

I have been accused of many things but green fingered is certainly not one of them. However, even in what passes as a garden at the vicarage, I have noticed the effects of mild winters or is it global warming? Our quince tree blossomed in January, our daffodils are showing their golden trumpets in the first week of February and alas the grass seems to be starting to grow (or what little there is of it between the moss). What doesn't seem to have changed though is the gradual increase in the length of daylight.

Long before the birth of Christ our ancestors were lighting great bonfires in mid-winter to encourage the sun back up into the sky and this Yuletide festival received a Christian layer with the imposition of Christmas - light shining at the darkest time of the year. In March our days lengthen very considerably and it is to do with this lengthening that the root of the word Lent finds its meaning. Lent is a spring time season when the days lengthen. Traditionally the time just before the full blossoming of garden flowers. But whatever the cause of early blossoming Lent exists within the Church as a reminder that the full blossoming comes only after considerable struggle through the cold and darkness of winter. Traditionally the church has taught that Lent, which was originally a time of fasting and preparation for baptism at Easter, can be best used by the whole Christian community as a time of solidarity and sharing with those suffering in the world that we might deepen our sense of discipleship by giving up some of the material benefits we enjoy. I would certainly want to argue that Lent can be extremely valuable for those outside the Christian community as for those inside it, in abstaining, fasting from the things we take for granted and give no second thought to. In this age of dietary care and awareness of our physical health it is no bad thing for any of us to consider giving up something sweet, something extra to our needs as an act of self-discipline.

However for the Christian, while such acts of self-discipline are important in themselves, nevertheless Lent needs to take us further. Lent needs to increase in us a sense of commitment to those who are without the very things we need and use in our daily lives. Lent needs to be a time when we are made aware of the cost of following Christ, be this in abstinence or in taking on other attributes or activities. There has been a trend in recent years to denigrate the simple gesture but I am not convinced that such a denigration is at all helpful, in fact I think it rather cynical.

Giving up sugar in your tea so that it tastes less attractive is one thing but giving up sugar in your tea which tastes less attractive and enables you to focus your thoughts and prayers upon those who work in the sugar production fields of the Caribbean for a wage which will not give them the basics of life existence is a very different story. Walking instead of taking the bus or the car will not only save you money but will give you time and space to notice your neighbour and their needs, to meditate and

pray as you walk along. To take on popping into church every time you walk down Park Road or St. James' Road any morning during Lent and come inside to pray for those with whom you are spending your day or your life is a positive and meaningful action not only for Lent but for every day. So my plea would be not to overlook the small disciplines of Lent but to take on that which would cause you to grow in commitment, in prayer, in discipleship of the one who was prepared to give up everything for love of you and me, including giving up His life on the cross that we might find new life in Him.

You will, of course, be welcome any week-day morning during Lent at St. James', when the church will be open, and at any of the Lenten services, details of which can be found elsewhere in this magazine.

*Brian Leathard*

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## **FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT**

**1-14 March**



### **10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the FAIRTRADE Mark (1994-2004)**

**Our scouts and guides have remembered**

**Come and join them on Sunday 7 March**

Look out for the Fairtrade label on a growing range of products – sugar, bananas, fruit juice, chocolate, tea, coffee, cocoa, honey, dried fruit, nuts, cereals, geobars, biscuits .....

Available in many supermarkets or at the URC Church in Hampton Hill High Street on a Saturday morning from 10.30am-noon.

**A personal challenge**

**How about committing to spend £2 extra a month by choosing some Fairtrade products?**

**Buying Fairtrade helps poor producers and sends a powerful message that we want to see a fairer world and are prepared to put our money where our mouth is.**



# St. James's Chronicles

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## The Hampton Hill Parish Magazine 1904 Extracts from the March Issue

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I find I have the opportunity of sending a short account of our voyage up to this point, which will reach the printer in time for the March Magazine, and I think you may be interested to hear something of what we have passed through and seen. The first five days were very stormy and the terrible Bay of Biscay did more than keep up her terrible character. A number of small accidents happened, but everybody is now convalescent or well.

We crossed Trafalgar's Bay on Monday. In the afternoon we arrived at Tangier, in Morocco, and caught our first glimpse of Oriental life. Tangier is the only town in Morocco which is progressing. The electric light and telephone are in use. The climate is delicious and many Europeans go there for the winter. It belonged to England about 230 years ago, but was given up again in 1684. Christian Missions are active and are doing much good. The printing press also is a powerful influence of a hopeful kind.

On leaving Tangier a great change came over the seas, "The wild winds hushed, The angry deep, sank like a little child to sleep." The sky became lit up with the most brilliant colours conceivable as the sun went down, and we moved up the Straits of Gibraltar as if we were gliding over a sea of glass. The Great Rock was a magnificent sight in the fading light.

We have now been four days in the Mediterranean, enjoying what would be midsummer weather in England. The sea is the deepest blue, and fleecy clouds hang in the sky, and every moment the scene changes as we pass along the African coast on the one side or the Spanish coast on the other. Yesterday we landed at Palma in the Island of Majorca. It was not easy to get ashore as a strong wind was blowing and we had to go in the ship's boats.

We first visited the beautiful cathedral, where crowds of people were present at the Ash Wednesday service, all looking very devout. The people are of Arabic descent, and appear to be very quiet and contented. We went a long drive of 32 miles, in pretty little carriages made of very light framework covered with canvas. We passed through miles of almonds and apricots, orchards in full blossom, and then through more miles of olive yards, and orange groves with the fruit fully ripe. We saw fields of peas and beans in blossom, and quantities of narcissus and purple anemones growing wild. Majorca is said to be one of the most beautiful islands in this beautiful part of the world. It never freezes, it never snows, and in the hottest summer there are always cool breezes in the mountains. The chief production is fruit and the famous majolica ware. We are now approaching Marseilles, where we expect to take in a number of passengers, and then we move on to Sicily, and expect to land at Syracuse, where St. Paul stopped for three days when he was being taken as a prisoner to be tried before Caesar.

I am, my dear friends, Yours very sincerely.

CHARLES R. JOB

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## Milo Hospital Tanzania

*The Reverend Christopher Wagstaff, who is our liaison with Milo Hospital Tanzania through U.S.P.G. wrote with the latest news at Christmas:*

"Ludewa Dispensary, as you know, had a fire earlier in the year and they have been busy raising money to open it again. I believe St James' has made generous donation for this work and I heard a few weeks ago that the corrugated iron for the new roof has been purchased. I am hoping that we will be able to raise £2,500 to build a Mother and Baby unit at the Ludewa Dispensary. It is badly needed in this very poor area where Aids is sadly rampant.

It is good news now that the hospital has Joseph Mlewa who has trained to be a Clinical Officer. He will be a great help to Dr. Looga and Benanieh. He is such a nice young man and I was delighted that he wanted to go to Milo when he finished his training. He has nothing in the way of worldly goods and I have had to help him buy a bed and mattress, a stool, table and cooking pots. Hearing such things makes us realise how fortunate we are."

*This is encouraging news from Milo where our on-going support is so much appreciated.*

If you wish to make a donation yourself, please speak to me - Margaret Taylor tel: 8979 9361.

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## THE CREATION Haydn

**PALM SUNDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> April at 7.30pm**

The performance will comprise all three parts, using the English translation developed by van Swieten and Haydn. The three soloists (Gabriel, Uriel and Raphael) are from Twickenham's local professional opera company, Opera Unlimited. The orchestra, led by the Maygrove Ensemble, is made up of amateur and professional instrumentalists.

Director: Ash Charles, Director of Music at St. James's Church

If you would like to participate in the performance, contact Ash Charles at [ash.charles@progov.co.uk](mailto:ash.charles@progov.co.uk) or 020 8943 5289 or 07775 783 949 for details of rehearsals.

Tickets: before 21 March £6

after 21 March £8 (concessions £6)

# REVIEW

*We have two reviews this month, from members of our congregation who have enjoyed two very different fitness activities.*

## AMIDA

It's a large building set in pleasant grounds, very attractive with lofty central open space and many artistic flower arrangements. It's often full of people and caters for many varied activities - some energetic but some more contemplative - a place of worship. As I am churchwarden, you may assume by now that I am talking of our own church building but I'm not. I'm talking of the other meeting place of parishioners - Amida! The worship there is of the body.

I joined up last September and made my first visit at the beginning of January, soon after its opening. I was greeted at the desk by Tina and we had a chat. Then as I walked through the very inviting bar area I bumped into Hal and Eila who had been for a tour of the gym. I thought how nice it was to at least know a couple of people at Amida. I went into the well-appointed changing area and got suitably attired for my swim. The pool was warm and I thrashed up and down for about 20 minutes to prove to myself that even I could do exercise of some nature! After the pool I went into the unbelievably luxurious and relaxing Wet Spa area. I plunged into the Jacuzzi and heard a voice saying "Hello Liz, fancy seeing you here!" My natural reaction was to greet our illustrious vicar with an embrace but changed my mind upon realising that we didn't have many clothes on! We laughed and had a brief conversation above the roar of the wonderful water jets. My journey took me into the sauna (but too dry for me), the steam room (mmm - lovely and good for the voice) and finally the warm relaxation pool where you float about gazing up at the starry ceiling with soft music of whale noises and New Age Music playing. I felt good as, finally, I returned to the changing area. Here I met Kim Duller and we had a chat about the exciting stage we had arrived at with the Opening Our Doors project.

I dressed and decided to pop into the Beauty Treatment area to book a facial massage. Here I found another old friend, Alyson, working as a receptionist. We always have loads to talk about as I taught her, and later her son, at local schools. She booked my appointment and I quickly viewed the treatment rooms which seemed like a foretaste of heaven!

So now you know what churchwardens do in their spare time! It's a wonderful place and is providing employment and opportunity for exercise, relaxation and chinwagging. Might I suggest, Brian, that future committee meetings might be held in the steam room?!

*Liz Butler*

## **FAMILY FESTIVITIES AT HAMPTON COURT PALACE'S ICE RINK AND FROST FAYRE**

It was a perfect winter's afternoon on the day of our visit; the air was cold, crisp and clear with just a hint of the soon-to-arrive Christmas celebrations. Georgia's arm had only just come out of plaster, so she could only watch with Natasha and baby Arthur. I helped Laura, Alice and Joseph (our neighbour's son) to put on their skates and I used my old ice-hockey skates (a memento from a mis-spent youth at Richmond Ice Rink).

Once the ice had been prepared by a little tractor (no match for Richmond's majestic "Zamboni" ice preparation machine), we all spent an enjoyable hour skating on the ice to classical background music in front of the glorious setting of Hampton Court Palace. During that hour the children's confidence quickly improved, even three-year-old Alice's. At the end of the session the stewards quickly cleared the ice for the next session and for a brief moment I almost had the rink to myself; it brought back memories of speed skating round Richmond Rink. Everyone had a mug of steaming hot chocolate in the adjoining aptly-named Frost Fayre Café before returning home after a very enjoyable family outing, on one of those winter afternoons when you feel glad to be alive. So we could not recommend highly enough that you get your skates on (excuse the pun) and book your tickets early if the ice-rink returns again later this year.

*Grant Clifford*

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## **GUIDES' FASHION SHOW**

At the end of last term, the Guides held a recycled fashion show. All the outfits were made from old clothing and recycled materials. It was a great success and a wonderful experience to be part of.

There were different themes at the show. These were "Grease", "Underwear", "The Flintstones", "Evening Wear" and a wedding. All the Guides strutted their stuff along a catwalk built from chairs, having come through a recycled curtain! After the show, there was a raffle and free snacks. Altogether we raised £177 for the Guide Friendship Fund and the Children's Society.

Thank you to everyone who donated money and who came along to the evening. Also thanks to the people who provided materials to make the outfits and who gave up their time helping to make everyone look so wonderful! Make sure you're there for the next Guide event.

*Panda Patrol*



**Council of Christians and Jews  
(Staines and District Branch)**

**A  
CCJ JEWISH  
INITIATIVE  
TO PEACE IN  
NORTHERN  
IRELAND**

**A revealing insight by  
REV JONATHAN GORSKY  
(CCJ EDUCATION ADVISOR)**

**Thursday 25th March 2004  
Staines Synagogue  
Westbrook Road, Staines  
Commencing at 8.00 pm**

**Admission £2.00 per person  
including refreshments**

**3<sup>RD</sup> HAMPTON HILL BROWNIES**

As I write this the February issue of The Spire has only been available for a couple of days so it would be unrealistic to expect anyone to have come forward to volunteer to run the Brownies as they will not have had a chance to read our appeal. However, a couple of mums have offered to assist so all we need now is a "leader". We all hope to get together in March so if you would like to join us to find out what is involved please ring 020 8895 7899 during office hours for further information.

I will write with an update in May and wouldn't it be lovely to tell you that we were inundated with offers and that 3<sup>rd</sup> Hampton Hill Brownies will continue to be part of the life here at St. James's?

*Brown Owl*

## MORE THAN AN OFFICE . . . . ?

*Surely the Lord is in this place; and I did not know it. How awesome is this place!*<sup>1</sup>

Our parish church is a sacred place. It is a place where God is known in prayer, in worship, and in silence. It is a place where Gods' story connects with our experiences at baptisms, funerals and weddings. It is where we gather together as the Body of Christ at the Eucharist, and from where we are sent out into our community in love. We cannot confine God to a building, but in encountering God in a holy place we find him elsewhere.

St. James's stands as witness to the presence of God in our world, and the way in which we develop and use the building speaks of God and plays an important part in our mission as a church. A previous generation added the spire which points upwards reflecting the mystery and wonder of God. In developing the west porch we are witnessing to that same God, who in Christ chose to live among us. It will be much more than an office. The church will be open beyond the times of daily prayer. Just as in Advent and Lent, there will be the opportunity to enter the building; to pause for a time of stillness; to be before God with our concerns, anxieties or joys.

The use of glass for the roof and doors will create a light and welcoming space. Viewing the length of the church from the street will speak of our vision and mission; of openness to the world and our desire to share God's love. Space for administration and space to meet with those wishing to talk enables us to open to others a space to be before God, to rest in his presence. We will have the opportunity to use the building in new ways. The accessibility and openness of our parish church allows us to communicate God's love.

*This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Genesis 28: 16-17

*Julie Gittoes*



### SPRING CLEANING

Hall : Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March

Church : Friday 26 and Saturday 27 March  
from 9.30am

TWO opportunities to help! Please come along



## FROM THE JANUARY REGISTERS

### BAPTISMS

- 18 Samuel Andrew Harwood-White, Teddington  
Kipsi Florence Owen-Thomas, Twickenham  
Thomas James Edward Gaymor, Twickenham

### FUNERALS

- 5 Ivy Houston, Hampton Hill 89  
Alwyn Hodges, Teddington 92  
9 Doris Shailer, Hampton 90

## DATES TO NOTE IN MARCH

- 1 David, patron saint of Wales, 601  
2 Chad, Bishop of Lichfield and missionary, 672  
7 **Lent 2**  
8 Edward, King, Bishop of Lincoln, 1910  
14 **Lent 3**  
17 Patrick, Bishop and patron saint of Ireland, 460  
19 Joseph of Nazareth  
20 Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne and missionary, 687  
21 **Lent 4, Mothering Sunday**  
24 Oscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, martyr, 1980  
25 **Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary**  
28 **Lent 5, Passion Sunday**  
11.00 Annual Parochial Church Meeting - Hall  
31 John Donne, priest and poet, 1631

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## WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

**5<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2004**

prepared by the Christian Women of Panama

2pm and 8pm at St Theodore's Church, Hampton

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**COPY DATE FOR APRIL MAGAZINE 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**