

Have you noticed how some people are particularly good at remembering other people's names, while a different group of people are good at remembering people's other faces? On the whole I think I'm probably better with faces than names (but if I walk past you in the street please don't quote me on this!) It certainly always strikes me as very impressive when someone I might only have met once and in a different context actually gets my name right. Impressive, but daunting, realising that I haven't been able to do the same.

Recognising people, realising just who we are, is crucial to the Easter story. In this period of Eastertide lots of the gospel stories about the risen Christ meeting people have to do with this central theme of recognition. More specifically, God recognises us and our needs, yet we, like the disciples, stumble around blindly, failing to recognise the risen Christ in our midst. Think of Mary Magdalene failing to recognise Jesus and mistaking him for the gardener. Then we hear of the men walking the seven miles or so from Jerusalem to Emmaus, but failing to recognise Jesus until they were at supper with him and he once again broke the bread. Or think of Thomas recognising Jesus only when he could physically see the scars of the nails, or the disciples out fishing not recognising who it was cooking breakfast for them.

In all these stories the risen Lord appears to the disciples as they go about their ordinary tasks. Mary had come to embalm the body, the men were simply walking on a journey, and the fishermen doing what they always had done, gone fishing. The resurrection stories are all about seeing the death-conquering, abundant-life-giving God active in the everyday experiences of life. Resurrection is not confined to the mountain peaks but speaks also to the plains which most of us occupy most of the time. For us, as for the first disciples, our names and faces, our needs and fears, our strengths and weaknesses are recognised by God, but we must ask ourselves if we recognise the risen Christ in our everyday lives, always offering us the possibility to transform them.

So as we go about our lives this month, can we try to recognise Christ in the people we meet at work, on the train or bus, or even as we do our Christian Aid collection from door to door!

Brian Leathard

EMMAUS

**As the disciples walked along the road, Jesus said to them,
"What is it you have been talking about?"**

Emmaus is a five week course covering the basics of
Christian life and faith.

It is designed to nurture the faith of everyone,
at whatever stage of the journey they may be.

The sessions will be in small groups so that each person can feel
valued and make a real contribution.

The first course will begin in May.

If you are interested, sign the clipboard at the back of the church
or speak to Brian or Freda.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Christian Aid
We believe in life before death

May is here, and so is Christian Aid Week; this year from 14th - 20th of the month. We are hoping that our collectors will once again raise a goodly sum - last year St. James' contributed £2890, which included £1112 from Geoffrey's D.I.Y. Messiah. The grand total from Churches Together Around Hampton was £9825, so this year we shall obviously break through the £10,000 barrier! The people whom we intend to help are from India, Rwanda and Nicaragua and I know that they can depend on your generosity. St. James' 34 collectors will be active in Hampton Hill and will visit many of you. Please remember them and Christian Aid Week in your prayers.

Margaret Taylor 8979 1342

On Sundays 5th and 12th March we held a special collection for

**The Bishop's Lent Appeal for the
Angola London Mozambique Association (ALMA)**

£1,295.00 was collected

THANK YOU

Refugees and the Church

(Source - The Board of Social Responsibility, Church House, Great Smith Street, SW1P)

The Christian faith has a special place for the stranger, the ones we may not yet understand, those different from ourselves. When we welcome the stranger, the outcast, the refugee we welcome Jesus himself. My hope is that our country which has had a great tradition of hospitality to the stranger will continue to be as open and as generous as possible.

The Archbishop of Canterbury

What is the new law?

The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 is a package of measures which attempt to address the situation caused in part by an increase in asylum seekers as a result of various political upheavals and wars around the world. The situation has been exacerbated by administrative problems in the Immigration Service with a backlog of cases stretching up to 7 or 8 years. The new Act should enable asylum claims to be dealt with more quickly, and alleviate the pressure on London and South East councils by dispersing them throughout the UK. No asylum seeker will be able to claim social security - they are given vouchers for food and toiletries. More will be held in detention and their rights of appeal against refusal of asylum will be reduced.

Christian Responsibility

Because these new arrangements will make life harsh for asylum seekers, churches and individual Christians will find that they are increasingly called to support asylum seekers. It may help to reflect that many asylum seekers are often forced to seek a new life because of economic crises in their countries which result from the economic and foreign policies of countries such as the UK.

Scripture has much to say about the treatment of the vulnerable and the need to welcome strangers and foreigners without suspicion. It is an essential part of the Church's mission and ministry to reach out to the marginalised and persecuted and to stand in solidarity with them in their struggles, suffering and hopes. We are called to speak out against injustice and oppression.

How can St. James's help?

Following on Peter Wilson's talk to the PCC on the 28th February (see *April Spire*), Brian, Ann and Dick visited the Twickenham Refugee Welcome Centre in the Twickenham Methodist Church Hall. The centre exists to provide a friendly and welcoming place for asylum seekers to meet and talk to others. It is not an advice centre and is staffed entirely by volunteers.

More volunteers are needed to help with:

- * Food preparation and washing up
- * Sorting and finding clothes
- * Helping with English practice
- * Skilled language teaching
- * Odd jobs and carpentry
- * Setting up the hall and clearing away
- * Being a friendly person to talk to

Volunteers are fully briefed but need to be flexible, reliable, discreet and committed. If you are interested please contact **Mary Holmes on 8892 3271**.

The following items are needed:

- * **Kitchen items - crockery, cutlery, pans etc**
- * **Roadworthy bicycles**
- * **A-Z guides**
- * **Young men's clothes - jeans and trainers**
- * **Radios**
- * **Toys (especially toys to ride on)**
- * **Board games for adults - chess, draughts etc**
- * **Folding pushchairs and buggies**
- * **Table football**

An evening of music and song with

Eve Baker - Geoffrey Bowyer - Chris Hodges

on Saturday 20th May 2000 at 7.30p.m. for 8p.m.

Proceeds to

The Twickenham Refugee Welcome Centre

£15.00 - to include supper in the interval

to be held at the home of John and Elizabeth Gossage

230 Hanworth Road, Hampton

8979 3793

(apply to them for tickets)



WOMEN'S ROYAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE

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The WRVS are looking for a new Club Leader for the Darby and Joan Club at Hampton.

Activities include running the club with the assistance of existing helpers, planning outings and parties and simple bookkeeping.

They meet at the Metropolitan Water Board Club in Ashley Road, Hampton on Wednesday afternoons from 1p.m. to 3.15p.m.

If you would like to discuss, without commitment, this post then please call Jenny Rigamonte at Area Office Horsham on 01403 256622 or 01323 739950.

The Bishop's Bus

How did we get involved? Whatever are we doing here?

The bishop had sent a double decker bus around all the church schools, to help children find the answer to "2000 years since what?" Some of us saw the actual bus at the resources exhibition staged by the Deanery Training Committee in conjunction with our diocesan team, and were told that it was very exciting and had been very well received by the children. It didn't LOOK particularly exciting. Then we heard that the original team was no longer going to be presenting the bus and it was up to the local churches to do that to the schools in their area. There was a video to explain what went on. About half a dozen of us were curious enough to want to see the video. Curiosity may or may not have killed the cat, but it certainly led us where we would never have dreamed of going!

With much trepidation and an overwhelming feeling of inadequacy, six of us and Mitch the puppet (the only professional and definitely the star of the show) went to meetings, watched the video, went to a couple of rehearsals (Well, some of us managed most of those things!) and learnt THE song. Members of the original team encouraged us every step towards our anticipated final humiliation.

Eventually THE DAY arrived, when we had to face the 250 (ferocious, no doubt) small children who go to Carlisle School. "So we make idiots of ourselves. It doesn't matter, the message is more important than we are" - Keep saying that!

We put on our red "bus" T-shirts and got through assembly - Well, Brian was in charge, so that was easy, but Margaret Ansell as Jo, did the mime of being on a tube train and having to "Mind the gap", as if she knew exactly what she was doing! The song about the gap between us and God and about Jesus being the bridge was sung, with actions and played again as all but one class left the hall. The first class were, taken to the three "bus stops" in the hall, with the help of a wooden model bus front and they heard the stories of Christmas (Jesus was no ordinary baby), getting lost in the Temple (Jesus was no ordinary boy) and the "Through The Roof" healing miracle (Jesus was no ordinary man). A visit to the bus followed and there they discovered why Jesus was crucified and about his resurrection and why this is significant to us.

We made it! There was no time to think; we were already late for the next class. We did get a break for morning coffee and lunch, but by the end of the day we had performed to 9 classes. The next week, over a day and a half, a similar process happened with the twelve classes at Hampton Hill Junior School. We survived. We even began to almost enjoy it - we were certainly well looked after by all the staff and pupils of the schools, some of whom we were delighted to recognise from the congregation. I hope there will be reports from the children displayed in church. I believe they enjoyed our efforts, too. They certainly have a good idea of the Christian message by now!

Ruth Mills

St. James's Church Website

We will soon be on-line! All text, graphics and art-work have now gone to our webmaster, John Inglis, who is putting it all into web pages for us. The website is divided up into the following sections and pages.

About St. James's: Services, Past & Present, Church of England Structure, Hall, Contacts

Running the Church: P.C.C., Churchwardens, Electoral Roll, Properties and Fabric, Servers, Sidespersons, Stewardship

Work in Church: Bell Ringers, Cleaning, Coffee, Flowers, Music, Social Events

Groups: Study Groups, Choirs, Guiding & Scouting, Liturgical Dancers, Sunday School, Travellers Band, Women's Forum

Witness: Charities, Churches Together, Hampton Deanery, Open House, United Nations, Website, Welcare

The Young Church

The Spire Magazine

Church Diary

Contacts will include the names and phone numbers and/or Email addresses of the clergy and churchwardens. For the sections **Running the Church**, **Work in Church**, **Groups** and **Witness**, each organisation, committee and group within the church was asked to write a short piece about themselves as a basis for their entry. **The Young Church** have their own page and are currently developing it themselves.

Initially, **The Spire** magazine section will contain the Vicar's leading article and 'Around the Spire'. Later it is expected that other contributions can be included provided that they are in an electronic version. The **Church Diary** section will contain dates of any forthcoming events, taken from the magazine and **Church Notices**, plus any others that people give me.

The whole website will visually enriched by a variety of artwork but you'll have to go on-line to find out what it's like! We're not exactly sure when this will be but it will be announced in church. In the meantime note that you can access **www.hampton-online.co.uk** where you will eventually be able to find the St. James's website via Local Services and Churches.

The church is grateful for the help given by all those who have been involved in setting up this site. In particular we would like to thank webmaster John Inglis, without whose expertise this website would not be happening, and also Gordon Stowell who has provided the illustrations which are similar in style to those he produces for the magazine.

Prill Hinckley

Website Administrator - 8979 0528

£2000 in Y2000

A first hand report from Sue Richardson of Christian Aid

On Sunday 12th March Sue Richardson came to talk to us about the two projects that our millennium appeal has helped to fund. In February she visited the Community Based Health Programme (CBHP) and the Water Supply project at Kyombe in south-west Tanzania. She also visited Milo, a well known place to us at St. James.

The CBHP reaches about 420 babies and their mothers. The health promoters are volunteers and they are charged with seeking out pregnant women and making sure the babies are registered and immunised. The programme tries to improve the nutrition of families by running a weekly clinic and by giving advice on how to improve animal stock.

The health clinic at Kyombe teaches the women about food preparation and the feeding of small children. About 30% of children in Tanzania are malnourished and problems usually occur at the end of breast feeding. The cause is not just poverty, but often the workload of the mother. She has to fetch water and wood, look after the house and feed the family, as well as work in the fields which are often some distance from the house. Toddlers are often left in the charge of an older child, which can so easily lead to nutritional problems.

At the clinic the weight of each baby and young child is recorded on their personal chart, which has three bands of colours: green, grey and red. The aim is to keep the children in the green as they grow, with the grey band to give a warning so that something can be done before the child ends up in the red. The clinic also gives family planning advice. The Tanzanian government is supportive of women and Sue commented on two posters at the clinic - one of a pregnant man and another about how men should listen to the advice of women in the home.

Whilst at Kyombe, Sue attended the official opening of the water project, a time of great celebration. Two natural sources of spring water, high up on both sides of the valley, are piped to storage tanks about halfway down and then on to 32 standpipes. The whole scheme is gravity fed, which means no pumps and no moving parts. It cost £78,000 and the villagers completed it in 6 months. They set up a water committee to manage the scheme and this committee will continue to maintain it. About 4000 people are now supplied close to where they live with fairly clean water - it needs to be boiled for at least 5 minutes before use. The saving of time and effort for the women is a great step forward.

Sue's visit to Tanzania obviously had a profound impact on her. At the start of her talk she said how hard it would be to convey her

experiences to us. But she managed very well. We are so lucky to have heard such a direct and speedy report on how our appeal money has helped. She finished her talk with a lovely recollection from a farewell party, during which the Vicar General reminded everyone of the story of Doubting Thomas. Sue had had the opportunity to travel to Tanzania and see the reality of life for people there and was blessed by the experience. But more blessed would be the people she spoke to and shared her stories with, who could not see what she had seen and yet believed that they needed to respond.

We must all take courage and energy from those words as we approach Christian Aid Week and strive to collect a record amount in this Jubilee year.

Our millennium project raised £10,000 - a fine achievement.

£9000 was sent direct to Christian Aid.

£1000 is being sent to St. Luke's Hospital in Milo as a special gift.

Many thanks to all who gave and to all who ran fund raising events.

I am sure you will feel it was well worthwhile.

Ann Peterken

The New PCC

At a well attended Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Sunday 9th April, the following were elected to the PCC.

Wendy Baker

Paul Peterken (Treasurer)

Elizabeth Gossage (Secretary)

Eila Severn

John Gossage

*Janet and Rodney Taylor**

Robert Hampton

David Taylor

*Caroline and Andrew Miskin**

Margaret Taylor

Kate O'Sullivan

Valerie Traylen

**May attend singly or together - sharing minutes and notices*

The ex officio members are:

The Rev Brian Leathard (Vicar and Chair) *Ann Peterken (Churchwarden)*

The Rev Freda Evans (Curate) *Dick Wilde (Churchwarden)*

Together with four members of the Deanery Synod:

Mona Gow

Lesley Mortimer

Ruth Mills

Pip Rowett

On Tuesday 16th May the PCC will attend a seminar on **Common Worship**, the new liturgy for the Church of England, in St. Mary's Church Hall at 8p.m. The meeting will be led by Archdeacon Malcolm Colmer, who has chaired the Committee for Liturgical Change in the Diocese. All are welcome to join the PCC at this meeting.

The Lenten course for "Churches Together Around Hampton" provoked much thought and discussion. It is based on the book "The Return of the Prodigal Son" by the Catholic priest and author, Henri Nouwen, written after viewing Rembrandt's painting in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg. We were each given a copy of the painting to study throughout the course. We began by reading the parable in Luke 15 v11-32. At each session we listened to extracts from the book and were invited to discuss and respond to prepared questions on what we heard.

The questions (seven or eight a session) were fascinating and penetrating because they revealed insights about a familiar story and some also touched a nerve! On the theme "The younger son returns", two of the questions were: "Do you sometimes seek from other people more than they can give? If so, how do you respond when they let you down?" and "Why do we find it hard to accept God's forgiveness?"

There was a depth to such questions which invited honest replies. Often in our group there were immediate responses and then came more thoughtful ones as we searched for truth and recalled our own experiences or lack of them on these deep issues.

For us it was a time of learning enabling us to become more effective in our daily lives. When a group comes together it is not easy to become expressive immediately and share honestly. We felt the quality of the questions ideally required more time for consideration and response. Just over an hour and a quarter for each session was perhaps not long enough.

Betty and John Rainbow

FROM THE MARCH REGISTERS

Baptisms

- 18 Benjamin Alexander Berrisford Soleil, 63 Wolsey Road
Kieran James Miller Soleil, 33 Dean Road, Hampton
- 19 Ruby Ellen Davis, 141 Fulwell Road, Teddington
- 26 Hugo Irwin Pumphrey, 183 Hanworth Road
Catherine Helen Rensmann, Bonn, Germany

Funeral

Ron Metcalfe, 5 Sanders Close



The special Children's Eucharist on Mothering Sunday was a happy and well attended occasion with gifts of flowers for all the "mums". Afterwards some of our young parishioners visited Laurel Dene to give flowers to the residents. The children enjoyed the occasion as much as the older people, and their visit was much appreciated.

On the evening of Passion Sunday, we heard the debut of the stunning new chamber choir, The Apocalypse Singers, conducted by Chris Hodges. *A Service for Passiontide in Music and Words* included Allegri Misere and works by Lassus, Purcell, Bruckner, Victoria and Gibbons, together with readings and a meditation. We look forward to more.

Well done to the Young Church and all who helped to make their Fashion Show a success. Over £160 was raised for £2000 in 2000, and we now know what the Vicar wears under his cassock and what down and out curates look like!

Warmest congratulations to Paul and Maggie Revis - they are grandparents again. Their daughter Julia has given birth to her second child, Thomas.

Several friends have had need of hospital care. Elsie Whittle has been in Hammersmith Hospital, but is now home. Chrissie also had another spell in Kingston Hospital. Billie Williams, Laurence Wheedon, Geoffrey Bowyer and Gill Gostling have all been patients but are now back home. We remember them all in our prayers and ask God to restore them to good health.

Peggy Gilbey of Winifred Road died in hospital recently following an operation. Her many friends, especially those at the Greenwood Centre, will miss her company very much.

Thank you to the parishioner who has responded to our appeal in the March issue of *The Spire* for help at Feltham Young Offenders Institute. It's good to see God working through our magazine!

Finally, what a relief that the major disruption of the road works on the bridge over the Longford in the Uxbridge Road have been completed and that all is back to normal.

DATES TO NOTE IN MAY

- 1 Philip & James, Apostles BANK HOLIDAY
- 2 George, Martyr, Patron Saint of England (tr)
- 8 Julian of Norwich, Spiritual Writer
- 14 **Christian Aid Week begins**
- 24 John & Charles Wesley, Priests, Poets & Pastors, 1788, 1791
- 25 The Venerable Bede, Monk & Scholar, 735
- 26 Augustine, First Bishop of Canterbury, 605
- 29 Rogation Day BANK HOLIDAY

COPY DATE FOR JUNE MAGAZINE: 10TH MAY