

## THE PATTERN OF SUNDAY WORSHIP - 6

We have seen that in the sixteenth century the celebration of the Holy Communion became infrequent, because people would not give in their names as intending to communicate the day before. But the Reformers insisted that whatever happened, at least part of the service should be read every Sunday - and this part was to be to the end of the Prayer for the Church Militant, then one or two collects and the Blessing. In our own time this form of service has been generally known as the 'Ante-Communion'. So, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, the Sunday services in an ordinary parish church came to be - Matins at about 06.00, Litany and Ante-Communion and Sermon at 08.00 or 09.00, Evensong at 15.00 or 16.00. The full service would be read four times in the year - Easter, Pentecost and Christmas, and the other occasion would usually be that of the church's own patronal festival, when the village had its annual feast and fair.

What effect did this scarcity of celebration have on ordinary Christians? There are some who think that the practice was a good one, in that it removed the supposed danger of 'undue familiarity with the sacrament', and must have made people take it far more seriously and not as a matter of course. Those who take this view commend the example of Presbyterian Scotland, where the four 'Communion Seasons' are (or used to be) times of great solemnity and moral and spiritual earnestness. Others think that the withdrawal of the Holy Communion from the eyes and the knowledge of most people meant that it ceased to be valued and revered, and came to be looked on as a comparatively unimportant rite, like the Churching of Women. This view is borne out by the fact that in many eighteenth century Prayer Books, everything after the Prayer for the Church Militant is printed in very small type, as if to symbolise its insignificance! So it would seem that it was unfamiliarity rather than familiarity which bred, if not contempt, at least disregard. However, the principal service on every Sunday, at which the Sermon was preached, was still the Mass, even though much mutilated; and Queen Elizabeth had certainly no intention of putting Matins into its place. The reasons why Matins did become so prominent in the Church will be considered in our next instalment.

(to be continued)

### RIDE! RIDE!

Nearly forty people from St. James's went by coach and car to the Westminster Theatre on Wednesday June 30 to see the new musical Ride! Ride! based on the life of the great Methodist preacher John Wesley. The seats had had to be booked as early as February and we had been waiting with some impatience ever since.

What did we expect to see? A rather tasteless modern musical with a veneer of religion, an amateurish repertory show, or a crashingly dull two hours? We would all have our particular views on the show but we would generally agree it was none of these. It was, in fact, an engrossing evening's entertainment with much spiritual meaning. The story and lyrics were by Alan Thornhill, well-known for his earlier artistic connections with Moral Re-armament, the music was by Penelope Thwaites, now making a wide name for herself in both classical and musical revue spheres. The director was none other than Peter Coe, who has over the years produced Oliver, Lock Up Your Daughters and Pickwick. The cast were all high-class professionals who combined great dramatic appeal with considerable musical talents. The sets, lighting and costumes were of an extremely high standard.

The show began with a compelling monologue by John Wesley himself, a slightly stooping white-haired old man thinking back on his 88th birthday at his life's experiences. What came through persistently throughout the next two hours was the great humility and love of the founder of Methodism for his fellow-men, whether they were the poor in the street, or their foolish erring masters in the proto-industrial society of the eighteenth century. He even had compassion for those in the Established Church, like the Rev. Henry Hobart, who had lost their evangelical zeal in the morass of patronage and life among the wealthy. Some of the scenes were repugnant, but very perceptive of the circumstances of the time - the quack doctors making an evil living out of the ignorance of their clients, the hard life on the streets, in the coal mines, and very often, in the mad-house. And through all, Wesley's common Christianity shines out. It was an engrossing evening which will leave lasting memories for those who saw this fine production.

R.L.B.

### **TWICKEREE 1976 and ALL THAT**

The park was restive yet orderly and business-like as the sun blazed down. The scouts' lines were alike in neatness, but each had an individual touch - mascots, decoration, a revolving entrance door at 3rd Hampton Hill!

We clustered in the shade at the opening ceremony. Not so lucky the scouts and cubs broiled in the sun - standing still and thinking of England and iced lollies. The speeches were mercifully short, then the demonstrations got under way.

I wandered off to look at the pageant preparations. Our lot were roundheads and cavaliers. What a gathering! Here was a cavalier, every inch an aristocrat from his plumed hat to his gym-shoes. My own roundhead needed a haircut even by seventeenth-century standards. What was that Crusader doing in our mob.....?

Back to the arena at 16.30 to see the end of a breeches-buoy rescue from the dreaded Marble Hill coast. Then the cubs' historical pageant. Vikings anticipating the Common Market, Harold's bad luck at Hastings, Bruce terrorizing the English with a very nasty spider, Hampton Court Palace erected in 30 seconds flat, ghastly execution of queens and elocution of poetry, then the 3rd Hampton Hill civil war scene - shrieks of the wounded and dying, and the savage and brutal clangour of cold cardboard.

It was a great occasion, even if the sun joined in too enthusiastically. On behalf of all scout and cub-scout parents I would like to say "thank you" to the organisers, in particular to Michael Childs and his scout-leaders for all the time and effort they spend so unstintingly on our children.

R.W. Wilde.

### **REQUIRED READING**

If it had been nothing more it would have been an excellent lesson in reading development: reading between the lines. And it was much more than that.

Ostensibly it was a "thank-you" coffee evening for all Christian Aid helpers in Hampton and Sunbury, and a pleasant occasion when people could relax and renew acquaintances. Hannah Stanton had very kindly invited us to her garden where we were regaled with coffee and strewn with mulberries spilling down from the tree.

But what about the reading? We had Lindy Archbell as our speaker, our local organiser. She used a novel way of helping us to find out a good deal about the workings of Christian Aid. We split into groups and were handed copies of actual requests for aid received last year. One was for a hospital in Kerala, S. India, and the other for a pilot project in build concrete boats in the Sudan. We considered the respective merits of the requests. The reading and discussion produced many thoughtful questions: priorities, financial viabilities, the relevance of local geography and conditions, intermediate technology and the way that Christian Aid has to eke out its money from year to year. The discussion was most lively and we all felt that we had learned much in a refreshing way.

We were disturbed to learn from Lindy that many organisations collecting in Christian Aid week have not sent in their money even by September (Hampton and Sunbury honorable exceptions of course). This tardiness causes some difficulty to Christian Aid which needs to have a steady flow of cash in order to meet its targets satisfactorily.

We went home, grateful for the hospitality and with some new understanding of the problems and activities of Christian Aid.

J.H.R.

### THE CHURCHYARD

"Mad dogs and Englishment" might have been written for this year's mass-attack - were those who stayed away in fact Cowards? Extended from one week to two, then to three in the hope that the heat might abate, complete clearance became less likely as enthusiasm and energy alike were sapped by day after day of blazing sun.

In this fourth week, it is at last cooler, and one or two hardy souls are returning to the task, now nine-tenths done. To them and to all who literally sweated it out for so long, many thanks.

### COMING SOCIAL EVENTS

With the ending of the holidays the new social season at St. James's is approaching. The Social Committee has been hard at it trying to devise events which will attract a wide following in the parish. Some of our plans, although exciting, must unfortunately remain undisclosed for the time being. However, some impending events can be announced now, as follows:-

**Thursday September 30** Seymour Harris will be presiding as Priest for the first time at a communion service in St. James's at 7.45 p.m. His many friends in the Church will ensure that this will be a very full gathering. Immediately after the service there will be an "alfresco" social and reception on the churchyard lawn, or if wet, in the church itself.

**Sunday October 10 Harvest Tea.** As announced in the July magazine, there is to be an innovation this year as regards harvest celebrations, which will not take place on a weekday but immediately following the Sunday 4.30 p.m. Welcome Service. It will start at 6.30 p.m. in the Parish Hall, School Road, and be in the form of a Hot Buffet Tea. A dramatic rendering has been promised.....

**Saturday November 6 Fireworks at Laurel Dene.** Fireworks are not only expensive these days, they are dangerous. Our popular Fireworks Party will give your family a display you could never afford, with refreshments included and in safety for a comparatively small sum. It's always a wonderful family event. Entrance by ticket only, though!

Would you like another dance, an evening of whist, or a film show? Let the Social Committee know of your secret wishes and we will see what we can do.

R.L.B.

### **WHITSUN OFFERING**

We would like to thank all those who contributed so generously to the Whitsun offering. It was a very pleasant surprise when we received the cheque, and we are most grateful for this appreciation of what is to us a most joyful ministry in the parish.

Seymour and Dawn Harris.

### **PARISH OUTING TO BEAULIEU**

Parish summer outings must always be somewhat of a lottery. They are arranged months ahead of the weather forecast and we then live in hope until the actual day. So over the years veterans regale newcomers with epic tales of how we survived the monsoon at Rochester or coped with arctic blizzards on the Thames in June. But, oh, July 1976! Tropical sunshine all the way to Beaulieu and when, indeed, we did have a few spots of rain at Bucklers Hard, it was welcomed enthusiastically; gardeners were heard to hope fervently that it was also raining in Hampton Hill (it wasn't) and some of us even dawdled on our way back to the coach to enjoy the now unaccustomed pleasure of getting wet.

It was a lovely day! Arrived at the estate we wandered off in groups to do our own thing. My little group found a shady niche in the cloisters of the old Abbey ruins and had lunch to the sounds of canned monastic chanting that was more pleasant than obtrusive. Later we followed some young electricians putting up wiring for amplifying equipment and were led to a Europe-flavoured folk-dance exhibition on the lawns in front of the Great House, and further along, in another part of the grounds, bumped into an Elizabethan drama with audience participation. We had benefitted by accidentally picking the weekend of the local Arts festival, with many of its performances taking place in the grounds.

In fact there was something for everyone: model railway, ancient transport to look at or ride on, kitchen produce. My own special picture for the memory album of a hot summer's day will probably be the distant view of the village behind the foreground of a cool lake and in the middle distance two cormorants, motionlessly poised on wooden posts watching for a fish-dinner. We walked under shady trees along the lake's border and gratefully absorbed the peace.

As usual the organisation was superb, whether it was for dispensing refreshments on the way or getting us back home on the dot of 7.30 p.m.  
C.H.B.

### **Y.P.F. ADVENTURE FIRST-HAND**

As this was our first holiday we were unsure what to expect. The twelve of us climbed into the overladen minibus and immediately went back to the garage for a bit of maintenance (we had trouble with the mudguards!) After a successful journey up with only one mishap (we had to buy a tow rope to secure the luggages) we arrived at the Y.M.C.A. hostel in Teesdale.

Next day we went to the quaint little church at Romaldkirk and afterwards went for a break-in walk. The talk in the evening made many of us a little apprehensive as to how the rest of the holiday would go since the discussion became a little heated.

Monday was overcast, but we still went on an attractive walk and returned to an appetizing meal of vegetable soup, spaghetti bolognaise, fruit salad and tadpoles in a local French restaurant. That night was full of pranks in the other dorm.

On Wednesday, the local vicar came to give us communion but, forgetting his prayer book, he returned on Thursday to give communion before his evening talk. After the communion, he took his hat and coat and left - to our horror! Martin gave us an excellent makeshift talk. Previously that day, Chris Reed won the stream-jumping competition by landing in the middle.

During the holiday there were rumours galore about a legless monk who haunted the hostel.

The scenery throughout was magnificent, but unfortunately on Saturday we had to come home. We both enjoyed the holiday very much.  
L.W. and S.W.

### PROPER CANTICLES?

"Why don't we have proper canticles any more?" asked a member of the congregation indignantly after a recent Evensong. I gave a brief explanation which was irately brushed aside, so I think that a longer one is perhaps called for, as there may be others who share these feelings of grievance and outrage.

Let us begin by clearing the ground. The name 'canticle' (literally 'little song') is given to scriptural hymns other than psalms, and the Series 2 alternatives are solidly scriptural and indeed great hymns of worship and praise. In the Middle Ages, far more passages of Scripture were sung than we sing now, and these included the songs of Moses, Hannah, Isaiah, and the Prayer of Hezekiah. So there is no doubt at all that the canticles we are now free to use on Sundays - 'Great and wonderful', 'Worthy art thou', and the Easter Anthems, as well as the others which we use on weekdays, are in the fullest possible sense 'proper' canticles (*except for one or two, like the Te Deum, which are ancient Christian hymns*).

But I think it was the unfamiliarity rather than the supposed impropriety that my questioner was really challenging. And we do have to keep a balance between the new and the old, the familiar and the unfamiliar. So in the course of a whole year we do sing the old familiar canticles, the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, more often than their alternatives. But these latter, with their thanksgivings for the Easter victory, and their ascriptions of praise to God's glory, are more appropriate for certain seasons of the Church's year, and so we use them frequently at these times.

It is salutary exercise for all of us from time to time to go deeply into the meaning of the words we sing, which may by over-frequent use have lost their cutting-edge, and then determine how far we must take them literally or metaphorically. I remember how this was brought home to me years ago at Mansfield, where it had become the custom to end the Eucharist with the singing of the Nunc Dimittis. But a young critic made us think again about the rightness of this. 'I don't want' he said 'to ask the Lord to let me snuff it every time I receive Communion. It was all right for old Simeon - he had done a good life's work and had had his reward. But I don't want to fade away in peace or otherwise, but go out and do something about it'. When this is pointed out, one can see how a canticle can be misused: and we see

how much more appropriate are the words of the Series 3 prayer: 'May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world'.

## **DIOCESAN FINANCE AND THE CHURCH'S MISSION**

The Bishop of London has issued a long paper on this subject, which is to be discussed in detail in the next few months by Church Councils and Deanery and Diocesan Synods. This is something which concerns us all and which we do well to think about, and we print here the first and the last two of the Bishop's sixteen points:

1. I presume that we can take three premises as basic to our discussion.  
i Our Christian belief that everything created by God is good and can be used by man for God's glory means that we cannot take a cavalier attitude towards money or afford to be 'other-worldly' about it. We must not take the line that the church should be indifferent to money. We cannot pretend that we do not understand it, and do not want to.

Money is an essential agency of the work of mission, and it is our duty to ensure that it will serve to this end.

ii It would seem to be a general rule that people value the things that they work for and for which they have to pay, while they take for granted the things that are provided for them without any effort or sacrifice on their part.

Owing to the generosity of benefactors in the past the Church of England has, up till now, been able largely to provide for the clergy and church workers from its accumulated funds and has had to make only minimal demands on the laity for clergy stipends.

Is this, one feels bound to ask, perhaps the reason why we do not take the mission of the church as seriously as we should; and may it not be that as we increasingly accept responsibility for the financial obligations of membership of the church, so we shall come to value more the spiritual issues which they represent?

iii We have a responsibility to help one another, and within the Christian family the strong are under an obligation to help the weak. But within the life of the church this interdependence must depend on the willing and unselfish acceptance by all of the duty to support one another. The state can demand that each citizen shall pay taxes so that the welfare of all may be financed, and punish those who do not pay. The church cannot use coercion of this nature. It relies on the voluntary and sacrificial giving of all - individuals, parishes, dioceses - who see the need to help others and who readily and joyfully accept the Christian obligation to do so. No one in the church can be forced to help others. But all should put the well-being of others before their own, and be ready freely to give in order that no one many lack what he needs.

15. This paper must end by re-emphasizing the third premise with which it started. The diocese is not, and should not be regarded as, a remote body which extracts large sums of money from parishes to be spent in some remote way. The diocese is the family of God in a particular area, and one of its responsibilities is to hold the parishes together in a unity which enables them to help one another. This interdependence cannot be forced upon parishes unwilling to accept it. Nevertheless the needs of the diocese are assessed and decided upon only after careful examination by bodies representative of all its constituent parts. The diocese is therefore entitled to expect a ready response from the parishes, especially from those which, often for historical reasons, are more affluent than others.

16. Indeed the Church of England is largely the victim of its past history. It has been so generously endowed in the past that it has, unknown to itself, been living for centuries in a state of spiritual luxury, and has been cushioned from facing the consequences of its widespread pastoral oversight. In other parts of the Anglican Communion, where endowments have been non-existent, church people have never known a state of affairs other than that they must pay for their spiritual privileges and support others, or go without. The Church of England is now facing the consequences of its indifference to financial policy in the past. It is not for us to parcel out blame to our forefathers, for they were the children of their time. But it is for us to listen to what God is saying to us through the crisis which has descended upon us, and if we put our house in order we shall be able to face the future with confidence because we have heard God's voice and are trying to be obedient to it.

### SOME DATES TO NOTE

#### August

- 10 20.00 Wayside Monday Centre Management Group (19 St. James's Road)
- 11 07.30 Holy Communion
- 16 10.30 Editorial Board (21 St. James's Road)
- 17 20.00 Prayer Meeting (75 Burton's Road)
- 18 07.30 Holy Communion
- 24 SAINT BATHOLOMEW: 07.30 Holy Communion
- 26 20.00 Prayer Meeting (69 St. James's Avenue)
- 31 BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST: 07.30 Holy Communion;  
20.00 Prayer Meeting (75 Burton's Road)

#### September

- 7 19.45 Wayside Monday Centre Training Session (19 St. James's Road)
- 20.00 Adult Confirmation Group Meetings begin again (69 St. James's Avenue)
- 8 20.00 Stewardship Committee (106 Park Road)
- 9 20.00 House Study Group begins fortnightly meetings again (68 Park Road)
- 12 All departments of Sunday School hope to reopen.
- 15 20.00 Liturgical Committee (63 Park Road)

Senior members of the congregation lead the service at Laurel Dene at 17.15 on August 22 and members of YPF on August 29.

**Stop Press:** Other dates just arranged .....

- September 2 20.00 Parochial Church Council (W)
- September 8 14.30 Mothers' Union Branch Meeting (W)

## **BAPTISMS**

June

27

Rebecca Elizabeth Chalkley, 130. High Street.

Giles Christopher and Justin Spencer Wadsley, 28, Longford Close

Richard Simon Per-Andreas Denniston, 12, Wilcox Road

(previously baptised in hospital - received into the Church)

## **CREMATIONS**

June

27

Ernest William Murcott, 12, Fitz Wygram Close, aged 84 years

(at South-West Middlesex Crematorium)

July

8

James Allen, 149, Uxbridge Road, aged 72 years

(at Kingston Crematorium)