

One of the lasting impressions so far of the series of talks given to the Hampton Council of Churches is of the manner in which Christian witness in hostile surroundings has left an indelible mark on the influential people in an area. It has highlighted the selfishness of the 'Powers that Be', caused them to rethink their position and given immense hope to the oppressed. I have no doubt that life is stirring in a way that we cannot imagine.

In South America, for instance, the speaker was only here because his work had provoked opposition and he had come home while it was still safe and he was still alive. The education of the mass of illiterate people was a threat to those currently in power and 'grinding the faces of the poor'. In Southern India the Christian witness is to equality of land and payment. For years the landowners have been able to get away without paying their workers even the statutory minimum wage. Now, by encouraging people to insist on their legal rights, the standard of life is getting better all the time for millions of poor people. Everyone benefits. Health is better, more food is produced, social unrest is less frequent. In Iran, where things are still very difficult and dangerous, the liberal-minded are being given hope that there can be a return to a more just society in western terms. Undoubtedly Christianity is an integral, if small, part of Iran and can and does influence more people than its numbers would suggest.

Which brings us to our own publication, 'The Spire'. As you know we spent some time discussing its content, its format, its cost and its effectiveness after Evensong on 9th October. A good number of people joined in the debate which ranged far and wide. Some felt that it was 'a very good read'. Others were less sure. Did it reach out? Did it inform? Did it record the local life of the parish? Was it valued? And if so by whom? Some of the answers are beginning to come in through the response to the financial appeal. Although we did not ask for letters or comments they are nevertheless being sent in with the contributions. And there have been expressions of great confidence and gratitude for 'The Spire'. It has reflected a caring and go-ahead parish, it has widened people's horizons, it has been interesting. Undoubtedly it would be missed by many if it ceased publication and probably it would be most missed by those who are not able for a variety of reasons to worship regularly. I am not saying that it is influencing the selfish 'Powers that Be' in Hampton Hill! I don't know that there are any. But it is certainly reaching and being read and received in all parts of the parish and beyond by a wide range of people, many of whom we do not probably know. The message seems to be that we keep going realising that what it says may be reaching surprising places far beyond our imagining, even if it is not always perfect.

That goes for the discipleship of the individual too. Who knows whom we shall bring to a knowledge and faith in Christ by our own quiet attempts to live out the life of the Gospel in our own insignificant corner of the community?

HAMPTON COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AUTUMN LECTURES – No. 2

What it means to be a Christian in South India

On Monday 3rd October we were treated to an informative and enlightening talk by Mr. Murdoch McKenzie who was a presbyter in the Church of South India from 1966 to 1978, having been ordained in India.

In his introduction he gave some background information. That the present population of India is 683 million, predominantly Hindu, and contains 20 million Christians; of these 12 million are Roman Catholic and 3 million Eastern Orthodox. Of the remaining sects, those from Great Britain: Church of England and the Free Churches, combined 36 years ago to form the C.S.I.

This very lively Church, centred in Madras, puts the average British churchgoer to shame. Its membership of 2 million is double that of 35 years ago. Split into 11000 congregations it supports or runs 70 hospitals, including the famous Velour hospital, 110 health centres, 30 colleges, 214 secondary and 1803 primary schools.

During part of his time in India Mr. McKenzie was in charge of the parish of St. Andrew in Madras, unusually a stone built church, modelled on St. Martin's in the Fields, as seen on one of the slides. We caught two glimpses of church activity, the organist Mr. Handel Manual auctioning the proceeds of the harvest festival, and a notice of a cycle rally as part of the national 'keep fit' movement. A more important commitment of the parish, however, was towards improving the level of education and living standards of some of the villages just outside Madras. In many instances the village and land used by the villagers were owned by a landlord on a sort of feudal basis. They were often paid well below the state minimum rate and were kept in a state of ignorance.

The efforts of the parish were greatly helped by 4 social workers which it maintained. They provided know-how and material help to enable villagers to manufacture goods for sale; we saw pictures of them making baskets and of building a brick kiln (effectively operated during windy periods). Improved education was achieved by contributing sufficient money to attract government subsidies to build schools (though only one-roofed) and by providing village television sets (the education programmes being particularly welcomed by the illiterates). Wells were also provided so that, for instance, when the ponds dried up in the spring after the autumn monsoon (assuming it had broken), the women and children only had to go a quarter of a mile instead of over 3 miles for water. As part of the struggle against the landlords they even organised industrial action at harvest time.

Copies of the monthly diocesan magazine were shown and these proved to be substantial and informative. They were very English on the surface but treated such un-English subjects as continuous drought, police brutality and dowry deaths. Mr. McKenzie found that the amalgamation of the churches into the C.S.I. was quite the natural thing and unwillingly came back to the divisions which exist in England.

I am sure I speak for all present in saying that we were greatly heartened by this effective and attractive example of Christian witness in the immense Indian subcontinent.

David Taylor

As an illustration of village life in Southern India here is an extract from an article in the Traidcraft catalogue:

The wife's day begins at 3am well before dawn. To begin her daily chores she sweeps the area in front of the house and sometimes renews the cow-dung surface which makes it smooth and clean. Then she cleans all the pots and pans for use that day with ash from the fire and a piece of coconut husk as a scourer. At 5am she will call the family. Their breakfast dish is known as 'kulu'; it is what millions of poor people subsist on. To make it, you pound grains of the millet family (which are quite nutritious) and then steep them in cold water for 8 hours. Then you cook the slightly fermented mixture with a little salt and leave it overnight. Most poor people in Tamil Nadu take this for breakfast and carry some out to work for lunch in the fields, like this lady who goes off at 6am when it is rice-harvest time. While the children get ready for school, father fetches some grass for the family goat in a nearby field. All the children get a mid-day meal at school. Father sets off for work at our batik workshop at 7.40am, bringing the youngest daughter to the nursery school run by our society.

Mother gets home about 4.30pm bringing her daily wages (so many measurers of rice) and picking up a few paise worth of vegetables from the roadside stalls in the village. She lights the wood stove and cooks the evening meal: they can't afford to eat rice every day, and usually make a porridge from the locally-available millets and eat this with a lentil sauce containing onions, chillies and a few vegetables.

When mother has no field work and cannot find any other casual work (for which she will be paid the normal woman's wage of Rs3.50 per day, when rice is now more than Rs4.00 per kilo) she goes off to pick up firewood in the fields and hills around. Once a week she takes the children to the river and they all have a bath and wash their clothes there, beating them out on the stones and spreading them in the sun to dry. Water for drinking and household use is available at a standpipe near the house; when there is no current (which is frequently the case) a handpump a little further off supplies the area.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Harvest Festivals seem to be a natural follow-on to the end of the main growing season, and the conclusion of another harvest. A natural opportunity for celebration after the completion of much hard work. The old pagan roots of this festival show through, but the Christian emphasis should always be on the thanking of God and the sharing of the produce.

Certainly Alan Taylor brought this quality out in the service. The congregation was swelled by many families, and a good turn-out of Brownies and Cubs. Their own involvement, both Brownies and Cubs, helped join everybody together; assisted no doubt by well-loved and rousing hymns.

The church was beautifully decorated with a great variety of flowers most ably arranged. Not only does it glorify God, but flowers and natural produce concentrate our minds on the enormity of His Gift to us.

The gifts and produce offered varied widely. Today it is obviously just as relevant to give tinned produce as the previously traditional varieties. All the offerings were gathered together, sorted out and distributed the following morning, mainly among the elderly or infirm members of the parish.

Finally it is good to remember that He is also with us and just as accessible in times of less obvious bounty. Habakkuk Chapter 3, verses 17,18 help us to remember:

Though the fig tree do not blossom,
nor fruit be on the vines,
the produce of the olive fail
and the fields yield no food,
the flock be cut off from the fold
and there be no herd in the stalls,
yet will I rejoice in the Lord,
I will joy in the God of my salvation. (RSV)

Thank you everybody who arranged, helped, gave, attended or thought. It was worth it!

Name supplied

HARVEST HOME SUPPER

Contrast is one of the joys of life and what a contrast it was after my last three months to be amongst my friends of St. James's again in party mood.

From the friendly smiling welcome by Nicholas and Susan Chubb to the final act of friendship when Leslie and Jamie Mortimer gave us a lift home the whole evening went with a bubbling swing.

The members of the Catering Committee, I think excelled themselves. My new appetite appreciated the numerous different flavours on my plate. Everything on the tables looked exotic, even the perfectly cooked potatoes, then the blackberry pies, ice cream and coffee or tea.

After that, in a well fed glow, we gathered our chairs nearer to the stage and enjoyed some simple fun. The Youth Club cheered us with their short sketches, Pat Young and Huw Taylor with amusing poetry, and the Choir with music as well as light hearted entertainment.

But before this entertainment started the Vicar made a thank you speech on our behalf to Bill Robinson on his retirement from the many years of service, as Churchwarden and Treasurer, that he has given to St. James. Mr. and Mrs. Robinson were then given a framed painting of their favourite holiday place in the Isle of Wight and a cheque which gave Bill an opportunity for some of his usual humourous remarks considering how he might spend it. A basket of flowers was passed to Mrs. Robinson and everyone clapped heartily this popular couple.

I cannot conclude without mentioning the appearance of the Hall. It is so clean and so cheerful and so colourful. I definitely approved of the colour scheme and the ceiling, the floor and the curtains. It really is a good setting now for the hard work which goes into these social evenings. On behalf of everyone there I would like to say "Thank You for working so hard, so efficiently and so unobtrusively for our enjoyment".

Another Harvest safely gathered in – for us. But Nicholas in his chosen Grace before our festive supper reminded us that it is not so with all people.

For food in a world where – many walk in hunger;
For faith in a world where – many walk in fear;
For friends in a world where – many walk alone;
We give you humble thanks O Lord.

Alison Thompson

This is the text of Tom Stanton's statement in court in Johannesburg on 7th September, 1983.

Community of the Resurrection, Saint Peter's Priory,
P.O. Box 49027, Rosettenville 2130, Johannesburg.

Your Worship, I am a member of the Community of the Resurrection, which is an Anglican Order. We have been living and working in South Africa for nearly 80 years. We live together in obedience to a Rule, giving priority to prayer and worship, and we serve the Church in various ways according to our gifts and resources. In the Rule of this Community there is a sentence: 'Nothing shall be finally required of any brother which violates his conscience'. I believe that to make a statement, or give any evidence against Carl Niehaus would violate my conscience.

Carl Niehaus has stayed at our Priory in Rosettenville occasionally. We value our contact with him especially because he is a member of the Dutch Reformed Church. I can say that he is my friend, though in fact I don't know him very well. I have no idea what he has done or is supposed to have done, to warrant this charge. But I believe in him; I believe that he is concerned to bring about a more just ordering of society than exists here at present. I would wish to support him in this; to give evidence for the State in their case against this young man would be a thing of which I would be deeply ashamed for the rest of my life. It seems to me that it would be a form of betrayal and I cannot do it.

I do not mean to be contemptuous of the Court, and I do not wish to impede the course of justice. I believe that the police in fact already have the information which they want me to give on oath. I am told that I shall go to jail, and that going to jail will be an empty gesture, — that it will do no good. Your Worship, I would rather live in jail as a result of an empty gesture made in good faith, than outside it with a guilty conscience of having said or done anything to further the conviction of this young man.

T. Stanton

MEDITATION

Men seek to escape Jesus, fearing that He will ask too much of them. They cannot grasp that when Jesus meets man in the way He is the great giver, and for every demand acquiesced to by man, He gives of Himself power, knowledge, peace according to His will for that man.

Place your trust in the world, and Satan will find you; place your trust in Jesus and you will find God.

The Lord knows that men are human and fallible; give that humanity and fallibility to Jesus for His blessing and be as water changed to wine in communion with God. Jesus calls us to be, with Him, Sons of God: how this comes about is by seeking to know the Father and the Son and for this purpose we have the Holy Spirit to abide in us to overcome humanity and fallibility and to glorify us for Christ's name's sake.

"Only believe and you shall see that Christ is all in all to thee".

M.O.

WAYSIDER URGENTLY NEEDS — someone to do 2 hours' cleaning a week, either on a permanent or temporary basis. Usual rates. For more details contact Roma Bridges, 979 6865.

SCOUT GROUP NEWS

AUCTION held on 24th September last was a great success, well over 100 people attended and £320 was added to our funds. As stated in the "Surrey Comet" we still have a long way to go before we have raised enough money to install electricity and water in our new Headquarters.

HARVEST FESTIVAL: It was pleasing to see so many parents at the service, and the Cubs of Brown Pack are to be congratulated on their little "rural harvest scene" of John Barleycorn.

DISTRICT PROWL: It was unfortunate this annual event coincided with our Harvest Festival. This is a 21 mile hike with check-points about every 3 miles, where some scouting task has to be carried out i.e. first-aid, pioneering, knotting, etc., also a knowledge of mapping and compass is essential. The area covered was around Shere and Peaslake in Surrey. We had 5 teams taking part and one led by Sampson Low gained 2nd place, another came 6th.

On Monday, October 3rd District Commissioner, John Donaldson visited Brown Pack and presented Margaret Hillman with her Warrant as Assistant Cub Scout Leader.

Michael J. Childs

A CAROL SINGING EVENING

On Tuesday December 20th, we shall be holding an evening of "Carol-Singing for All" in church at 7.30pm. This is *not* a Service — but Community Carol Singing with orchestral accompaniment — and probably an orchestral piece to listen to.

There will be a rehearsal for Orchestra (including descant recorders) on Sunday evening (December 18th) in church at 7.30pm. Would instrumentalists please bring a music stand as well as your instrument. Please give in your names (and instrument) at the beginning of December. Whether you play trombone or violin, and whether you are an experienced orchestral player or just a near beginner (I think you should be of at least 2 years playing), please join us and enjoy Christmas music.

Do come along and sing — I have arranged these evenings (which have always been much enjoyed) for many years, in a variety of communities.

Olive Hayward

The Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity is about to consider the payment of grants for the year 1984 and, accordingly, persons who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress are invited to make application by the 31st December, 1983 on a form to be obtained from, and returned to, the Vicarage. Other persons and local associations/societies are kindly asked to bring this matter to the notice of those whom they consider might qualify for assistance.

RE-ORDERING OF THE CHURCH

In the last edition of The Spire we promised you a rather fuller description than was then possible of how the Parochial Church Council was applying for permission to alter the interior of the church building to improve hearing and seeing what was going on. How often have people said 'I couldn't hear what he/she was saying' or 'of course I couldn't see properly'. This has been a problem at St. James's for years and we are making a two-pronged attack which should go a long way to solving the problems. The ideas we have proposed have been approved by our architect and the Diocesan Advisory Committee which will ensure that future generations will not be able to blame us for indiscriminate alteration. First, we are installing a system of microphones and speakers (which can be added to later if need be) to help make all readers' or talkers' voices heard in all parts of the church. Secondly, we are extending the chancel floor by about twelve feet and in order to achieve this we are removing some of the pews in the nave and the north aisle. Part of this dais will be raisable to improve visibility still further. The improvement from the north aisle will be dramatic. Consequently we are having to re-organise some of the heating pipework to avoid tripping over exposed pipes as at present. We should not lose any effective heat since at the same time we are converting the boiler to gas which should make the operation of the system both more flexible and cheaper to run. We hope to have the heating alterations completed by Christmas and the other work done early in the New Year.

BIBLE SUNDAY

Sunday 4th December is celebrated in many Churches as Bible Sunday, one day in the year when we consider in more depth than usual the Bible and what it means not only to us but to many millions of people throughout the world.

To mark this event there will be a special display in the Church of Bibles and Bible Study Notes for people to look at and buy, or order. In recent years there has been an explosion in the publishing of new Bibles, does your old faithful need replacing, or perhaps a new version for one of your Godchildren would make a very acceptable gift for Christmas?

Come and look and remember how lucky we are to have such a wide choice when many people throughout the world long for a Bible of their own in a language they can understand.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING – WITH A DIFFERENCE

You could pick up a few very attractive and useful Christmas gifts and at the same time spend your money in a charitable way if you come to Wayside at 20.00 on Tuesday 22nd November. There is going to be a Traidcraft sale where you can choose from a great variety of handmade items, many of them quite inexpensive: batik, woodwork, basketware, jigsaws, stationery and many others, as well as coffee and tea. All these things are made by poor Third World communities where they often provide a vital means of income – and they are sold here through Traidcraft, a Christian alternative trading organisation. Many of the projects whose goods you can buy here are initiated or run by Christian Aid. Do come and support some of the poorest people of this world.

MOTHERS UNION

On October 5th Miss Hewson gave a most interesting talk on Sri Lanka and showed slides and photos taken during her travels.

Our November meeting consists of the AGM followed by tea and a viewing of old photos depicting people and parties connected with the M.U. in the past.

In December our Christmas Party will be held on December 14th in the Parish Hall. (By invitation only).

CHURCHYARD

We should like to thank the small band of helpers who have enabled us to cut the long grass and keep the churchyard clear during 1983. The "final fling" will be on Saturday 3rd December from 9.30 onwards when we hope to clear the leaves. In addition to the paths, lawns and flower beds we want to clear the centre section around the copper beech tree which looked so pretty last spring. This will be our last opportunity to get at this area before the bulbs appear. Make a note in your diary and watch out for the dates of the next working parties which will start early in Spring 1984.

David and Janet Nunn

WRITTEN NOTICES

From September onwards written Notices have been produced which are handed out in church every Sunday. These contain details of the Sunday services and as complete a calendar of the week's events as possible. They should have the advantage that you cannot miss or mishear anything announced in church and that you have a useful reference throughout the week when you take the Notices home.

In order to be successful, details for inclusion must reach the Vicarage by each Friday morning.

A few more people are needed to produce the Notices on a rota basis. You have to be able to type and take the original to the printer in Hampton early on Friday afternoon. Volunteers please contact the Vicar.

This particular way of producing the Notices is a trial. Please let us know whether you find this format satisfactory.

AROUND THE SPIRE

Babies make the news once more this month! After a recent operation, and a rather worrying time for all the family, young James Ormerod is now fully recovered and once more out and about. Miss Amber d'Albert is now a sister, getting used to all the responsibilities that that entails, her brother Rowan having been born in early September. We remember Amber herself at a very young age when she accompanied her mum Ros to some Liturgical Dancing rehearsals. The youngest baby, though, was born to Ann and Roger Severn on Monday 17th October — a beautiful little girl whose name has not yet been decided. We wish them all very well indeed.

Pat and Les Lambert would like to express their appreciation on behalf of Elizabeth and Keith who were happily married at St. James's on Saturday October 8th. Their wedding ceremony was made truly memorable for the family and friends; The Rev. Nicholas Chubb conducted the service with feeling, special prayers were contributed by the Rev. Seymour Harris, and the reading and address warmly delivered by Alan Taylor. Together with the wonderful music from the organist and choir this made a most joyful occasion. Thank you to you all.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms	9th October	Sian Elizabeth Brenchley	9 Westbank Road
	16th October	Simon Richard Robson	42 Wolsey Road
		Alexandra Emily Richards	6 Seymour Road
		Adam James Whitman	40 Fairlawn Close Hanworth
		Katrina Louise Fuller	37 Deacon's Walk
Marriages	8th October	Keith Leslie Lambert and Elizabeth Beryl Anne Rees	
	15th October	Gary Leslie Brett and Linda Chung Paul Mark David Bridges and Joanne Elizabeth Cox	
Funeral	18th October	Albert George Westbrook	aged 70 33 Wolsey Road

ERRATA

Our apologies for a few printing errors which slipped through the net last month. In particular we are sorry for the mistakes in Around the Spire, where it should have read Mollie Saunders and Len and Vera Rockliffe, whose Golden Wedding date was a day out.

CHEMISTS ADDITIONAL DUTY ROTA

November	13th	H Hall, 62 High Street, Hampton Hill
	20th	Thomas, D R, 113 Stanley Road, Teddington
	27th	Manley, D G, 122 High Street, Teddington
December	4th	Martin, F G Ltd, 3 Station Approach, Hampton
	11th	Moss, E Ltd, 14 Broad Street, Teddington
	Weekdays except Saturdays	6 - 7 pm
	Sundays	11 - 12 noon
	There is a 24 hour Chemist at London Airport	

	Communicants	Attendance	Pledged Giving	Other Giving
25.9	103	127	141	11
2.10	99	111	122	32
		Drought Relief	£23	
9.10	108	119	108	13
16.10	86	96	223	9

DATES TO NOTE

November

- 13 SIXTH SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS, REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY
Services as usual
- 14 20.00 HCC Lecture (All Saints, Hampton)
"What is means to be a Christian in Fiji"
- 15 09.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Editorial Board, 75 St. James's Avenue
20.00 Tuesday Club, Wayside "History of Thomas Cook", Slide-Talk
- 16 20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burtons Road
- 17 19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Koinonia
- 20 FIFTH SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS, STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY
Services as usual
17.00 St. James's hold evening service for Laurel Dene
- 21 14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry
- 22 09.30 Holy Communion
- 23 10.00 Liturgical Dancing, Church
- 24 19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Stewardship Review, St. James's Hall
- 27 ADVENT SUNDAY
Services as usual
- 28 Last HCC Lecture (All Saints, Hampton)
"What it means to be a Christian in Africa and the Indian Ocean"
– The Rt. Rev. Trevor Huddleston
- 29 09.30 Holy Communion
20.00 Tuesday Club, Wayside "Know your Rights" CAB
- 30 ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE
20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burtons Road

December

- 1 19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Koinonia
- 3 09.30 Churchyard Working Party, Grand Leaf Clearing
- 4 ADVENT 2
Services as usual
- 5 14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry
- 6 09.30 Holy Communion
- 7 10.00 Liturgical Dancing, Church
- 8 19.15 Holy Communion
20.00 Koinonia
- 11 ADVENT 3
Services as usual
- 13 09.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Editorial Board, 75 St. James's Avenue
20.00 Tuesday Club, Wayside, Christmas Party
- 14 M.U. Christmas Party