coffee, but also carried out a spring clean which included scrubbing the floor of the entire building.

Other improvements include the formation of a proscenium arch, given and built entirely by the Hampton Hill Association, the installation of a new gas cooker, kindly donated, and new windows in the lavatories.

The main hall is to be decorated by professionals in February, prior to which sundry necessary repairs have to be done: meanwhile our grateful thanks to all of those who have given unstintingly of time and energy to such good effect.

J.W.G.

SOCIAL EVENTS

On Thursday December 9 there will be a Beetle Drive in Wayside at 8 p.m. Tickets, including refreshments 10p. Come and join in the fun with the chance of winning prizes.

Carol-singing is here again, and St. James's will be touring the parish on Tuesday December 21, starting at the Church at 7.30 p.m. We can do with voices of every quality and volume. As usual we will end up at Wayside with HOT coffee and mince pies at about 9 p.m.

Give thought now to the Christmas Party on January 8. Gypsy dress will be our theme, so ear-rings and headsquares will be the order of the day. Tickets, including refreshments, will be 35p adults, 20p children 14 and under.

GARDENING FOR GOD

Over the past couple of months, Y.P.F. has spent several Saturdays gardening for old people—a service that we not only enjoy but that we feel we are called to do by God. Many of our company have also spent several weekends at a large house near Hindhead converting the garden from a jungle before Toc H open it as a home for people who have just left mental hospitals. During the re-decorating of the Hall, Y.P.F. took over the job of clearing the car-park of acorns, cones and leaves. With all this going on, we have, however, still held our regular Sunday meetings, which are becoming more and more popular with average attendances of over 20 people.

M.C.E.

THE MOTHERS' UNION

The controversial subject of "Euthanasia", as presented to us by Lady Latey, on October 6, provoked some stimulating discussion. I hope it proved to the visitors present that the M.U. is deeply concerned with such vital social problems.

The Deanery Quiet Afternoon held in our Church on Monday October 25 was conducted by Sister Elizabeth May of St. Michael's Convent, Ham, the theme being "The Holy Spirit". Members from all parts of the Deanery went back to their homes feeling rested and refreshed for this period of quiet meditation. The only discordant note was provided by the numerous planes which roared overhead; was it because we were so quiet that the noise seemed so much louder than usual?

The September Jumble Sale proved a great success. Our Treasurer is more than glad about the financial success as we have some heavy calls on our finances and rely on this sale to keep us solvent!

Our meeting on Wednesday, December 1 is open to anyone who cares to come. Mrs. Haines will be speaking on her work as secretary of the Company of Compassion—a society which works for divorced women and those who are separated from their husbands. It may surprise some people to know how closely M.U. associates itself with this work.

I.V.R.

PROJECT PUMWANI

On Sunday December 5 the Rev. Peter Lapage will be coming to St. James's to tell us about the Youth Project of the Church Missionary Society. The younger members of the Society, aged 13-18, are asked each year to give their support to a specific project, and to meet a target figure.

This year's project is called "Project Pumwani" and it is hoped to raise £5,000 towards equipment for three Christian Industrial Training Centres, one at Pumwani, one at Mombasa and one for girls at Kisumu.

Pumwani is the downtown area of Nairobi. Many young boys who have come to Nairobi to find work end up here and drift into petty crime or worse, simply because they have no training and cannot get jobs. The Christian Industrial Training Centre aims to teach these boys such things as motor engineering, carpentry, signwriting, plumbing, etc., in order to enable them to get good jobs and play a useful part in society. The centre was founded in 1959 by a C.M.S. Missionary and was built by Kenyan boys themselves. Last year about 1,400 boys applied for places, but only 72 could be taken—hence the need for expansion. The Centre has about 220 boys in all. Most of the boys who complete the courses at the Centre obtain settled jobs and one or two have returned to join the staff of the Centre.

Through "Project Pumwani" youngsters in this country will be able to help unemployed teenagers in Pumwani and other areas of Kenya.

G.M.G.

POINT OF VIEW

Why can't we have "better" hymns? I imagine that there are few in the congregation who haven't at some time felt dissatisfied after the Service with some or all of the hymns, and that the Vicar has this question fired at him with a regularity which would depress a lesser man. The trouble is, of course, that many of us have a limited repertoire of old and loved favourites in which we can join with gusto, and we feel cheated if instead we are offered unfamiliar tunes allowing us only a hesitant and muted participation. On the other hand, there are others who regard these old favourites as outdated, who mutter darkly about hymns "ancient and victorian" and demand new and modern tunes (and words—let's face it—some of the words in both our books leave much to be desired!). Meantime the Vicar, who has to choose the hymns suitable to the seasons or festivals, does his best to balance these conflicting views: where alternative tunes are available the decision is usually made by the organist. From experience, I suggest that the only answer if you really want to join in and belt out every hymn is to extend your own repertoire. The hymns for any service are always chosen in time for the preceding Monday choir practice which gives ample time to learn them if you want. As to whether there

should be more old favourites or more new tunes, it seems to me that our two books offer a pretty fair selection and that on the whole, we get an even balance between the reactionary and progressive viewpoints.

One last point—if the tune which you so dislike is really pleasing somebody else, that should ease the pains—shouldn't it?

J.W.G.

PARISH HALL PIANO

A party of seven volunteers meeting one evening in St. James's Road and setting off in a large builders' lorry followed by a getaway (?) car might well have been the promising start of a T.V. serial. The collection of equipment in the lorry indicated heavy work ahead but the expedition was quite innocent. Acting on information given by Mrs. Melville, the outing was to collect a piano from a school in Heston for use in the renovated Parish Hall.

The appeal in last month's magazine is still open, however, since a second piano would be very welcome. If any reader knows of one in good condition, and which has been regularly tuned, for sale or as a gift, any member of the Hall Management Committee or the writer would be pleased to hear about it, and doubtless the seven volunteers will again be willing to do the necessary.

R.J.C.D.

CHURCH MUSIC

The special music planned for October 31 has now been postponed until December 12 at Evensong, owing to a change of soloists. However, the postponement has enabled us to extend the music which will now comprise the whole of part III of Handel's "The Messiah".

We urgently need more ladies and gentlemen to augment the choir, so if you profess to be a music-lover now is your opportunity to demonstrate it. Remember we are all amateurs so please do not let shyness prevent you from attending the augmented choir practice at 8.30 p.m. on Friday in the Vestry.

R.J.C.D.

BELATED GREETINGS . . .

(But they kept it so quiet, we didn't know about it until the day itself) . . . and hearty good wishes to **our** Mr. and Mrs. Thompson of Burton's Road, on the celebration of their golden wedding anniversary. We do not need to repeat here what the local press has so admirably and fully said, but we would just express our own joy and thanksgiving and pride in having such a splendid and generous couple in our midst.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

November

- 19 10.00 p.m. Ecumenical all-night Youth Vigil in Southwark: "Awake on Planet Earth".
- 21 STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY.
- 22 7.30 p.m. for 8.00 p.m. STEWARDSHIP PARISH SUPPER at York House (by invitation).
- 23 10.30 a.m. Editorial Board (63 Park Road); Deanery Synod (All Hallows, Twickenham).
- 30 St. Andrew's Day: 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion; 6.30 p.m. Tuesday Club: Theatre Outing.

December

- 1 2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union—Mrs. Haines: "The Company of Compassion" (W).
- 3 8.00 p.m. Liturgical Committee (68 Park Road).
- 4 3.00 p.m. Old people's monthly Party (H).
- 5 6.30 p.m. The Reverend Peter Laplage of CMS preaches at Evensong, and speaks at a Parish Meeting at Wayside after the service.
- 8 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion in St. Anne's Chapel (L.E.H.S.).
- 9 8.00 p.m. Beetle Drive (W).
- 11 2.30 p.m. Young People's Fellowship: Advent Fair and Sale of Christmas Presents (H).
- 12 N.B. No service at 8.00 a.m.; 9.30 a.m. CONFIRMATION AND PARISH COMMUNION, followed by the usual light refreshments at Wayside; 6.30 p.m. Evensong, followed by Part 3 of HANDEL'S "THE MESSIAH".
- 14 8.00 p.m. Tuesday Club—Advent Party (W).
- 21 St. Thomas's Day: 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion; 7.30 p.m. Parish Carol-Singing.

BAPTISMS

September

- 6 Sophie Charlotte Rendall, 39 Park Road, Teddington.
- 24 Sophia Alice Horenz, 32 Longford Close.
Simon James Lambert, 1 Upper Lodge, Bushy Park.
Natalie Clare Moore, 52 Rectory Grove.
Jason Daniel Frank and David John Cruddas Saunders, 213 Hampton Road, Twickenham.

MARRIAGES

October

- 9 Alexander Donald Stewart to Alexandra Johnson.
- 23 Michael Victor Arthur Cross to Jacqueline Georgina Gilby.

BURIAL

October

- 14 Margaret Davey, 5 Camps House, Edward Road, aged 73 years (at Teddington Cemetery).