

JUNE 2009

# The Spire

## Trinity

**APCM** how the financial crisis has affected us



# The Spire

St James's Church  
Registered Charity No 1129286

This Spire is produced nine times a year on behalf of the PCC of St James's Church.

We make no charge for this magazine but hope that you will contribute towards the production costs, enabling us to expand our important outreach across the parish.

If you are a regular reader please consider making an annual donation. Cheques should be made payable to 'The PCC of St James' and sent to Spire Appeal c/o the Parish Office.

Thank you.

## GET IN TOUCH

### STORIES, FEATURES

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### AROUND THE SPIRE

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### WEBSITE/YOUNG SPIRE

**Prill Hinckley** is the church webmaster. She also compiles the monthly Young Spire page. Please email: ✉ p.m.hinckley@blueyonder.co.uk

### CIRCULATION

The Spire is available free from church. It is also delivered across the parish or posted further afield. To find out about receiving a regular copy this way please contact Susan Horner:

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### NEXT ISSUE/COPY DEADLINE

The July issue for St James's Day will be published on Sunday 28 June.

All copy must be with us by **Monday 8 June**.

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**Writers** Susan Horner and Dick Wilde

**Regular contributors** Prill Hinckley, Debbie Oades and Peter Vannozi

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### PUBLISHING

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When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

# WELCOME

June 2009



In this issue you will find details of the work of the church during the past year and the new PCC elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 26 April.

Although the church's financial year ends in December each year, the working year goes to the end of April.

This year we have elected Don Barrett as the new Treasurer to replace Anne Cowlin. Anne has moved from Hampton Hill to Andover and this made it a long journey to attend meetings and deal with the practical day-to-day running of the accounts. We had hoped to make a presentation to Anne, and thank her for all her work, at the APCM but unfortunately she was taken ill the day before and couldn't come to her last meeting. We wish Anne and Peter well in their home in Andover.

We hope you will enjoy reading the feature in the centrespread, giving some background into the life of St James's and the people who serve the church.

Best wishes

Janet

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janunh@btinternet.com

For the latest news: [www.stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk](http://www.stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk)

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**Treasurer**  
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**Theatre Club**  
Maria Beaumont 020 8943 4336

**Weekly Notices/Pew Sheet**  
Kirstie Hird 020 8941 6003

► **UPDATES**  
Please tell us about any changes

## OUR CLERGY



### ► VICAR

**Revd Peter Vannozi**  
Peter was born in Hanwell in 1962, but owes his surname to his Italian great-grandfather who came from Florence to the UK in the late 19th century.

☎ 020 8979 2069

✉ vicar@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

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### ► CURATE

**Revd Debbie Oades**  
Debbie was born in Hull in 1963 and is a self-supporting minister.

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✉ debbieoades@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

### ► BAPTISM AND WEDDING ENQUIRIES

These should be made in person in church on a Saturday morning from 10-10.30am.

## PARISH OFFICE



### ► PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

**Kirstie Hird**  
For enquiries and hall bookings. The office is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.

☎ 020 8941 6003

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## SERVICES FOR JUNE

### • Sundays

• 8am Holy Communion  
• 9.30am Parish Communion

### • 7 June - Trinity Sunday

• Isaiah 6.1-8  
• Romans 8.12-17  
• John 3.1-17

### • 14 June - 1st Sunday after Trinity

• Ezekiel 17.22-24  
• 2 Corinthians 5.6-10 [11-13] 14-17  
• Mark 4.26-34

### • 21 June - 2nd Sunday after Trinity

• Job 38.1-11  
• 2 Corinthians 6.1-13  
• Mark 4.35-41

### • 28 June - 3rd Sunday after Trinity

• Wisdom of Solomon 1.13-15; 2.23,24  
• 2 Corinthians 8.7-15  
• Mark 5.21-43

### • 1st Sunday in month

• 7 June  
• 9.30am All-age Communion

### • Mondays-Fridays (but not Tuesdays)

• 9.15am Morning Prayer

### • Tuesdays

• 9.30am Holy Communion

### • 1st Wednesday in month

• 3 June  
• 7am Commuter Communion

### • 1st Thursday in month

• 4 June  
• 2pm Holy Communion

## Don't join the blame game



As summer approaches and temperatures rise so have the temperatures soared in the vilification of those deemed responsible for the terrible economic state we are in. As the weeks have moved on there has been a visible progression and escalation from the pains of individuals through to the shock of the nation, culminating in the global crisis.

On 9 June we commemorate St Columba, an abbot and missionary who died on this day in 597. St. Columba was born in 520 AD in Donegal, Ireland. He was educated via the monastic system and was ordained priest.

He travelled through Ireland setting up monastic centres. He had a fiery temper and was accused of copying a prayer book without permission. Instead of 'turning the other cheek' he entered into a battle in which many soldiers were killed.

Filled with remorse, St Columba vowed to atone his actions by winning as many souls for Christ as were killed in battle. Exiled from Ireland for his actions, he established Christianity by the monastic system throughout Scotland and Northern England; the monastery on Iona still attracts thousands of pilgrims.

St. Columba was a good man, a 'holy' man, yet he was far from perfect. St Columba's temper led to the loss of so many lives. Was his temper inflamed by a wrong accusation; was it a shock reaction to being caught, a deflective reaction of embarrassment; or was it out of sheer self-righteousness?

We shall never know for sure, but what we do know is that when he realised the consequences of his actions he reacted remorsefully, turned back to God and devoted his life to the Gospel. Indeed, he became known as the 'dove of God'.

Throughout this time one particular passage of scripture has been very forward in my thoughts and prayers: that of the woman caught in adultery. (Jn 8:1-11)

Firstly what strikes me is the awful duplicity of thought and action, in that they who set themselves up as



Debbie Oades

religious moral representatives were quite prepared to use the misfortune of one to entrap another.

Yet Jesus' initial response was non-verbal, neither aggressive nor submissive: 'He bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. He gives the women the scribes and Pharisees time, time to reflect, time for them to see and hear themselves as they truly are. When Jesus stands He has their attention, and He responds with, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her".'

It is a bitter pill to swallow, but swallow it we must, for no matter how good we like to think we are or how hard we try to be good, we are all to varying degrees, as

individuals, nations, and as members of humanity, not without responsibility for the state we are in; not without sin.

No one other than Jesus was able to stand in condemnation, for no one other than Jesus was without sin. The one able to condemn the woman, chooses not to and releases her.

We are not told if the woman so publicly caught and accused turned from her ways. But we are told what we need to know and that is that Jesus, though aware of her sin, releases her.

The time Jesus spent writing on the ground gives us all time to contemplate the implications and ramifications of the way we live our lives. The ground Jesus writes on is holy ground, the ground on which we stand. This ground is a time and place of judgement, the bitter pill, but it is also the place of compassion, of reconciliation and forgiveness, a taste of honey.

The woman and St. Columba were held to public account for their actions much the same as those in the banking and political world are today.

Their actions have impacted on their own lives and the lives of others. Let us not in the heat of the summer bake in self-righteousness, but take the time to sit in the shade and reflect on our own actions!

## IN THOUGHT AND PRAYER

The first Sunday of June is Trinity Sunday.

The theology of the Trinity: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit yet one God is difficult to comprehend, and can be for many a stumbling block to faith.

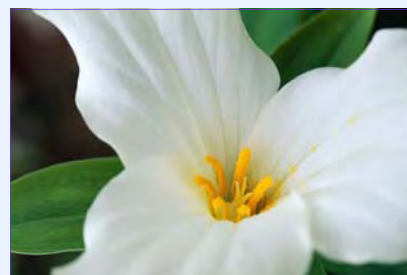
Many people such as Tertullian, Praxeas, Origen, Arius and St Athanasius, have theorised, contemplated and even been excommunicated over how the Trinity is to be understood.

It seems to be a very real human need to be able to define things clearly, so it is a pity that our very way of communicating, our language helps us to understand to a point, but can also restrict and limit us.

Have you noticed how we say 'in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit' rather than as would be grammatically correct 'in the *names* of...' God breaks down our grammatical constructs for the need of the singular.

St Patrick another Celtic Saint like St. Columba talks about the Trinity in *St. Patrick's Breastplate*, the final verse being;

I bind unto myself the name,  
The strong name of the Trinity;  
By invocation of the same.  
The Three in One, and One in Three,  
Of whom all nature hath creation;  
Eternal Father, Spirit, Word;  
Praise to the Lord of my salvation,  
Salvation is of Christ the Lord.



St Patrick, in trying to explain the Trinity, used the three-leaf clover, however the clover can be found in many numbered forms.

Therefore I offer to you a picture of a Trillium (above) on which to contemplate, in the hope that, in the words of a song, a picture paints a thousand words.

A Trillium rather than St. Patrick's clover is by its very nature one. It has without exception three leaves, three calyx, and three petals. It always has had and always will have because although the leaves, calyx and petals are distinct, they are inseparable as they are formed of each other.



## Save the Children Fund is 90 years old



This year is the 90th anniversary of the Save the Children Fund. It was founded by Eglantyne Jebb and her sister Dorothy Buxton who were horrified by the plight of children in cities like Berlin and Vienna after the First World War.

The Teddington and the Hamptons branch was formed 50 years later and still works hard to improve the lives of children all over the world. There will always be a need to help children caught up in conflict, disaster and poverty. The big campaign is education as there are still more than 60 million girls worldwide who do not go to school.

In this country, SCF works with children who do not have the same opportunities as others, because they are poor, or refugees or discriminated against in some way.

■ The Church of England has teamed up with *Country Life* to hunt for an elusive species: the unsung hero. Together they are looking for volunteers - of any denomination- who keep their churches and communities alive. If you have anyone to nominate, please tell the editor of *The Spire*.

## Search begins for the best church website

Who has the best church website in the country? Surefish.co.uk, Christian Aid's community website, aims to find out. There will be awards for the best local, regional and national church websites, as well as the best blog, youth website and most innovative site.

Websites offer regular churchgoers, visitors and those new to an area an insight into the life and work of the church. They are one of the best and cheapest ways of promoting the location of the church, its activities, regular services and special events.

The competition will recognise the voluntary work put in by thousands of people across the UK in designing, publishing and maintaining a church website. The public will be able to vote for their favourite site in a shortlist to be published in early June.

Packaging: Avoid buying products that have lots of packaging. Choose loose produce and buy refillable containers where possible. We use Ecover washing-up liquid in the Church Hall kitchen and refill bottles at Health on the Hill in the High Street.



## REGISTERS FOR MARCH/APRIL

## MARCH Baptisms

15 Henry James Brett, Hampton Hill.

22 Francesca Ayanna Ramachander, Hampton Hill.

## Funeral

16 Douglas Goodson, 94, Hampton Hill.

## APRIL Baptisms

5 Ellena Teal Deakin, Teddington.

5 Finn Andrew Worley-Brady and Louis David Worley-Brady, Hampton.

12 Leila Louisa Simpson, Teddington.

## Weddings

18 Joseph Mills and Charlotte Davis.

18 Matthew Prior and Laura Fifield.

25 Samuel Sparks and Katy Simpson

## Funeral

6 Eileen Gent Hunter, 85, Hampton.

## We are at your service...

## New treasurer makes planned giving a priority as recession wipes £12,000 off investments



The new PCC: back row, from left, Liz Butler, Debbie Oades, David Taylor, Ann Peterken; front row, from left, Liz Wilmot, David Hetling, Margaret Hobbs, Peter Vannozi, Nick Bagge, Don Barrett, Clive Beaumont, Lesley Mortimer, Rosamond Daly, Dick Wilde, Janet Nunn. Not pictured: Martin Hinckley, Susannah Nettleton, Betty Rainbow and Pip Rowett.

Seven routine meetings were held in which the church worship and its administration were discussed and in which the treasurer presented the updated accounts.

Additionally there was an Away Day to discuss the progress of our Mission Action Plan, and a workshop on practical ecology run by Hannah Shepherd of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Council.

After the final settlement on the West Porch it was agreed by the PCC that we should appoint a new Inspecting Architect and Daniel Goldberg agreed to take up the post.

The Church of England has always been registered as a charity but new rules had been agreed and all churches with an annual income over £100,000 had to register with the Charity Commissioners to receive their own charity number. This was a convoluted process as all PCC members would now become trustees of the church.

St James's Church now has its own charity number - 1129286. This will be very useful as sometimes local stores are able to donate goods or materials under their charitable giving. It will certainly be worth a try.

Our treasurer for the past two years, Anne Cowlin, was unable to be present because of sickness. The accounts had been prepared by her and audited, and were on display in the church for detailed examination.

In Anne's absence they were presented and explained by the vicar. There had been some unusual items in the balance sheet, such as the cost of the replacement of the lead stolen from the west porch, mostly reclaimed from our insurance, and a 'paper loss' due to the write-down of the value of our investment assets.

However, overall the giving had been

maintained, and our expenditure contained. If the investment loss - which may in time be reversed - was not included, the accounts showed a positive balance, income over expenditure, of about £12,000 over the year.

The vicar summarised by saying 'We are on an even keel'. He expressed our thanks to Anne Cowlin for her hard and patient voluntary work, and wished her a speedy recovery. After the APCM, Anne would hand over her work as treasurer to Don Barrett, who had agreed to take over.



Don, pictured left, said he hoped we would be able to maintain our Planned Giving commitment as the mainstay of our finances. Special emphasis would be given to planned giving on Sunday 14 June.

A report on the fabric of the church was given by Richard Melville, speaking for the chair of the Properties Committee, Bryan Basdell. This sub-committee is responsible for the maintenance of the church, the hall, the decoration of the vicarage, the Pigeon Lane property, and parts of the churchyard.

This entails making sure that the regular inspections of boilers, electrical appliances and other routine work is carried out, and also that maintenance detailed in the quinquennial (once every five years) inspection is progressed.

A routine spring-clean and autumn leaf clearance and gutter-clean is scheduled annually; Richard gave details of jobs which were either completed or in hand. He highlighted the recent marking of the metal on the church roof with 'SmartWater', which will hopefully be a deterrent to thieves. He ended his report with an appeal for some

young volunteers to join the team.

In his report the vicar hoped we would continue to focus on our Mission Action Plan (MAP). The PCC Away Day had been a valuable contribution to this. Peter warmly welcomed our new curate, the Revd Debbie Oades. One of the areas of MAP that she would be helping to develop would be continuing Christian education for adults, as was a new group for toddlers and carers.

A Carers and Toddlers Group is due to be launched this autumn. The dates and times will be confirmed in the next issue of *The Spire*. Debbie would welcome any donations of pre-school toys, books or craft equipment (all in a good condition please) that your family has outgrown or no longer uses. Also needed are old shirts, both child and adult sizes, for use during messy play. Any enquiries or donations to Debbie Oades, Debbie Nunn or Carole Greville-Giddings.

Peter was actively involved with Hampton Hill Junior School as chair of the governors, and he valued our close contact with the uniformed groups.

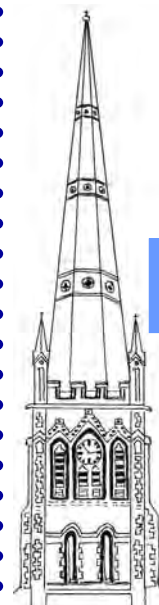
He reminded us of the local occasions at which our new bishop, The Rt Rev Paul Williams, will officiate this year (see Events on page seven) and welcomed the new Area Dean, Revd Derek Winterburn, taking over from Revd Andrew Watson.

There had been 32 baptisms, 14 weddings and five funerals in church during the year; 13 funerals had been conducted at the crematorium or the cemetery.

Particular mention was made of the role that the Visitors' Group plays.

The Visitors' Group was set up five years ago to assist the clergy with pastoral care. Some 12 members visit the elderly and housebound and enjoy tea and a chat once a month. Tea parties are held three times a year where all those visited meet up with old friends and clergy. We are particularly pleased that some of our regular church members also attend these to catch up with friends who are unable to get to church so much. The group is planning to introduce Baptism Evenings, along the same lines as Marriage Preparation Evenings, whereby we invite a few families at a time.

Peter said that although we were living in troubled times, the church's presence and its steady routine, based on the Christian faith, offered us all a firm foundation for our lives.



## AROUND THE SPIRE

## NEWS FROM HAMPTON HILL AND BEYOND

## Living Water Lent Appeal exceeds £900

St. James's has raised £915 for this year's London diocese Lent Appeal. The Sunday School made a splendid contribution of £169 from a sponsored sleepover and the serving of parish breakfast on Mothering Sunday.

Through ALMA, which links the Diocese of London with Anglican Churches in Angola and Mozambique, the appeal is supporting the Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of people without safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015. The progress of the sum collected from all London parishes can be seen at: [www.almalink.org/lent2009.htm](http://www.almalink.org/lent2009.htm). Thank you to everyone who gave. ■ St. James's also decided to give £500 to the Archbishop's Appeal for Zimbabwe from our 2009 budget for charitable donations.



Robin Smith, who is the son of Prill Hinckley, will marry Abi at Dulwich College on 30 May. We wish them both every happiness for the future.

■ We are delighted to see Mary Metcalfe back in church after an absence of many weeks due to illness. We have heard that Vera Bannister is now back in Teddington Hospital after some time in Kingston Hospital and is making good progress.

■ Thank you to all those who collected during Christian Aid Week and particularly to Margaret Taylor for its organisation. At the time of printing, the money is still being counted so we will publish the total in the next issue.



## Can you offer someone a lift to church?

Could you help by occasionally giving someone a lift to church? There are a number of people who want to attend services, but are unable to do so without transport. If you can, please contact Liz Butler, either by telephone: 020 8977 4227; or by email: [lizzybutler@googlemail.com](mailto:lizzybutler@googlemail.com). Could the person who recently volunteered contact her again as she has mislaid your details.

■ Alexander Michael Johnston, son of Andy and Mike and grandson of Pip and Anne Rowett, was baptised at St. James's on 17 May.





## Quiz - St. James's North and South Aisles



▪ Sort the letters to make the sentences:

Two ..... (SSALEI) run down the sides of the church with the ..... (VEAN) in the middle. The children's corner in the ..... (HTNRO) aisle. Many ..... (HAICSR) here allow different arrangements for services, meetings, group work and so on. The St. James's ..... (PYRSELA) play for the all-age services in the ..... (HSUTO) aisle. There are also display ..... (DSOBAR) here.

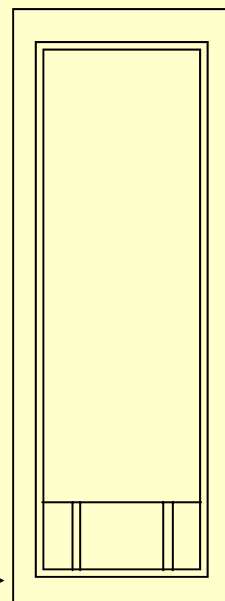


▪ Colour the pictures

▪ Answer the questions below using the following words: (Mother and Child, mosaics, four, St. James, marble, Christ the King, St. Michael)

- What are these pictures called? .....
- How many are there in the aisles? .....
- Whose pictures are in the north aisle? .....
- Whose pictures are in the south aisle? .....
- What are the picture borders made of? .....

▪ Design your own **mosaic**

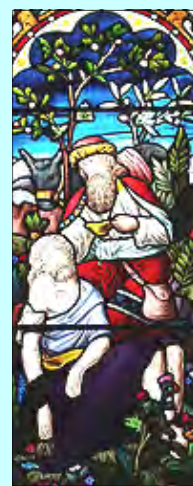
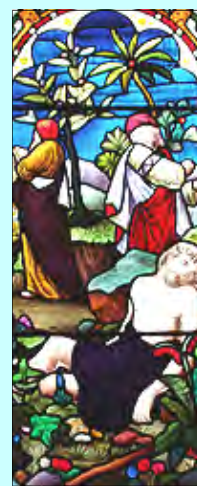


The south aisle **stained glass windows** show five parables (stories which Jesus told to teach people how to live like God wants us to.)

▪ Put the correct parable endings using these words: (Sheep, Samaritan, Son, Sower, Virgins)

The Good .....  
The Lost .....  
The .....  
The Wise and Foolish .....  
The Prodigal .....

▪ Draw lines to connect the pictures to the titles below.



The parable of the Good Samaritan

Centurion kneeling at the foot of the cross

Jesus carrying the cross



UNTO SING LORD NAME HIS THE AND PRAISE

Sort the words to show what is written:



CHILDREN TO COME ME SUFFER LITTLE UNTO



# Revelations

## A new leader for Catholics

In April Pope Benedict XVI nominated the Most Reverend Vincent Nichols, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham, to be the new Archbishop of Westminster. His appointment was warmly welcomed by Archbishop Rowan Williams. The friendship of influential religious leaders, and their respect for one another, has a profound influence on the harmony of a community, just as bitterness divides it. We have seen the result of such bitterness in the recent history of Northern Ireland, now peacefully resolved. Dr Williams has made outreach to other faiths a cornerstone of his ministry. This has not found favour with everyone, as the reception of his modest suggestion of the very limited use of civil arbitration by sharia law for Muslims has shown. Dr Williams speaks and writes in a manner which requires careful attention. He does not use soundbites, and his precision is sometimes misunderstood as equivocation. Dr Nichols has a reputation as a man of strong faith and has great skill as a communicator. The great strengths of these leaders seem complementary.

## Problems with riches

In the early days of the New Labour government, Peter Mandelson said: 'We have no problem with people getting filthy rich', probably as a jocular attempt to dispel fears that the new government would attempt a policy of envy and perhaps levelling down. However, if a society has both very rich and comparatively very poor people, problems do seem to arise. A new book by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*, considers the rather strange grouping of Japan and the Scandinavian countries, which statistically show a much more even distribution of income than, for instance, the US and the UK. In terms of health, longevity, and peaceful community life, among many other enviable characteristics, the authors claim that the more equal societies seem to do a great deal better. Scientific testing of social behaviour is notoriously difficult, but perhaps we do have a problem with people getting filthy rich if their fellows are miserably poor.

## A perfect disaster

The government's chief scientist, Professor John Beddington, forecasts an environmental 'perfect storm' in the near future. Just when it will be necessary severely to cut our emission of greenhouse gases, he sees a growing world population and a surge in the demand for food, water and energy which cannot be met. This, he says, will build to some sort of climax in about 2030, and the global unrest will reach catastrophic levels. There have been many forecasts of imminent doom in the past, some with quite plausible extrapolations of existing social or technological developments. For a variety of reasons none of the forecast apocalyptic disasters has materialised, which tends to make us sceptical of yet another doomsayer. However, there are several good reasons for taking this one very seriously. We are seeing quite clear signs of climate change; also water, food and energy shortages are already affecting many communities, not only in the Third World. Building and buying more consumer goods as a solution to our recession seems rather like drilling holes in the Titanic to let the water out.



## From Henry VII to Henry VIII

- Runs until 29 August 11am-5pm Saturday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Museum of Richmond, Old Town Hall, Whittaker Avenue, Richmond
- Five hundred years ago, King Henry VII died in his palace at Richmond. The museum is marking the anniversary of this event with an exhibition and a series of associated events, including a Tudor film season, exhibition gallery and talks, and a Tudor dance workshop. Admission free.
- For more information telephone 020 8831 6000.

## Deanery Service with the new bishop

- Sunday, 7 June, 6.30pm, St Mary's, Hampton
- All are welcome to meet and worship with Bishop Paul.

## St James's Theatre Club

- Wednesday 10 June, 7.45pm, **Alphabetical Order**, Richmond Theatre
- Imogen Stubbs leads a star cast in Michael Frayn's chaotic comedy set in a provincial newspaper office. Tickets are £17 (normal price £27).
- Thursday, 3 September, 7.45pm, **Annie**, Richmond Theatre
- Su Pollard stars in a heart-warming, rags-to-riches story, with lots of toe-tapping songs. Tickets are £15 (normal price £25).
- To join us, please put your name on the church notice board or telephone Ria Beaumont on 020 8943 4336. As usual, transport can be arranged.

## Hampton and Hampton Hill Carnival

- Saturday 13 June, 12-4pm, Nursery Green Park, The Avenue, Hampton.
- The Hampton and Hampton Hill Carnival parade leaves St James's Road from 12 noon, travelling down Hampton Hill High Street into Ormond Drive, Percy Road and The Avenue. The fair opens on Nursery Green from 12.30pm.
- Further details available from the White House Community Association, telephone 020 8979 1884.

## Initiatives of Change Forum

- Tuesday 16 June, 7.15pm, **Time's Running Out**, 24 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1RD
- Light refreshments from 6.30pm, talk begins at 7.15pm.
- Clare Short was Secretary of State for International Development from 1997 to 2003. With environmental stresses threatening even greater instability, the future looks grim, she says, unless the international community responds with greater generosity.
- The talk is free, with a collection taken towards expenses.
- To book places, please telephone 020 7798 6000.

## Concordia Concert

Sunday 28 June, 7.45pm,  
**With a Merry Noise**, St John's Church, Wimbledon  
Programme to include Walton's *The Twelve* and the first concert performance of Paul Spicer's *Psalms 150*. Tickets on door £12 (concessions £10).

## Music for a Summer Evening

Friday, 3 July, 8pm, YMCA Hawker Centre, Lower Ham Road, Kingston upon Thames KT2 5BH  
Thameside Clarinet Choir perform a concert of popular and light classical music. Admission at the door or tickets from members, £5 each, accompanied children free.

## Car-free Sunday

Sunday 5 July, St James's Church  
Can you walk or ride a bicycle to church, or perhaps share your car with another church member instead of using your car? We are having a car-free Sunday on 5 July to include all the uniformed organisations. There will be a national car-free day on Tuesday 22 September. We hope that we can cut our carbon footprint by encouraging you to walk, cycle or car share when you come to church.

## St James's Day

Sunday 26 July, 11am  
Everyone is invited to join us to celebrate our saint's day. **Please note that Parish Communion will begin at 11am.** The preacher at this service will be The Very Revd John Hall, the Dean of Westminster. The service will be followed by parish lunch in the Vicarage gardens. There will be tours of the tower from 1-3pm and the chance to try ringing the bells. Look out for more information in church nearer the time, and in the next issue of The Spire.

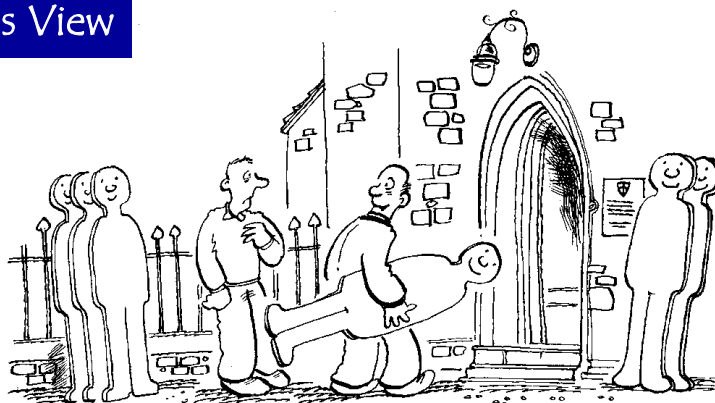
## Confirmation Service

Sunday 22 November, St James's Church  
There will be a confirmation service in November with Bishop Paul. Anyone aged 11 or over who would like to find out more about being confirmed should speak to the Vicar.

## Parish Pilgrimage

Wednesday 2 September  
The pilgrimage this year will be to Westminster Abbey. Look out for more details nearer the time

## Vicar's View



... I thought my church attendance figures would benefit from some 'quantitative easing'...



## Keeping faith with Darwin



I am what's called an evolutionary biologist and although I am based at King's College London, on the Guy's Hospital campus near London Bridge, my work takes me all around the world to collaborate with other scientists.

I often work in Australia on a special and unique lungfish, the only one left of those related to fossil fish that managed to get a 'leg up on to the land' and walk on four legs. This is a special and unique species adapted to where it lives in the river in Queensland, Australia.

This year, evolution has been much in the news. It is 200 years since the birth of Charles Darwin and 150 years since he published the world shattering theory of *The Origin of Species*. There has been a bewildering range of points of view in the newspapers and on television.

So, what does it mean for us? Why should we, as Christians, have an opinion on these theories that explain how all the multitudinous varieties and diversity of animal and plant life came into being on earth?

Some people think that God is supposed to have created each type of animal and plant individually by a special act of creation. This idea that Creationism is a real alternative to evolution has gained some publicity recently, but frankly it doesn't stand up to any test of observation when we look carefully at life around us.

Many of my colleagues in science are committed Christians and see no conflict in this: the facts are out there; life has changed through time and we are part of that continuum of life. So why is Darwin's magnificent and unifying *Theory of Evolution* portrayed as a conflict between this enlightening concept and Creationism as if it is a real alternative?

Belief in the theory of evolution is central to my life and 'evolution' is what I 'do'; it explains to me the great universality of life all joined together as one. We can marvel at the complexity and diversity of life with its intricate and interwoven webs between behaviour and the environment. It seems self-evident to me that God initiated both His plan for life on the earth and at the same time set up this mechanism for the creation of unimaginable diversity within the world we know today.

This was only possible through selection of those that were adapted to live and function within the changing environment around them. In other words, individual species change through time and evolve into new ones, although we barely understand how the process of this evolution works.

My work involves trying to explain just a small part of this process in the different ways in which teeth develop and function.

If we ignore the fact that evolution has occurred and is still ongoing, then it is at our peril and that of all mankind.

The whole basis of medicine and the understanding of disease and its cure is founded on the underlying facts of evolution that we are all connected through the genetic machinery from which all life develops. We can look at how genes function in a fruit fly as an animal model, and then what happens if this gene becomes non-functional tells us what its role is in life - ours as well as the fly.

So how does evolution link with the bible for me? Well, it all falls into place with Genesis and our enlightened understanding of the text, as the light that God gave to the world. Creationism and its pseudo-scientific offspring Intelligent Design are products of US history and the Founding Father's separation of church and state. Fortunately this is not something from which we suffer in this country.

The point in time when God's spirit came upon mankind and we were made in his image was when we were given perfect freedom to choose and accept, or not, His love for us and His world. It seems that we are material beings trapped in time with the choice of eternal freedom through Christ and with the help of the Holy Spirit. The struggle for survival of the fittest seems harsh and without love, but may be part of the process of suffering through which the whole world is transformed and creation set free. Although we are part of this we don't always have control and need God's love to deal with the changes that occur in our own lives.

When God speaks to Job he explains his role in ordering the world, but not as a one-off event, only a continuous and all-consuming process in which the intricacies of natural life are never fully controlled, or understood by humankind. Again in Psalm 148 there is pure praise for creation effected by God and this involves also the setting of limits and imposing order, not just separate and single acts of making things.

It seems to me there is no case for 'Creationism' as it is being propagated today in some quarters on the back of religious fundamentalism.

According to Francis Bacon, Darwin's book *The Origin of Species* was not a manifesto for atheism but a book of nature where he had found God acting through the laws of natural selection.

As Darwin wrote: 'Whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed laws of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been and are being evolved.'

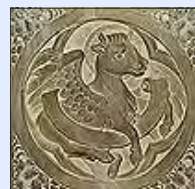
The recent BBC TV programme *The Tree of Life* brought all this to the awareness of many more. As its presenter Sir David Attenborough said: 'It is the story of how Darwin changed the way we see the World and our place in it.'

And for that we have only Darwin to thank for our perspective on God's world.



Font comes from the Latin word *fons*, meaning fountain. Essentially a font is a bowl for water. It may be more or less elaborate. Often fonts are decorated in a way that draws out the meaning of aspects of Christian faith especially relevant to baptism. In common with many fonts, the one in St. James's is near to what was the original main entrance to the church. On arriving in the church people had to pass the place of baptism where their journey with Christ as members of his Church began.

The font in St. James's is eight sided - four sides have symbols which represent the four Gospels - **Matthew, Mark, Luke and John**. They contain the good news of Jesus which a baptised person has heard.



The other four sides all have symbols which represent a name or title of Jesus:

**A and O**, Alpha and Omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. In the Book of Revelation Jesus is referred to as the alpha and omega, beginning and end, first and last.

**IHS**, the first three letters of the Greek for Jesus (iota, eta, sigma.)

**XP** the Greek letters 'chi' and 'rho', the first two letters of the Greek for Christ. The two letters are superimposed on one another and this was a Christian symbol from the Third Century onwards.

**The Star of David**, a reminder of the Jewishness of Jesus, who is referred to in the Gospels as 'Son of David.'

The symbols point people towards Jesus and his identity.

