

Easter is a time for Joy and Faith. Recently I heard a speaker ask an assembled audience of christians what was the opposite of Faith. To a man (and woman) they answered 'doubt'. Not so, said the speaker, the opposite of Faith is Sight. In the letter to the Hebrews in the New Testament the writer describes Faith as 'the evidence of things not seen' or 'Faith . . . . . makes us certain of realities we do not see'.

The Gospel story of Easter day shows us the first disciples seeking Jesus in Faith. It was only later that they saw Jesus and had their faith confirmed by appearances as He spoke with them. Perhaps you remember that Thomas was not with the others when Jesus first appeared and would not believe what he had heard. When Jesus eventually was present in the same room as Thomas and Thomas had touched the physical body of the Risen Jesus then Jesus said 'Because you have seen me you have found faith. Happy are they who never saw me and yet have found faith'. That is said very much to you and me who have no earthly chance, but only a heavenly one, of seeing Jesus.

Christian Hope is not the same as secular optimism although many people devalue the word hope to mean the same thing. The Christian Hope is founded on the evidence of God's activity in the world which we have already witnessed. And so the Hope is active in the whole spectrum of the world's doings and this enables christians not to give way to ultimate despair even when we see the continuing horrors of war, famine and wholesale destruction taking place in every continent. Even the situation in Lebanon appears to be marginally better than it was a month ago. The violence of the fighting is not so devastating and it seems that most people really do desire peace even if they want it on their own terms. It is true that there is still great oppression and violence in Central America, there is drought and famine in many parts of Africa, there is injustice in Russia and South Africa, there is suffering from unemployment (? a form of injustice) and very bad housing in our country. If we rely solely on men and women to solve the problems we shall find that we come up time and time again against the selfishness and shortsightedness to which we are all prone. If we invoke God to inspire these same people with the Spirit of His Love and rely on His positive action we face the future with Hope and not Despair, with assurance that all *will* be well in the end.

As we come to Easter once again (a note appears below on why the date for Easter varies) let us show our Joy and our Faith and our Hope by our presence at worship here or elsewhere on Easter Day.

Nicholas Chubb

## PUTTING A DATE TO EASTER

Easter, unlike Christmas, is a 'moveable feast', although the Second Vatican Council suggested that it should be a fixed date, an idea which has again been aired by both church and state more recently.

This is one example when the church deliberately avoided Christianising an existing festival — in this case, the Jewish Passover. In the second century a bitter dispute arose between those who said Easter should be celebrated on the same day as the Passover (14 Nisan in the Jewish calendar) and those who said it should be on the nearest 'day of resurrection' (Sunday) to the Passover. The

latter accused the former of being Judaisers and dubbed them 'Quartodecimarians' ('Fourteenthers'). They were even pronounced heretics by Bishop Victor of Rome.

The Council of Nicea settled the dispute – not the only major decision still applied which dates from that historic meeting in AD 325 – by deciding that Easter Day should be the first Sunday after the full moon (the 'vernal equinox') which always occurs between 21 March and 25 April.

This 'Roman' system was not adopted throughout Britain until the Synod of Whitby in 664. Today, the Eastern orthodox Church still uses a different system for calculating Easter. (It celebrates Christmas differently, too.) Easter can be as much as five weeks later in the East.

Today a traditional time for weddings, it was originally the major date for baptism. Candidates were prepared during Lent, and then on Easter Day testified to their own death with Christ and new life in him by passing through the baptismal waters.

*From TODAY Magazine*

## **CONFIRMATION TRAINING DAY**

A few weeks ago I received an invitation to meet with other recently confirmed members of the Church of St. James, for a day of prayer and discussion. The meeting was to be held at All Saints', Isleworth on March 3rd. My immediate reaction was one of intense pleasure at the prospect of an opportunity to exchange with others, our thoughts and ideas. It also seemed an excellent way of really getting to know one another.

As a matter of fact, it proved, for me, to be a most enriching and satisfying day and I felt most grateful to everyone who had worked so hard to organise it, contributed their time and experience and made it so instructive and successful for "novices" like myself.

There were about sixteen people there, including Nicholas and many of our Readers from St. James.

One of our first activities, after a welcoming cup of coffee, was to introduce ourselves in a friendly and informal way (we all seemed to know each other's faces but not everyone's name).

There followed a remarkably good talk/discussion on practising Christianity in all walks of life as it exists in various communities – how Christianity copes in all situations and stratas of society, with all types of problems.

We also benefitted from taking a detailed study of the Collect and Readings for the week. The sequence which follows through from the Old Testament through the Epistle and finalizes the lesson in the Gospel Reading. A remarkably revealing development from the old, to the new message of Christ's Way of Life.

The slow and careful study of the Eucharist brought new knowledge and awareness of this great thanksgiving ceremony. It was good to have some explanations of the four differing Eucharistic prayers and I felt significantly better informed.

We sometimes broke up into separate groups (with some trepidation!). However, our Readers acted as our Group leaders and skilfully guided and encouraged us to try and actively construct and contribute prayers of intercession. At first this seems a very difficult and challenging thing and I was very aware of my own inexperience and inadequacy. But the whole idea in practice gave us a deeper understanding of how to pray.

By the time we reached the stage of the Holy Communion service, in the late afternoon, I was feeling much better prepared than ever before to receive with faith.

It was very meaningful to share the Communion Bread and Wine by passing from one to another by name. The result was a strong feeling of bonding and unity as a body of people in Christ.

I do hope that we may all meet again and continue together in our search for love and peace.

Rosalie Meyerowitz.

## **EASTER PEACE PILGRIMAGE**

Easter Monday Peace Celebration.

March and Festival at Lakenheath.

Holy Week Pilgrimage and Christian Peace Camp.

Details from Anne Malins (01-941 6784) who asks your prayers for her family and other Holy Week campers and Pilgrims.

Organized by: Christian CND, Catholic Peace Action, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Quaker Peace Action, Pax Christi, Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

## **TOM STANTON**

Many of you will have read in either the Guardian or the Church Times that Tom Stanton, Hannah's brother, was released from prison in South Africa on Tuesday, 6th March, exactly six months after his sentence was imposed. It is a great relief to know that not only has he been set free on time but that he has also had no penalties added to his prison sentence. He has told Hannah on the telephone that he is free to go anywhere, as before, and that on the way back to his Priory at Rosettenville he went to visit someone under house arrest, Helen Joseph. We rejoice for him and for Hannah. Whether or not he will be free to leave South Africa in the future without being prevented from returning remains to be seen. Although he is a South African citizen that citizenship of course could be revoked. However this is not in any way so far as we know an immediate prospect. Tom has been released and has been allowed to stay in the country he wishes to love and serve for the rest of his life. For that we give thanks and assure him of our continued prayers and thoughts in the days that lie ahead.

## **WHAT WE ASK AND HOW WE ASK IT**

This was the title of a talk given in the church on 11th March after Evensong by Professor Stuart Hall. Professor Hall is Professor of Ecclesiastical History at King's College London and by his own admission an academic theologian. When on the staff of Queen's College, Birmingham, he taught the Vicar some of his New Testament studies. The Liturgical Committee had asked for someone to speak in depth and certainly he filled the bill admirably. To begin with he spoke so deeply that he lost some people on the 'down'. However he gradually relaxed and moved slightly away from the details of his prepared text which enabled the listeners to remake contact. His main thrust was to emphasise the need for us to make our *real* needs known and uttered to God the

Father and not to shy away from complaining at God (if that was how we felt). So often he thought we wrapped our prayers so as to disguise our concerns and in public we tended to inform the listening congregation rather than make requests directly to God. The basis of this argument was prayer in the Old Testament and Jesus' prayer in the New Testament. He criticised some of the Collects in the Book of Common Prayer and many more in the Alternative Service Book for not being direct enough. He also admitted in the following question time that he would probably do just what we do at St. James's if he were in parish ministry, even though he disapproved of some of the practices! Altogether a stimulating and thought provoking contribution to our christian education. Between forty and fifty people came to hear him, definitely an improvement on our usual evening congregations.

We are hoping to have the Reverend Michael Atkinson of the Board of Social Responsibility speak to us on 20th May and Brother Donald from the Society of St. Francis on 17th June.

## **CLEAR AS DAYLIGHT**

There is an old story about the rabbi who asked his disciples how they knew that night had ended and the day was on its way back. "Could it be," asked one, "when you can see an animal in the distance and tell whether it is a sheep or a dog?"

"No," the rabbi replied.

"Could it be," asked a second, "when you can look at a tree in the distance and tell whether it is a fig or an olive tree?"

"No," the rabbi replied.

"Well, then, what is it?" the disciples pressed.

"It is when you look on the face of any man or woman, and see that he or she is your brother, or sister. Because if you cannot do this, no matter what time it is, it is still night."

## **WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

What was it that made the cat jump? What is it that makes us jump? What makes us see ourselves clearly as we are? It was the Holy Spirit in the shape of an angel that made the cat react by sticking its tail in the air and arching its back. It knew something unusual was happening. The woman at the well knew that here was someone different when Jesus spoke to her and asked her, a Samaritan woman, for a drink of water from the well. Even more astonishing he then proceeded to tell her things about herself that he could not have possibly known in the usual way. Here was someone to make you jump! Here was someone who made you see yourself as if for the first time, in whose presence the inmost soul was revealed. Not a comforting thought, but the woman reacted by running into the village to collect her friends and neighbours to come and see this man and hear his words.

The theme of the Women's World Day of Prayer this year was 'Living Water' and the speaker at the afternoon Service was Lesley Mortimer. The two Bible readings both concerned momentous meetings at the wellside. The Old Testament lesson recounted the meeting between Abraham's servant and Rebecca and the New Testament lesson the meeting between Jesus and the

Samaritan woman. The meeting about which Lesley spoke in the first instance was that between the cat and the Angel Gabriel in Lotto's picture of the Annunciation, then the woman at the well and finally ourselves, our encounter with the Holy Spirit. Jesus told the Samaritan woman that whoever drinks of the water that He gives will never thirst again because it is the Living Water of eternal Life.

The Service was a truly happy occasion, well attended and with an air of welcome and warmth. Refreshments followed the Service and that gave everyone present the opportunity to talk to each other and to meet people that we may not have met before.

## **THE PARISH HALL**

Two items from the Hall Management Committee on 15 March caused me to look back through the minutes kept since the Committee was formed in early 1971.

The first is the Annual Clean, for which we have fixed Saturdays 19th and 26th May. I see from the minutes that we held our first "Spring Clean" on 28/29 April 1973. This, then, will be our twelfth annual "Clean", the dates having varied from year to year between April and September. We do need as many helpers as possible, so please make a diary note of the dates.

The second item concerns the post of Booking Officer. Eila Severn took on this job when the Committee was formed, and having carried it out ever since, now feels that she would like some relief. Roy Brooks (another founder member) has kindly agreed to take over as Booking Officer.

Our thanks are due to them both.

The changeover is effective from the end of May.

Jack Gostling

## **THE INVITATION**

Mr. Green had just reached retiring age. He had all his life worked for a large international manufacturing company. He had on the whole enjoyed his career and was quite satisfied with his life. The extraordinary thing about his company was that despite its vast international ramifications it was wholly owned by one single individual, a truly remarkable person who ran his business empire with great skill. Mr. Green, however, had never really felt interested enough to find out very much about this man. His job paid for a fairly pleasant life style and that was all that mattered to him. So it was that it came as quite a surprise to Mr. Green when shortly before his actual retirement date he received a personal invitation to a banquet with his employer. Talking to his colleagues he realised that quite a few of them knew all about the strange custom the boss had of inviting every single employee to such a banquet on these occasions. Some colleagues seemed to know a great deal more about the boss as well, and were keen to tell Mr. Green all sorts of details, but he did not bother to listen. Since the banquet was to take place in a very attractive exotic location, however, and the invitation included all airline tickets and travel documents, Mr. Green prepared to go on the appointed day.

On the aircraft Mr. Green found himself sitting next to a nervous looking man about his own age whom he soon recognised as a lift attendant from his

local company headquarters. It turned out that this man was also retiring and had received the same invitation. He had never been abroad in his life and found the whole experience rather traumatic. He said in fact he would never have dreamt of setting foot on an aircraft — flying frightened him so much — but he would not miss this banquet for anything. Actually holding the invitation in his hand had been the happiest moment in his whole life. Mr. Green was quite incredulous when he heard this and could not really understand the other's sad indignation as he told him how the British regional manager — a distinguished man Mr. Green remembered very well — had actually refused to go when he retired two years before. "He just did not know what he was missing", said the lift attendant with a vehemence that made Mr. Green shrug. "Well, after all" the latter replied, "this manager must have been used to good living. Just another banquet would not have interested him that much." Whereupon the lift attendant tried to explain to him that it was precisely not just another banquet. "This is very special, indeed", he said. "Not everybody is allowed into the main banqueting hall. People have to have some qualifications." This suddenly made Mr. Green angry. He protested that he himself surely had all the qualifications necessary to get the full treatment. He had always done his job properly, never cheated the company, even by private photocopying; he had often worked overtime without extra pay, he had been very decent and honest; never taken a day off for flu unless he was really ill . . . . The lift attendant raised his hands to stop this indignant flow. "That is not really the point," he said, humbly. "There is the book of company rules which tells you how to qualify. Only it isn't really rules," he added. "It's more than that. I can't explain it very well." This made Mr. Green even crosser. He had been given a copy of this "Company book" when he first started his job, he vaguely remembered; but he had never bothered to actually read it. It amazed him to hear the other one say that he had studied this book all his life, that he would have found it quite impossible to cope without the book. "It is so much more than rules. It tells you all you need to know about the boss and what he expects of you." He went on and on talking, and Mr. Green soon stopped listening and fell asleep. The last thing he heard was that his companion was "so looking forward to meeting the boss personally." He said that with something in his voice which sounded like great love. "Silly man, as if the boss would take any notice of mere lift attendant!", Mr. Green thought before he drifted off into his dreams.

When they finally arrived after changing planes twice, it was pleasantly warm and they were taken through agreeable surroundings to a large elegant building amidst palm trees and lawns. They entered an imposing doorway in what turned out to be a wall surrounding a large garden of such amazing beauty that Mr. Green held his breath. He was not normally much affected by nature, but this was something quite quite special. He wished he could have lingered to savour details, but their guide walked briskly past flowering shrubs and perfectly proportioned water basins. He led them up a few steps across a shady colonnade into the lofty entrance hall of the main building. They crossed the cool marble floor and mounted an elegant flight of stairs. At the top a second guide escorted them along a wide corridor to a large glass door on their left. As they came near, the door opened and a young man stepped outside. Mr. Green heard the lift attendant catch his breath. "That's his son!" he whispered as the young man approached them smiling as at a friend. Mr. Green could hardly believe

what was happening when the young man greeted his companion warmly, put his arm round his shoulders and led him in through the door, whereas the other guide barred his own way when he tried to follow and said: "No, you cannot go in there, Mr. Green." He could only catch a glimpse of a large exquisitely beautiful hall and festively clad people before he was led off further along the corridor. Mr. Green just did not know what was happening to him, the only fact he was certain of now was that to pass through that glass door with the young man was the one thing he desired more than anything else in his whole life. Everything the lift attendant had said in his faltering way suddenly made sense. "If only someone had told me earlier!" Mr. Green thought as he walked away from the banquetting hall.

Hilde Bucknell

## **CHRISTIAN AID WEEK – MAY 14 - 20**

The big guns thunder and desperate families race through the rubble of Beirut, often carrying their wounded and dying. The horror is brought home to us on the television news. In the dust and destruction, a queue of civilian wounded grows hourly outside a new emergency hospital in the southern suburbs. That the wounded are being treated at all is thanks to the foresight of a Lebanese organisation which set up the hospital and stocked it with vital drugs and equipment . . . . . with the help of donations made through Christian Aid.

The suffering in Lebanon is just one of the many man-made and natural disasters which draws Christian Aid's attention each year, and in which we can help, even from so far away, in our giving during Christian Aid Week from May 14-20. This year's theme is 'Good Works' . . . . . a call on all of us to make sure that good can work around the world.

Last year, a £45,000 Christian Aid grant aided a partner organisation in India which helps local groups find and conserve water; a development agency funded by Christian Aid builds a dam for villagers in the Bolivian Andes; vegetable gardens are built in the desert of Mali, in West Africa; Brazil's handicapped benefit from job creation programmes; and poor Philippino families are given a loan of piglets to fatten and sell at a profit. Drought-stricken northern Ethiopia, where more than a million people are suffering, is also the focus of a major emergency appeal to raise funds.

The world's problems don't seem to have become any easier since the days when the idea of the charity that became Christian Aid began forming in the minds of British churchmen and women in the wake of the European refugee problem after the Second World War.

Locally this year, Christian Aid Week will get under way with a united service at All Saints, Hampton at 6.45 p.m. on May 13. The other big news that day will be the London Marathon . . . . . and competitors are invited to arrange sponsorship in aid of the appeal. For the rest of us, the recommended exercise is to trot to the front door and hand generous donations to a hard-working volunteer collector.

Chris Richards

## RELIGIONS TOGETHER FOR PEACE

Not so very long ago it was difficult to persuade Christians to recognise one another as fellow members of the family of Christ, especially if they belonged to different traditions. More recently, Christians have been joining together each year for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and indeed there is now a much stronger spirit of unity within the Christian family. But it took a long time to break down the barriers. Now it is necessary to think in terms of the whole human family as we realise that the bitter divisions within that family are not only wrong but dangerous.

The message of the Christian Gospel is peace and unity. Christ came to proclaim the good news of peace to those who were near, the privileged "chosen few", and to those who were outside. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January during the week which ends with the Conversion of St. Paul enables Christians to pray for the essential unity of Christ's Body. The Week of Prayer for World Peace in October during the week which includes United Nations Day enables Christians in unity to pray together with other members of the human family of all religions for the peace and unity of the whole human family.

It is not possible to pray for unity unless we recognise one another as fellow human beings. When we are drawn together into a true human fellowship of prayer we begin to recognise the value of each other's faith; then we understand how spiritual our fellowship has become.

This is precisely why the World Conference of Religions for Peace came into being as a world-wide fellowship of men and women of faith who meet to share their concerns about the many factors and situations which threaten world peace and deny human dignity.

One part of this world-wide fellowship is the European Committee, which met recently in Stuttgart. My wife Jean and I joined in the discussions there, chiefly in preparation for the Fourth World Assembly of WCRP in Nairobi next August (the previous ones were at Kyoto, Japan in 1970; Louvain, Belgium in 1974, where I joined in; Princeton, USA in 1978, where Hannah joined us). There will be three main themes: (1) People of Faith Working Together for Peace; (2) Human Dignity, Social Justice, and Development of the Whole Person; (3) World Peace and Disarmament.

A feature of our week in Stuttgart was the inter-faith worship each day, conducted in turn by a Christian, a Hindu, a Muslim and a Sikh. We did not have a Jew with us in Stuttgart, but our own regular meetings in London are mostly held at Westminster Synagogue.

Gordon Wilson

## AROUND THE SPIRE

Violet Clark has been ill for some time now and has recently had a spell in hospital, first Kingston and now St. Mary's, Hampton. We do wish her a speedy recovery and a safe return to us.

Mrs. Mal Macarthey has also been ill recently and her two sisters are not in the best of health either, so our love and prayers to them and we hope that with the return of Spring we shall see them again soon.

Our other valiant fighter against ill health Chrissie Hockley is also not at all well at present, we miss her wheelchair in the south aisle; hurry up and get better Chrissie!

Please remember all our invalids in your prayers and anyone else you know to be ill.

## FROM THE REGISTERS

### Baptisms

March 4th	Benjamin John Brian Oliver	242 Hounslow Road, Hanworth
	Ellen Carrie Irwin	202 Hanworth Road
	Benedict Colin Newman	16 School Road

### Wedding

March 24th	Robert Frank Brooks and Catherine Mary Walsh
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### Funerals

February 23rd	Louise Coles	Laurel Dene	aged 97
February 26th	Leonard Welbury	Laurel Dene	aged 77
February 26th	Henry Aberdeen	144 Hanworth Road	aged 61
February 29th	Charles Edward Philip Breton	2 Lime Tree Court	aged 76
March 1st	Milly Hanson	Laurel Dene	aged 83
March 7th	Dorothy Evelyn Sylvia Passmore	67 Laurel Road	aged 73
March 9th	Charles Arthur Barryman	47 Laurel Road	aged 77

## HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

Holy Week is the name given to the days immediately leading up to Easter during which Christians have traditionally made greater attempts than is usual to give time to prayer and devotion. Most churches have extra services (some of them different in character to those normally met with) in order to give people opportunities for a special preparation for Easter. This year at St. James our programme is:

Palm Sunday (15th April)	At Evensong an augmented choir will sing a cantata composed by the father of Julian Lloyd Webber
Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday	20.00 Holy Communion
Tuesday	09.30 Holy Communion
Wednesday	06.30 Holy Communion 12.00 Austerity Lunch
Maundy Thursday	20.00 Holy Communion (followed by Hot Cross Buns)
Good Friday	10.00 Childrens' Service 12.00 Three Hours' Devotion Conducted by Bishop Alan Rogers 20.00 Compline (A service for late evening)
Easter Eve	20.00 Preparation for Easter and Renewing of Baptismal Vows
Easter Day	08.00 Holy Communion 09.30 Parish Communion 11;30 Family Service 18.30 Festal Evensong

## AUSTERITY LUNCH

You are invited to partake of an Austerity Lunch on Wednesday, 18th April, from 12 - 2 p.m. in Wayside. Soup and baked potato 50p. Coffee or Tea 10p. There will be a Bring and Buy Stall. All profits will go to CHRISTIAN AID, so please come along and support this worthy cause.

## SOME DETAILS FROM THE REGISTER OF SERVICES

<i>Date</i>	<i>Communicants</i>	<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Pledged Giving</i>	<i>Other Giving</i>	
1 January	95	105	88	14	
8 January	95	105	192	12	
Bankers Orders (Dec.)	£210	Christian Aid	£24	Children's Society	£56
15 January	120	132	194	18	
22 January	101	111	96	31	
29 January	113	125	127	10	
5 February	112	174	338	24	
12 February	112	134	133	12	
19 February	99	118	119	11	
		Bankers Orders (Jan.)	£622		
26 February	112	153	100	15	
4 March	122	175	149	50	
11 March	97	112	189	9	
18 March	112	124	107	15	

## DATES TO NOTE

<b>April</b>	11	20.00 Good News Group		
	12	19.15 Holy Communion		
		20.00 Koinonia		
	13	06.30 Holy Communion		
		18.30 Confirmation Class		
	15	PALM SUNDAY At Evensong a Cantata for Holy Week		
	16	20.00 Holy Communion		
	17	09.30 Holy Communion		
		20.00 Holy Communion		
		20.00 Tuesday Club – Social		
	18	06.30 Holy Communion		
		12.00 Austerity Lunch at Wayside		
		20.00 Holy Communion		
	19	MAUNDY THURSDAY	20.00 Holy Communion	
	20	GOOD FRIDAY	10.00 Children's Service	
			12.00 Three Hours' Devotion	
			20.00 Compline	
	21	EASTER EVE	20.00 Renewal of Baptismal Vows	
	22	EASTER DAY	08.00 Holy Communion	
			09.30 Parish Communion	
			11.30 Family Service	
			18.30 Evensong	
	23	ST. GEORGE		
	24	09.30 Holy Communion		
	26	19.15 Holy Communion		
	29	EASTER 1	Services as usual	
	30	ST. MARK (transferred from 25th)		
	<b>May</b>	1	09.30 Holy Communion	
			ST. PHILIP AND ST. JAMES	
			09.30 Holy Communion	
		20.00 P.C.C. (Vestry)		
		20.00 Tuesday Club		
3		19.15 Holy Communion		
4		18.30 Confirmation Class		
5		St. Michael's Convent, Ham – Open Day		
6		EASTER 2	Services as usual	
8		09.30 Holy Communion		
		COMMUNITY CARE GROUP	10th ANNIVERSARY LUNCH	
9		20.00 CCG	Chicken and Chips Concert at Linden Hall	
10		19.15 Holy Communion		
11		18.30 Confirmation Class		
		20.15 Liturgical Committee		
13	EASTER 3			
	18.45 United Service for Christian Aid Week (All Saints')			
14	CHRISTIAN AID WEEK BEGINS			