

I've been asked many times why our church is "St. James". I don't know. Does anyone have any suggestions? Answers, on a postcard please, and perhaps we can print them here in The Spire. St. James' Day falls this month and we shall be celebrating it on Sunday 7th July with Parish Communion at 11a.m. and then, from 5p.m. to 10p.m. a grand barbecue, with food and drink, music and dancing. Everyone is very welcome - families, children, singles, friends, parishioners and all. Tickets are available in church.

I don't know why the founders of our church decided to make St. James its patron or indeed I don't even know who made the decision. Was it the vicar of Hampton (St. Mary's) when the ancient parish church gave land for a church in Hampton Hill (or as it was then called New Hampton) to be carved out of its vast parish? Was it the then Bishop of London who consecrated the building? I guess in the end it doesn't really matter, suffice to say that St. James is as fine a patron for the 21st Century as he was for 1863 when the church was commissioned.

James, with his brother John, were members of Jesus' earliest group of friends. They were fishermen, sons of Zebedee who heard and saw Jesus in action and decided to join him in his challenge. Obviously they saw something special in this man Jesus of Nazareth even if they could not identify just exactly what it was. They groped in the dark often enough, and indeed, they got things wrong too. They wanted Jesus to be manageable, to fit their ideas and pattern. Remember, at the Transfiguration they offered to build huts for Jesus, Moses and Elijah. Their mother wanted her boys to have pride of place in the kingdom with one sitting on Jesus' right and one on his left.

We know that in 44 A.D. James had become the leader of the church in Jerusalem. He was strong, influential and a man of integrity. When, in order to please the whim of the Jewish opponents of Christianity, King Herod Agrippa had him arrested he refused to deny his faith and was executed by the sword. Lots of stories sprang up about him over the centuries, - traditions and myths which are of little historical truth but do perhaps contain a germ of a different truth about this James. He became a figure of great devotion in the Middle Ages and Santiago (St. James) de Compostella in northern Spain became the largest centre of pilgrimage after Jerusalem.

Whatever the truth, whatever the mystery James had faith which he lived out to the full. He led the faithful Christians in times of uncertainty and persecution. He didn't give up or conform to the world's biggest powers and influences. He stood up for what he found in Jesus Christ - a love which is strong and sacrificial, a prayerfulness which is as true in word as in action, a forgiveness which wants a new start and a desire for life in all its fullness. That's a great patron to have - one who shows us what God is like. A patron saint we would do well to follow in our day.

Brian Leathard

FAREWELL TO THE GREENWOOD CENTRE



Parting is such sweet sorrow - how very true.

My decision to part from the Greenwood Centre was not easy but was, I believe, the right decision for me and for The Voluntary Care Group. Someone once said to me why change if it is not broken! I believe change is necessary to grow and develop. Standing still is not always for the best. I started to work for V.C.G. in 1987 and at that time the office was in the U.R.C., on Hampton Hill High Street. I consider myself very fortunate to have worked with Hannah Stanton one of our co-founders; she sat on our committee for many years whilst I was there. I liked Hannah and she always made you feel she liked you. On a recent visit to South Africa for a conference on "Women and Violence" I was reminded of Hannah and her stand on human rights. Although Hannah was part of a global stage she translated her views into her local community - the importance of citizenship and of helping each other. Her values and vision are as fresh today as they were in 1974 when V.C.G. was founded.

We are fortunate to have a rich and resourceful community. Releasing the energies of our community is, I believe, what we have tried to achieve in the Greenwood Centre. We are constantly changing to meet new challenges and to address the inequalities and disadvantages in our community.

We moved to the Greenwood Centre and developed it into a healthy living centre for everyone in the community. We developed community transport to meet the needs of our community. We have taken very positive steps to address the problems experienced by young people by setting up a mobile youth café providing activities and services.

The Greenwood Centre should be seen as a resource centre for the community. Working in genuine partnership with the other local groups and in particular the local churches, providing opportunities for local people to be good citizens; linking local resources and services to needs; all to improve the local residents well-being.

We now have a new Director in the Greenwood Centre, new members in the local council, and a new structure in the health services. This is the future. I have great faith in all the people I have come to know over the years; in particular my connections with St. James's both personal and public. I believe Hannah's vision will continue to grow and I will watch with great interest the next phase. Au revoir and not goodbye.

Deirdre Curran

3rd Hampton Hill Scout Group

Barn Dance and Barbeque

Friday, July 12th, 7.30p.m. - midnight

Hampton Hill Scout H.Q. (By School Road recreation ground)

Tickets: Adults - £12.50 (inc. 1st glass wine or beer)

Under 12's - £1.50 (inc. drinks of squash & ice lolly)

from Fiona Jones - 8979 2201 or Liz Wilmot - 8977 9434

3RD HAMPTON HILL BROWNIES

It's been a while since we let you know what the Brownies have been up to and for that I apologise. The Pack continue to work for a range of interest badges including Road Safety, and to enjoy the usual games, making friends and craft activities.



However as with all voluntary organisations there is a constant problem recruiting new volunteers. Angela has a long way to travel and as we need two leaders to run the Pack, Ian (my husband) often helps out at the last minute.

Eventually Angela and I will want more time to pursue other interests and before that time comes it would be nice to share the workload and bring fresh ideas to the pack. So why not come along one Tuesday evening and see what you could do to help?

Brown Owl

A.L.M.A.

Angola, London and Mozambique Association

July 12th marks the fourth anniversary of the signing of the covenant at St. Paul's Cathedral cementing the link between the dioceses of Lebombo (Angola and Southern Mozambique), Niassa (Northern Mozambique) and London respectively. Much has moved forward since the link's inception and the Anglican Church continues to grow in both countries.

On April 4th the Angolan Government and U.N.I.T.A. signed a cease-fire agreement ending 27 years of civil war. President dos Santos declared the war over saying, "Peace will endure because the Angolans want it" and General Kamorteiro of U.N.I.T.A. stated "The price of peace is infinitely lower than the cost of war." These are powerful words and let us pray there is real conviction here. With a war legacy of 4 million displaced people and 50,000 orphans they desperately need our prayers and assistance.

Bishop Dinis' plea to turn "swords into ploughshares" has resulted in over 200,000 weapons being decommissioned in exchange for bicycles, ploughs and sewing machines. However Niassa, which is the size of England, is now without a Bishop and Bishop Dinis, despite failing health and his existing commitments in Lebombo, has been appointed Vicar General until a new Bishop has been found. Please pray for him.

Elizabeth Wilmot

A.L.M.A.



Council for Christians and Jews Staines & District Branch A.G.M. -

'Can Christians and Jews ever understand each other?'

"I'm usually not very good with theology, but this I managed to follow," was the comment of one lady attending the A.G.M. of the Staines and District Branch of the Council of Christians and Jews. The meeting had been addressed by Clive Lawton, author, broadcaster, lecturer at the London School of Jewish Studies and Radio 4's only Jewish 'Lenten' speaker. His subject had been 'Can Christians and Jews ever understand each other?', but as I explained to the aforementioned lady, a subject is as interesting as the speaker not the other way around. Mr. Lawton certainly comes in that category, articulate, witty and always both interesting and thought provoking. Those who have heard him before will always want to return for more.

The two religious groups could learn from each other. Christians were most knowledgeable of biblical texts, particularly the Prophets. Jews used texts as a basis for interpretation and there were often different explanations - sometimes contradictory. He said that the fact that there were four Gospels showed a Jewish influence! This point provoked a question that led into the theology to which I referred at the beginning of this article.

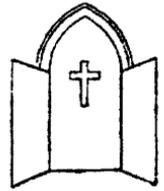
Mr. Lawton said that theologically speaking Jews were closer to Muslims, but, as far as Christians were concerned, differences should be a springboard for more engaged discussion. He also spoke of Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist approaches in a talk of which this article only describes a brief part. He had began by reminding us that we are all descended from a common ancestor. The Council of Christians and Jews - now 60 years old gave reassurance that members of the two religions were not an utterly different species.

Clive Lawton had spent 10 years in Liverpool. While there, he had been asked to join a 'dialogue group' by the then Anglican Bishop of Liverpool Dr. David Shepherd. This group also included the late Roman Catholic Archbishop Derek Worlock. Dr. Shepherd said that the idea was that he particularly wanted to discuss "the difficult bits". With a speaker of Clive Lawton's calibre, the "difficult bits" become that much easier.

We are indeed fortunate in the C.C.J. in the high standard of speakers. Right up there with the most eloquent, is the Director of the C.C.J. herself, Sister Margaret Shepherd. Sister Margaret will be giving a talk entitled "Religious Life Today" about the evolution of the modern convent and monastery from the days of the Audrey Hepburn film 'The Nun's Story' (of somewhat more substance than 'The Sound of Music'!) to the current day (Sister Margaret dresses as we do). This will take place on Thursday 3rd October at 8p.m. at Our Lady of the Rosary R.C. Church, Gresham Road, Staines. If you are interested in becoming a C.C.J. member, please contact our local branch secretary, Mrs. Carole Greville-Giddings on 020 8979 6592.

"OPENING OUR DOORS"

The Official Launch of the Project to Develop the West Porch

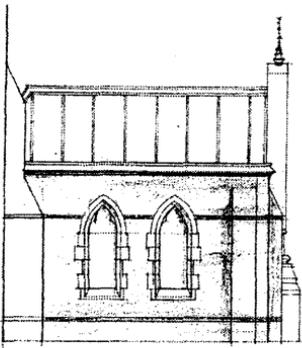


What a fabulous weekend to launch our new Jubilee year project - "Opening our Doors". On the 5th, 6th and 7th July we have organized a Festival weekend to not only celebrate our Saint's day, but to also officially launch our project to develop the West Porch.

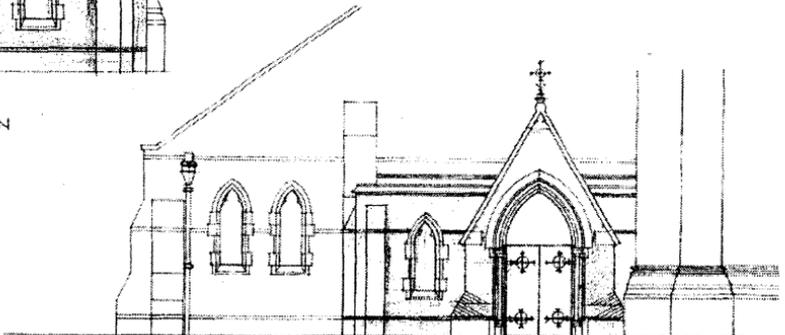
The outline drawings are shown in detail below, however in brief, the plans will involve the redevelopment of the West Porch to create a wonderful new space within which will be an office for the church and community use, a quiet room for private discussion and counselling and a toilet with disabled access and baby changing facilities. Even more exciting is the design of the new porch. The roof will be glazed, as will the doors., and this will let much needed light resonate into the church, as well as allowing a direct view from St. James's Road, down the length of the church.

We will be launching the project at our **Grand Family B.B.Q. on 7th July 2002**, and there we will announce our plans of how we aim to raise enough support, sponsorship and external funding over the next six months to allow us to begin building work early in 2003. Our aim is then to "OPEN OUR NEW DOORS" on St. James's Day 2003 - What a challenge!

If you would like further information on our "OPENING OUR DOORS" project, would like to support us in any way, or would like to book some tickets for any of the events during our Festival Weekend, please contact Kim Smith on 020 8979 2617.



NORTH ELEVATION



ST. JAMES'S CHURCH - HAMPTON HILL FESTIVAL WEEKEND

Friday 5th July 8.30 pm

ORGAN RECITAL

Christopher Cromar

Celebrating the centenary of composer

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

Plus Bach and Mozart

Admission £5 (Conc. £3)

Saturday 6th July 7.30 pm

CONCERT

The Apocalypse Singers

Brahms and Elgar

Part songs, music for clarinet, violin, harp, horns

Christopher Hodges (Conductor) Christopher Cromar (Organ)

Admission £10 (Conc. £5)

Sunday 7th July (St. James's Day)

PARISH COMMUNION 11.00 am

GRAND FAMILY BARBECUE 5.00 pm – 10.00 pm

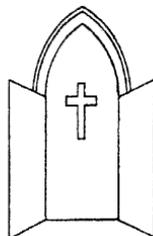
Food and drink, music and dancing, fun and games for all ages

Admission £5 (Conc. £3)

Proceeds from these to:

“OPENING OUR DOORS”

Visit our Website: www.stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk



*For further information on these events and booking
details please contact Kim Smith on 020 8979 2617*

SAINT MARY MAGDELENE

It's not easy to write about Mary Magdelene because we only know of her from the Gospel stories and the instances and circumstances are well memorized by us all. We know that she came from Magdela, a town on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. She is often called "The Sinner" expressing a pre-eminence of guilt and there is strong implication of a previous disorderly life.

First mention of Mary Magdelene is at the house of Simon, the Pharisee. She had heard that Jesus was to take supper there and took a jar of ointment to anoint his feet. To do so, she had to expose herself to the disgrace of a crowded honourable assembly - this was a "woman of ill repute" well known locally. No doubt this was the reason her following ministrations were carried out, we read, in silence. She wept. Her tears washed Christ's feet, with her hair she wiped them, she kissed them and anointed them with oil.

Simon was understandably concerned, as host to the gathering he would have felt responsibility for his guests. He then thought that Jesus, if he were a true prophet, would be aware that this woman was a sinner and chide her. However, Jesus took him aside and explained His accepting response by the story of the two debtors released from debt - who would feel the greatest affection for the forgiving creditor, the one who owed less or the one who had owed more? He pointed out that her ministrations to Him showed such great love and significantly, no other person present had thought to do likewise. "Thy faith has saved thee, go in peace".

From that time the woman from whom "seven devils went out", along with several other women including Joanna, Chuza and Susannah, accompanied Jesus wherever He went.

There is the story of Jesus in the house of Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead. Mary then anointed His head and caused consternation - this time from Judas Iscariot who complained of the waste of the costly balm! Once more Jesus defended Mary Magdelene and said that the poor would always be with us but He would soon depart; it was as an act of memorial.

Mary's gratitude and devotion attended Him in His passion, she stood under the cross and did not abandon Him after death. She left only to observe the Sabbath festival from sunset on Friday evening to sunset on Saturday then went to buy spices to anoint the body. Returning at dawn and finding no body she ran to tell Peter and the other disciples. Whilst standing outside the sepulchre, Jesus appeared to Mary the first person to see the risen Lord. One can read significance into the fact that she was the chosen one, the repentant sinner.

It is an ancient popular French tradition that Saint Mary Magdelene, being expelled by the Jews, put to sea accompanied by Martha and Lazarus and landed safely at Marseilles. She retired to a cave in the wilderness fed and attended by Angels. The mountains surrounding her grotto are named "La Sainte Baume" in honour of her famous ointment.

She is patron saint of Contemplatives, Fallen Women, Glovers, Hairdressers and Perfumers.

Margaret Lawrance

HEAR OUR SILENCE

"Hear our Silence" is an invitation to silent prayer, open to people of all creeds and races. It is organised by John Skinner, a former Jesuit and now a full-time writer and lecturer.

I attended one of his workshops in May. We were a group of nine people, and we started our day by getting to know each other and having a general discussion. John explained how he had spent some time living and praying with the Carthusian hermit monks at Parkminster, and he has based "Hear our Silence" on this spiritual and healing experience.

We had quite a deep discussion in the afternoon, a "lectio divina", when we studied some writing by Cyril (a Carthusian) called "Attending to God". We talked about "self" and "soul", "emptying ourselves" and "becoming receptive to God's light", how prayer is "entering into the depths of the heart and dwelling there in peace".

During the day we had two half-hour sessions of silent prayer. We sat in a circle with three candles in the centre. John played some Carthusian plain-chant, then he read a short passage. After that we remained silent for half an hour until the music was gradually reintroduced and we all joined hands and wished each other "peace". I expect it was a different experience for all of us, but I think we were all moved. I, personally, find it quite difficult to keep my own thoughts at bay and remain receptive and empty for more than a minute or two at a time. There are various recipes to help, like repeating a mantra, concentrating on a part of your body, etc., but I think we all have to find our own way. Praying like this in a group was good. It was encouraging to feel the warmth of human presence and the sharing of God's presence with others in the silence. Altogether, I found it was calming and uplifting.

I think that, for all of us, finding a little while to be silent and still each day, feeling the presence of God and making ourselves available to Him, is an enormous help in our busy and often stressful existence. I believe that all through our lives God is reaching out to us. Sometimes, we do not heed or hear Him for a long time. That is where I think "silent prayer" comes in; it helps us to relax and wait *patiently* for God to speak to us.

"Be still and know that I am God". Psalm 46: verse 10.

G. Rosten

For full details please write to: John Skinner, Hear our Silence, 19 Church Hill, Honiton. EX14 2DB (Tel: 01404 45812)

ROYAL NATIONAL LIFEBOAT INSTITUTION

Sunday 7th July New Lifeboat Station at Teddington Open Day

11a.m. - 4p.m. Entrance via Manor Road Recreation Ground.

See how the station works and watch the lifeboat on exercise.

Tuesday 16th July Steamer Trip from Kingston Landing Stage at 7.15p.m. Music and Full Buffet Supper.

Tickets £16.00 from Jill Goddard 8287 7438.



Lifeboats
Royal National Lifeboat Institution

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2002

Thank you to all those who collected, donated and counted money. Without your help there would be no Christian Aid Week! This year's total of £3645 reflects the generosity and hard work of many people at St. James and both Christian Aid and I are very grateful for your time, money and effort.

Special thanks to all who signed their collection envelopes as tax payers. The amount of money collected is increased by the tax pay-back. So if you gave £5 in your envelope and signed your name, the amount received by Christian Aid becomes about £6.25. When all the money in the signed envelopes is added together a very substantial sum is given to the charity by the Inland Revenue. Our total of £3654 could have become about £4570.

Once again our band of collectors have given willingly of their time and energy. In this way they have "made a difference" to the lives of some of the poorest people in the world.

Margaret Taylor



Our thanks to everyone who helped with the Jubilee Open Day on 2nd June. The event was blessed by fine sunny weather and visitors of all ages enjoyed the activities on offer, although only a few brave souls mounted the ladder leading to the top of the spire.

The highlight of the event came when Ramani climbed the tower and threw buns down to delighted visitors. The last time this happened was January 1888 when Mrs. Bligh, wife of a

previous vicar, threw buns down to parishioners celebrating the completion of the tower and spire that were built to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

Please remember those in the community who are unwell - Ruth Gostling, Frances Beaumont now recovering from a knee operation and Stan Bannister, Kath Brooks, and Peter Ryan who are still in hospital.

It is with great sadness that we record the death of Ron Bridges after some weeks in hospital. Ron was a faithful member of St. James's and will be greatly missed. We send our love and deepest sympathy to Roma, her sons and grandchildren at this sad time.

We remember too all the young people who have sat exams recently.

We send congratulations to Mary and Dick Wilde on the birth of a grandson, Cameron.

Confirmation will be on Thursday 21st November. If anyone of any age is interested please contact the clergy.

We must apologise for an error in Round the Spire in the last issue. The 40 year marriage mentioned then was that of Richard and Dorothy Warder! Sorry.

FROM THE MAY REGISTERS

Baptisms

- 19 Megan Sarah Turnill, 27 Holly Road, Hampton Hill
26 Finn Edward Curtis Cranston, 111 Strodes Crescent, Staines

Weddings

- 4 Alexander Latham-Boal and Helena Jeffries
18 Francis Perry and Shelley Mason

Funerals

- | | | |
|----|--|----|
| 9 | Betty Herd-Bond, 21 Bayleaf Close | 83 |
| 16 | Anthony Finch, 37 Jasmine Road, West Ewell | 56 |
| 20 | Charles Kennedy, Bayleaf Close, Hampton Hill | 83 |
| 21 | Reta Mcaffee, Laurel Dene | 84 |

Interment of Ashes

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| 3 | Timothy Seward, Flat 6, Guildford Street, London WC1N 1DT | 51 |
| 27 | Rosetta Stagg | 83 |

DATES TO NOTE IN JULY

- 3 Thomas the Apostle
6 Thomas More, Scholar and John Fisher, Bishop, Reformation Martyrs, 1535
7 ST. JAMES' DAY
1100 Parish Communion
1700-2200 Parish Barbecue, tickets available now
15 Swithun, Bishop of Winchester, 862
23 2000 Parochial Church Council
29 Mary, Martha and Lazarus, Companions of our Lord
30 William Wilberforce, Social Reformer, 1833

*"God has changed all our sunsets
to sunrise."*

S Clement of Alexandria 2nd-3rd C

