

Easter this year is so late that Lent does not begin until 7th March. But the March magazine will not be published before then, so I begin with a word or two on Lent. Many of you will know that the word Lent has no particular christian meaning – it just means the time of year when the days are getting noticeably longer. But over the centuries christians have evolved ways of preparing for Easter in the Longer Days. Perhaps it is partly psychological that we feel that we can cope with a bit more voluntary discipline after the imposed discipline of the winter months. These are for many a time of gritting teeth and surviving as best as we may the rigours of cold and discomfort. There is therefore some virtue in working out a routine which is not imposed on our lives. Prayer is the element which is most obviously the basic ingredient of a disciplined christian life. It is the thing which most easily gets squeezed out by the multitude of jobs we have to do. We have to make time for it. We have to make a quiet time for it. And this is not at all easy for many who live at close quarters with their family who see no reason for it, or whose neighbours are no respecters of the community. So it needs determination and will power to keep whatever special rules we make. Jesus did not intend us to parade our piety before the world; in that way we become like the pharisees whom he so often criticized. So we have to organise ourselves in such a way God knows what we are up to even if others don't. There is no need to feel that we must join this or that group but it could be helpful if we looked around for something unusual, like an activity based on another church. If St. James is too far away from you have you thought of searching out a service or Lent course 'just round the corner'? The Hampton Council of Churches would positively encourage such action. Have you looked for a special book to read? or asked what to read? The important thing is not to stand still but deliberately act. For some of course it could mean doing less!

Nicholas Chubb

## **CHRISTMAS PARTY TIME**

### **a) Tuesday Club**

As in previous years the last meeting of the Tuesday Club on 13th December was a "Christmas Social". This was very well attended by members in party mood and party dresses.

During the evening quiz games on tape provided lively entertainment; the questions included many musical items, well known tunes, to which we found it impossible not to add our own voices.

It was with regret that the Chairman announced the resignation of our treasurer, Joan Canham, as she is leaving the district. We, her friends of the Tuesday Club wish her happiness in her new home.

Tea and mince pies were served midst much chatter and laughter which is such an enjoyable part of a social gathering. The Committee wish our members and friends a Peaceful New Year. Our next meeting in 1984 is on 10th January; visitors are always welcome.

Dorothy Weston

## **b) Mothers' Union**

This most cheerful event was held on Wednesday, December 14th in the Parish Hall, and was very well attended, the M.U. having invited many guests.

A most wonderful tea was provided, — all the things we shouldn't have eaten but how we enjoyed them!

As one who missed the original production of the Ladies' Choir Cinderella Pantomime, I was thrilled to be present at this performance: those incomparable ugly sisters! Cinders so pathetic, "I'm very un-hap, un-hap. I've not got a chap! a chap, a chap", but carried off by her irresistible prince in the end! The very presentable Boots rejected as a suitor, but nobly putting up with it. It was delightful and we all came away singing the "Blue Danube"!

Thank you for a lovely party.

Hannah Stanton

## **c) The Parish Party — "Well-known Characters"**

On a cold and windy evening we waited for a bus with very few festive thoughts to warm us. But we arrived, and all thought of the outside was swept from our minds as we entered the brightly lit cheerful Parish Hall with all the friendliness that people of St. James's seem to exude.

This was the Christmas Party January 14, 1984. The fancy dress costumes were fun and obviously everyone — except me — had made a great effort to increase the carnival spirit. It was suggested that I wrap myself in the Observer Newspaper since that was my role, but the ink is a bit too free!

For once I will not dwell on the food, suffice it to say that it was as usual good to look at, good to eat and plentiful and that some hard work had gone into the thought and preparation.

It is not easy to describe fun and party games but I will try for those who were not fortunate enough to be present. There was never a dull moment from start to finish and everyone participated in the old favourites of Miming a Word, Passing the Hats, Traffic Lights and a few more besides. There were also lists of questions on Bird Names, Railway Stations, with space to write the answers.

The children were so happy and full of go the whole evening. My visitor remarked to me: "How very well the children behave, they are not disciplined or controlled and yet they are never a nuisance, all playing happily together." I thought a moment and then replied: "There is a good deal of love in St. James's Church and where there is love and respect the children are happy, so there is no need to misbehave." Anyway I think it is something like that. They were certainly happy.

Unfortunately there were fewer people at the party than usual which was disappointing for the many who had worked hard to make it a success. It is always the Golden Nucleus, so why not make the next one your first one?

Thank you all for an evening of fun. I came home tired from the noise but happy from the warmth and friendliness around me.

Alison Thompson

## CAROLS FOR ALL

The evening of Tuesday December 20 was the date, and St. James's Church the venue for a lively "Carols for All" Concert. It was well attended by a good cross section of age groups who gathered on a wet and inclement night to warm themselves spiritually at the results of the hard work of Miss Olive Hayward, our worthy organist!

Soloists delighted us with the most pleasing fare and Alan Taylor's rendering of a portion of Thomas Hardy's immortal "Under the Greenwood Tree" was both skilful and unforgettable! To sustain a lusty Dorset accent throughout such a rendering is an achievement which should not pass without due mention!

It seemed amazing that out of a group of volunteers, Olive took all those said ingredients and blended them together in the orchestra to produce a wondrous and most acceptable meal of sound for us all! It was also exciting that "our man" Nicholas and his three ladies were seen giving their utmost in the pleasant orchestral sounds which came forth. The guitar interludes by Paul Revis were an interesting and pleasant contrast.

A festive and fitting baptism it proved to be for the new dais in the church to be used in order that we might see as well as hear clearly what was taking place.

Olive added much interest to the proceedings, and nicely balanced it all by giving us a well condensed history of Christmas music from early times onwards. I enjoyed the humour of the manner in which Olive kept the congregation 'on their toes' with regard to their singing, and admonished the male efforts when they dared to flag.

A warm thank you to all – Olive, orchestra and soloists alike for their hard work. By their efforts they skilfully set the atmosphere for this beautiful and joyous christian festival of Christmas!

Bea Page

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Someone said Christmas should be less about our presents than about His Presence.

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Among the Christmas services special mention must be made of the **Crib Service** for the very young, a comparative innovation which Nicholas brought with him from his previous parish. This happy little, informal service has grown ever so much! It has a very special appeal for the little ones – and their parents or grandparents who bring them; this year we had over a hundred, young and old. Falling on Christmas Eve it made a very fitting start to the festivities.

## CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

Candle-lit young faces in the darkened church, intense as their owners concentrated on holding the bright Christingle oranges . . . . for those of us not too certain beforehand what the service on January 8 entailed, this sight alone brought one kind of tingle.

But by then we had learned that the old central European service of Christingle, adopted by the Church of England Children's Society, was all about the light of Christ, represented by the candle, extending over the world — as seen in the oranges. The vicar explained the significance of what we were to see, liturgical dancers gracefully opened proceedings and children appeared from everywhere to take part during a stirring vocal solo. Scouts, cubs and brownies lit the side aisles with more candles as a procession of youngsters, parents and babies then wound around the church. Under cover of darkness, the 'fruits of the world', embodied in raisins and sweets carefully arranged around the oranges, were lucky if they lasted until the end of the service.

A break with St. James's tradition put this year's service at Epiphany. To judge from the crowded church, the move obviously suited many who may have found the days before Christmas already too busy.

Chris Richards

## GROWING IN FAITH – Looking for a Group to Join?

The Pilgrimage of Life or The Christian Way — these are terms which imply that in the course of our life we move forward, progress. We should never stand still or assume that our present attitudes or convictions are the final or ideal ones. There should be spiritual development throughout our life, our goal being ever greater knowledge of God, and His will for us. With these, will come a deep love of God and our readiness to follow His will.

There are different ways of achieving this growth, but one of the most effective is to join with other people who strive for the same goal. In meeting together regularly and sharing openly one's thoughts and experiences one can indeed grow — and one usually finds a very happy bonus: new friends whom one can truly love, respect and trust.

As a member of one such group in the parish, who meets on Thursday nights in the Vestry, I know this to be true. This group is open to anybody at any time, but now is perhaps a particularly good time to come along and see whether the particular path we are following might suit *you* and promise *you* to grow, because we have just begun a new programme. For the time being we are going to look each week at the following Sunday's readings, thoroughly discuss them and allow them to speak to each one of us very personally. This, we know, will lead us all into a deeper understanding of God's word and greatly enrich our Sunday worship. A little later we are going to decide together what exactly we do for Lent.

Which ever vehicle we use, open minds and honest consideration of the Word of God together will help us progress along the Christian Way.

Hilde Bucknell

During Lent the Good News Group is going to meet every week on Wednesday evening for a course of study on "Faith" led by the Vicar.

## SAVING THE PEACE

The question of nuclear weapons is a difficult one for us all, and is one about which sincere Christians have very different views. There is little doubt that, as Dick Waltham says in the last issue, the real trouble lies in the hearts and minds of men. Perhaps the only truly Christian view of "defence" is to turn the other cheek, yet few supporters — even in the name of Christ — of unilateral nuclear disarmament are pacifists. Unilateral nuclear disarmament does not itself involve the surrender of other defences. Most Christians over the centuries have accepted the idea of a Just War. But one of the criteria for a Just War is that the consequences should not be worse than the injury or injustice to be averted. Many experts agree that any use of nuclear weapons is almost certain to escalate into a major nuclear war and that any such war between east and west will, by direct effect and by the long nuclear winter which it is now believed will ensue, destroy civilisation as we know it throughout the northern hemisphere. Can any injury or injustice justify this? As a priest has said, "It is better to witness to Christ under communism than be a charred body".

From the purely selfish point of view, are nuclear weapons a sensible defence? Many experts (Earl Mountbatten in 1979, George Kennan, a senior American statesman, in 1981 and Robert McNamara, former US Secretary of Defence, in 1983) have said they are useless for this purpose. But, it is said, they *are* a deterrent. However, we might well ask with Professor Pentz, "Is a threat to commit not only mass murder but also mass suicide a credible deterrent?" and "what are we doing with over 50,000 nuclear weapons when 200 would be more than enough for deterrence?" If we say that, of course, we do not intend to use our nuclear weapons, is it right even to threaten to do so? If we say we do not intend to start a nuclear war, why are we stock-piling Cruise and Trident, which are essentially first-strike weapons?

I do not believe anyone is deliberately going to start a nuclear war but the dreadful and inescapable fact is that as the numbers of nuclear weapons grow ever more vast and, especially with Pershing, so close in time (6 minutes) to their targets, it becomes almost certain that human misunderstanding or misjudgment or technical error or malfunction will precipitate such a war — the only question is how soon?

The man who was falling from a skyscraper, said when well on the way down, "everything's alright so far". Perhaps what we do as a country is not that important but at least we can give a lead and so attempt to break the vicious circle and brake the fall.

Ron Bridges

## **RE-MARRIAGE OF DIVORCED PEOPLE IN CHURCH**

Many of you will have read in the papers that last summer the General Synod of the Church of England agreed in principle that there were some circumstances in which it could and would be right to re-marry in Church people who were divorced and whose partner was still living. Since that day the argument has gone backwards and forwards and has centred round the question of how to achieve this and satisfy everyone's conscience. One of the possibilities, which has come to be known as 'Option G', was eventually chosen as being most suitable. This option is to be discussed and voted upon by all the Dioceses and by the time you read this will have been the subject of a special meeting of all the clergy in the London Diocese. So far several Dioceses have rejected the proposals overwhelmingly as being either wrong or unworkable. Certainly the machinery is complex and no-one need assume that there will now be an 'open door'. No clergyman will be compelled to take a service of re-marriage. Detailed enquiries will have to be made and the results assessed by a special panel which will report to the Diocesan Bishop. The Bishop will make the final decision from which there will be no appeal (or reason given for the decision).

There are various reasons for the difficulty. The Church is still very divided on the right-ness or otherwise of re-marriage of divorced persons whatever Synod may have decided. There is also the problem that a 'Church' wedding is a legal wedding. I am sure that we shall not find a solution until everyone has to be married by the Civil Authority and the Church can choose freely whom it will marry and whom it will not.

## **THE SPIRE**

Hilde Bucknell has felt that, at any rate for the time being, she cannot continue as Editor of the Spire. We accept her resignation with regret but wish her very well as she awaits the arrival of the new baby. In the meantime (at the time of writing the future of the Spire is under discussion) the Vicar will assume editorship with a team to support him. A full report should be in next month's edition of the decision taken at the P.C.C. on 24th January.

I am sure that all our readers would wish to thank Hilde for the wonderful service she has given the parish since she took on the editor's hat. It is a very time-consuming task and at moments very irritating when article writers have to be chased for copy to meet the deadline. We are glad to welcome to the editorial board Chris Richards for whom this is a busman's holiday — he is a journalist with the Daily Mail.

## **KINGSTON MUSIC MINISTRIES**

Please make a point of coming to Evensong on 19 February: it has something special to offer. A few members of the above Group of local Christians are coming to introduce some of their music. The Kingston Music Ministries offer a very wide range of modern christian music which appeals to varying tastes but always contains a powerful message.

## WHAT KIND OF A CHRISTIAN ARE YOU?

- Some are like Wheelbarrows —  
they do not move unless pushed.
- Some are like Kites —  
they fly away unless kept on a string.
- Some are like kittens —  
content if they are fed and petted.
- Some are like Balloons —  
go off with a bang at the slightest prick.
- Some are like Trailers —  
only travel when towed.
- Some are like Custard —  
they fall out over trifles.
- But some are like Good Watches —  
open faced, pure gold, quietly busy and full of good works.

## AUDREY SHILLING

This letter comes to bring you my thoughts and greetings for Christmas and the New Year.

The past year has been one of fulfilment in a sense. The Bow Baths Community Centre opened its doors on 4 July and after a successful children's holiday programme we began our first term's work in September. I was appointed administrator of the Centre — a job which is quite the most challenging of my Church Army career, while it is also the first job I have done for 30 years which has been in no way dependent on Church funding. (I do, however, continue to be licensed as lay worker at St. Paul's, Old Ford).

We are fortunate that the project has brought together many local people with real commitment to it, even though many more are needed. The responsibility of maintaining and running a building in an area such as this is no easy task. Security is a major problem and we have to have an alarm system which means that three of us take turns in being called out at night from time to time! Also we have to struggle to find the energy and resources to reach out to the very many people in need in the area.

The good things so far have been the many sporting and recreational activities that have been running this term (judo, karate, gymnastics, fitness training, table tennis, etc.); the growing parents and toddlers, pensioners and youth groups; and running a social club which is beginning to get off the ground. We have the money to appoint a second worker and have some very good candidates to interview next week. So it's all coming along well for a start.

In the context in which I live and work the Christmas faith is very much a matter of holding onto the knowledge that God *is* with us and in all of us: His image waiting to be formed in us. I continue to be very conscious of the need of the prayers of my friends, that we may overcome our fear and powerlessness and create a strong unit of people here who know themselves to be inheritors of the Kingdom of God.

Wishing every blessing to all at St. James.

Audrey Shilling

## NEWS OF MY BROTHER, TOM

A large number of the congregation signed a Christmas card for my brother, who is still in gaol in Pretoria, South Africa, serving his 6 months' sentence, and I sent it to St. Peter's Priory, Rosettenville, Johannesburg, where he works. It was a brightly coloured card and I hoped that it would be possible to wave it at him through the perspex through which visitors to the prison have to see him. It has been received by his fellow members of the Community, and he has been told about it, and will see it as soon as he is released from gaol. He thanks everyone for their caring and sends greetings to St. James's.

If I had known earlier I would have sent it to the gaol, and it might have been one of the twelve cards he was allowed, and which were taken to his cell on Christmas Day morning. In his last letter, received a few days ago, he said that they had made his cell look very festive. Mine just got there in time – asked for by him in a letter, and after I had sent off the card from St. James's congregation.

Tom is well. In each letter (I have now had four) he says that he is fine. Dr. David Rabkin who was deported on December 2nd, (after seven years of a ten year sentence for distributing Anti-Apartheid literature) telephoned me on December 3rd, and described the two and half months they had spent together in their unit – two cells and a shared bathroom and loo. They had got on well; they had their daily exercise together and had played badminton. I asked how did Tom play, bearing in mind that he is 66, has recently had a hip operation and has arthritis in his knees: "a little slow on the court" said David, "but his racket work was very speedy." David as a long termier had been able to leave goodies for Tom, got from the store, also daily and Sunday newspapers. His last words to the Major, in charge of that section of the Security Prison, were: "Do look after Tom." David said to me "He's not very good at asking for things for himself is he?"

One thing David Rabkin told me, something that had made him very angry, was that in transit from Diepkloof gaol, where Tom was sent at first, to Pretoria, they put leg irons on him. This has hurt me dreadfully.

But he is in good heart. All his visitors say this and it comes through in his letters. The quarterly publication of the Community of the Resurrection has in it a Thanksgiving and Intercession leaflet which Tom composed many months ago, and which the Editors have incorporated into the Christmas 1983 issue of CR. The prayers are poignant in that they almost prophesy that something of this nature might happen to him, and he prays for the courage to face up to it. I have some spare leaflets if anyone would like to have one. I am very proud of my brother.

Hannah Stanton

## AROUND THE SPIRE

The first 'Around the Spire' for 1984 brings news of the deaths of three people, each notable in their own way. The first of these being Tom Harries, Greta's husband and father of Raymond and Richard. Tom has been in poor health for a number of years, but he was always courageous and cheerful, doing his exercises, keeping to his diet and when the weather was suitable out, latterly in a wheelchair, manned by Richard and always with a cheery word for everyone.

Everything was of interest to Tom and his bravery and determination were an inspiration. Although he will be very much missed his strength will help many that he has left behind. We send our very best love to Greta and all the family.

Another familiar Hampton Hill figure was Mr. John Clark, 'Nobby', a distinguished looking elderly gentleman with his white beard, hat and walking stick he could be seen around every day. He worked for 'Shell' for many years, twenty of them in Sarawak and after the death of his wife some years ago maintained his home in precise order.

Betty Stewart's mother, Gertrude, also died recently, she was 94. She had been faithfully cared for by Betty for many years with the help of friends and neighbours, while at the same time Betty went to work and ran the Sunday School. We send Betty our condolences at this sad time.

While it is always sad to report these events it must be reflected upon that all these people had lived long and useful lives and for that we thank God.

We have great pleasure in welcoming Canon Gordon and Mrs. Jean Wilson who have just retired to the parish. Canon Wilson is the Secretary of the Conference for World Peace, and was for many years Secretary of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship. We look forward to seeing them among us regularly.

Finally our congratulations to Brenda Oliver who we hear has recently become District Commissioner for the Guides. We wish her joy and success in this new office.

**WAYSIDE 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.

## FROM THE REGISTERS:

### Funerals

28th December	Dorothy Alice Humphrey	91 Uxbridge Road	aged 79
30th December	William Patrick Newton	206 Uxbridge Road	aged 73
6th January	Beryl Edith Nicholson	55 Wolsey Road	aged 52
12th January	Thomas James Harries	27 The Wilderness	aged 67
12th January	John Colin Clarke	160 Uxbridge Road	aged 88
13th January	William Charles Kent	3 Deacon's Walk	aged 97
17th January	Getrude Maria Stewart	71 Ormond Drive	aged 94
17th January	Kathleen Joel	6 Craigwell Avenue, Feltham	at birth
17th January	Frederick Henry Neale	26 Hanworth Road	aged 62
17th January	Paul Michael Stapleton	10 Hanworth Road	aged 29
19th January	Percy Webb	16 Fairlight	aged 78

### Baptisms

22nd January	Adam John Fletcher	20 Seymour Road
22nd January	Natasha Jane Stebbings	56 Wordsworth Road

## **DATES TO NOTE**

### **February**

- 12 EPIPHANY 6 Services as usual  
14 09.30 Holy Communion  
10.30 Editorial Board, 75 St. James's Avenue  
15 20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burtons Road  
16 10.30 Young Families Group, Shirley Hill "A typical morning at the  
19.15 Holy Communion [Nursery"  
20.00 Koinonia  
17 19.30 Youth Group, Wayside  
19 9th SUNDAY BEFORE EASTER  
Morning services as usual  
16.30 Evensong with presentation by Kingston Music Ministries  
20 14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry  
21 09.30 Holy Communion  
20.00 Tuesday Club, Linda Apthorpe "Journey up the Nile", Wayside  
23 19.15 Holy Communion  
20.00 Koinonia  
24 19.30 Youth Group, Wayside  
26 8th SUNDAY BEFORE EASTER Services as usual  
28 09.30 Holy Communion  
29 20.00 Good News Group, 75 Burtons Road

### **March**

- 1 10.30 Young Families Group, Toddlers Club, Wayside  
19.15 Holy Communion  
20.00 Koinonia  
2 19.30 Youth Group, Wayside  
3 10.00 Post Confirmation Training Day, Isleworth  
4 7th SUNDAY BEFORE EASTER  
08.00 Holy Communion  
09.30 Parish Communion with Parade  
16.30 Parish Communion  
5 14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry  
6 09.30 Holy Communion  
20.00 Tuesday Club, Val Dennis "Patchwork"  
7 ASH WEDNESDAY  
14.30 Mothers' Union, a Service in Church for Ash Wednesday  
20.00 Holy Communion  
8 10.30 Young Families Group, Sheila Baddeley – Simple Printing  
19.15 Holy Communion  
20.00 Koinonia  
9 19.30 Youth Group, Wayside  
11 LENT 1 Services as usual  
12 10.30 Editorial Board, Vicarage

**End Quote: "For best results, observe the Maker's instructions!"**