

DOES CHRISTMAS MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE

How about celebrating Christmas in May? An odd idea? St. Clement of Alexandria who lived just over a hundred years after Jesus thought that the most probable date of Jesus' birth was 20th May! And he either belonged to a church where this was the common practice or convinced a good number of people that this was so. In many places it seems that it was not until nearly 400 years had passed that Christians observed Christmas at all. The earliest mention of 25th December is in 336 A.D. So does it matter when we celebrate Christmas? or if we celebrate it? or how we celebrate it?

I suppose that the majority of people concentrate on the last question first. It is quite a sobering thought that the *gift* element in Christmas really stems from the stories surrounding Nicholas, Bishop of Myra (in Turkey) in the 4th century, and the *Christmas tree* element has developed from various Germanic traditions connected with St. Boniface in the 7th century. Both these parts of our present day festivities were much increased only a 100 years ago during the 19th century. Even the common crib scene was only introduced by St. Francis of Assisi as a 'visual aid' 700 years ago!

We regard all these things as 'the essentials' of Christmas. Yet really they are just frills and adornments. The important thing about Christmas is that it reminds us of something which God did for the people of the world He had created. He sent Jesus to be born so that we could all touch and feel and see what He, God, was like. We see in Jesus a God quite different from any other God. We see a God who is all powerful but also one who is all loving, who breaks through all human limitations of space and time but cares infinitely for all people individually. One thing He does *not* do. He does not force any man or woman to believe or trust in Him. He did not force Peter or James or John or any other of the disciples whose names we know to follow Him; He invited them — yes — but he did not make up their minds for them. We do know of some who refused the invitation and many do to-day.

So putting first things first we worship at Christmas, giving ourselves to God. Then we can show our joy by sharing it with others and exchanging cards and presents and having parties and fun with family and friends. We can also show our care and concern by helping some of the unfortunates amongst us, the ill and the lonely and the hungry.

A truly joyful Christmas to you all.

Nicholas Chubb

Under dates to note please find all the Christmas services we can choose from this year. Special attention is drawn to "Carols around the Crib" in the afternoon of Christmas Day, a new informal service especially for young children and their parents. Also the EPIPHANY — 6th January. This ancient Festival commemorates the arrival of the Three Wise Men or Kings at Bethlehem with their gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. Greek, Russian and Syrian Orthodox Christians keep this Festival more than Christmas. For us there will be an Evening Communion at 8.00 p.m., and the following Sunday will see a special Welcome Service. Read this magazine carefully for other information connected with Christmas!

Dear People of St. James',

As I write this in the middle of November, it is almost a year since you gave us such a wonderful and memorable send-off as we set out on the new adventure of retirement. From time to time we relive this great experience as we show the album of photographs to friends who visit us, and we feel that the ties of love and prayer and friendship between us and you are so strong that they can never be broken. We have around us many reminders of you all — including a large stone trough for bedding plants in our small garden which we bought not only for its usefulness but also because it is embellished with the shell of St. James.

I was advised by an old priest to allow myself at least a year to become adjusted to retirement, and I appreciate more and more how wise his counsel was. We are still feeling our way, and trying to preserve a right balance between looking back and pressing forward. For a long time we thought and spoke of Hampton Hill as home, and could not get rid of the feeling that we were here only temporarily. Now we have made the transition and overcome the temptation to to make constant comparisons between what happens in this parish and what we did in St. James'. We are grateful for the welcome which we have received here, and for opportunities of ministry and fellowship which are now opening up before us. Con has become deeply involved with the work of the Mothers' Union in the parish, deanery and diocese, and was finally prevailed upon also to become Enrolling Member of the St. Leonard's branch; I have been allocated some preaching and pastoral work by our friendly vicar. To help keep our minds active we have joined a German class (for beginners!), and the hard work (skilled work too, done by Con or under her direction!) needed to convert our allotment from its wilderness state into fruitfulness keeps us physically fit.

We are very glad that there have been unexpected opportunities to meet some of you, and that others when in the neighbourhood have been able and kind enough to call — and we hope that this will continue!

We are very glad also that St. James' is going from strength to strength, and we continually thank God and pray for you all. We send our deepest love and heartfelt best wishes to you for Christmas and the New Year.

Rupert Brunt

QUIET TIME

Some tell us that prayer is all in the mind,
That the only result is the solace we find,
That God does not answer, nor hear when we call;
We commune with our own hearts in prayer — that is all.
But we who have knelt with our burden and care,
And have made all our problems a matter of prayer,
Have seen God reach down from His heaven above,
Move mountains, touch hearts in His infinite love;
We *know* that God works in a wonderful way,
On behalf of His children who trust Him and pray.

Anonymous

GODSPELL MAGIC ON NOVEMBER 1st

"I don't think", said my pew-neighbour, "that St. James' has even had an evensong like this . . .". As the sound-linked lights flashed, the rock music beat through the amplifiers, and the gaily-clad Youth Action Theatre group acted and sang their interpretation of the gospel message, I had to agree.

Godspell tries to wipe away the dull gloom of conventional piety like cleaning layers of dark varnish from a brilliant old painting. The gospel message is about joy, life more abundant, life lived to the full.

The young company conveyed this excitement to the packed church (I would guess three hundred people) by their infectious enthusiasm. They gave bold and confident performances, the solos being sung competently, effectively and audibly. To me the most impressive professionalism was in the faultless stage drill and choreography. Manoeuvring in the restricted space provided by the stage on the chancel steps with a large company could easily have led to chaos. It was so well done that the area limitation was barely noticeable.

It is no reflection on either the musical or the interpretation to say that the excitement it conveys is, I suppose, only one of an infinite number of aspects of the message. The life more abundant can shine through the "dark varnish", even in the quietest evensong with a congregation of half-a-dozen. Not in the same way, not perhaps to the same seekers, but the same sense of joy. On reflection, perhaps there have been evensongs like this in St. James' many times, passing mostly unrecognised.

Perhaps another simile is useful. A book's spirit can often be conveyed excellently by a talented artist with a front cover illustration. It obviously is not a substitute for reading the book, but it gives the possible reader an insight into the spirit. Godspell seems to me to be rather like this. If the splendid performance we saw gave such an insight to any of the audience we have to thank the players for something more than entertainment.

Dick Wilde

The most moving moments during the performance came near the end when we had seen 'Jesus' crucified on a scaffold, red streamers hanging from his wrists. The Church was in complete darkness, and the silence, after so much noise, was total bleak emptiness. Gradually a light began to rise behind the East window, it grew and grew until the whole window was transformed into a wonderful tapestry of colour, and we saw the scenes depicted in these windows clearer than ever before — it was truly a magnificent few moments. No theatre could have competed with that backdrop — a true inspiration on someone's part. Thank you. It was a subtle way of showing how the power that raised Christ again from death reached into normal human experience from outside. God Himself acted and created something quite new.

GOD'S MESSENGER

On Sunday 15th November I went to St. James's Church to hear the cantata about John the Baptist which my youngest son had told me was very good; he had been practising it in the choir for several weeks and was most enthusiastic about the music.

I am sure that the congregation was as delighted as I was with the performance which was given with great assurance. Parts of the singing were most moving,

and what gave me personal pleasure was the very clear diction which was consistent and crisp. Salome's dance, which was specially created for the cantata by Eila Severn, was a delicate bonus that added to the work. Thank you choir, readers, dancers and especially Miss Hayward who welded together their talents into a worthy offering.

M.E. Williams

THE TODDLERS FIREWORK DISPLAY

On the 5th November, toddlers and parents arrived at the church at 6 p.m. to see a blazing bonfire. Once the fire had died down they all came to the Vicarage garden where a marvellous firework display was put on for everyone to enjoy. After many (toddler-sized tame) bangs and whizzes, hot tomato soup, Ribena and hot dogs were brought outside to warm everyone up. After an enjoyable evening the toddlers went home, parents in hand.

Thank you to everybody who made such a happy evening possible.

Noami Chubb

MOTHERS' UNION

On Monday, October 19th, Hampton Mothers' Union Deanery Festival was held at St. Mark's Church, Teddington. The service commenced at 1.30 p.m. with a procession of Branch Banners; our Enrolling Member, Dorothy Edmonds carried St. James' Banner, accompanied by Ellen Dore and Amy Hamilton. The Deanery Banner carried by Eila Severn, attended by Violet Clarke and Freda Moses, brought up the rear. After the Banners had been received at the altar rails, the Rev. R.S. Wallace commenced the Eucharist (Series 2), during which the Epistle was read by Pat Young and the Gospel by Vera Rockliffe, the intercessions were led by Kathleen Powell, Enrolling Member of St. Mark's Branch.

Basing his remarks on the Collect for the 18th Sunday after Trinity (See the Book of Common Prayer), Father Wallace preached an inspiring sermon on "with pure hearts and minds". Betty Parnell, Kensington Area Vice-President was unable to be present, but her husband presided at the organ and added a great deal to our Festival.

The Service having ended, we made our way to the Church Hall to eat our sandwiches, St. Mark's members providing us with tea or coffee. Two husbands gave yeoman service in the newly rearranged kitchen. Lunch over, we had a chance to chat with members of other Branches, which all added to the warmth and friendliness of the occasion. Then Pat, who is our Deanery Presiding Member, conducted a domestic session, giving us a full account of Diocesan Day, held earlier in October, when the theme chosen was "Increasing our Faith". Enrolling Members in turn gave an account of what is done at their Branch meetings. From these we all gained new ideas for our own Branches, and also names of new speakers.

At 3 p.m. we wended our way home; despite the chilly day we all felt cheered by the warmth and love engendered by such a happy gathering. We extend our gratitude to Rev. Wallace for allowing us to gather at St. Mark's, to the two Servers, to Mr. Parnell, but above all to the St. Mark's members (and their husbands) who made us so welcome.

Vera Rockliffe

SCOUT GROUP NEWS

November 7th: and Saturday night was Bonfire night in Hampton Hill, so said the caption under the picture in The Surrey Comet. The entrance to the site was attractively lit up with coloured lights, as also the Group Headquarters. Here soup, hot dogs and orange juice was laid on for the 250 odd people who attended. More was spent on fireworks this year and everyone voted it a most successful evening.

Both Cub Packs held their usual boisterous Halloween Party complete with fancy Dress and Lantern Parade, and are now well into their winter activities of football and swimming. 15 boys from Gold Pack have passed their World Conservation Badge – this is a difficult badge to obtain and takes about six months to complete.

The Troop have also been busy with football and swimming, but the highlight of this term so far was "The District Prowl" which took place on October 25th. The hike started at Thurley extending to around Haslemere and Godalming, and at each check point a difficult Scout test had to be performed. Out of the 22 teams entering our first team came 4th and the other 16th. In spite of the continuous rain, a thoroughly good day was the opinion of all the boys.

Michael Childs

EL SALVADOR

We have all heard of the "civil war" in this Central American country; the torture, the killings by death squads, 22,000 people killed since January 1980, 250,000 more who have fled the country, the killing of Archbishop Romero while celebrating Mass one day. The USA supports the tyrannical regime and opposes any examination of human rights in El Salvador.

It was very moving to hear the Rev. Marta Benavides, a Baptist minister from El Salvador, speaking from personal experience of her own country on Tuesday November 1st at the Baptist Church in Whitton. She is now a refugee in Mexico, and is visiting this country. Many people will have heard her speak on the Sunday programme on the radio recently, and she is also speaking to the Baptist Union, the British Council of Churches and in the House of Commons. Her sincere witness of what it means to be a Christian, the risks to life itself, the probable subjection to extreme cruelty, will not be forgotten by her hearers. We were grateful to the Rev. Barry Vendy and the Baptist Church for arranging this opportunity for hearing about these modern day sufferers under persecution.

Hannah Stanton

HAMPTON AND HAMPTON HILL COMMUNITY CARE GROUP

Our one-parent group is desperate for volunteer babysitters. So if you can spare 2-3 evenings a month and would like to help, then please contact Sheridan Hardy – 943 2386 or the CCG Office – 979 9662, for details.

HAMPTON FUEL ALLOTMENT CHARITY

Financial Assistance to those in need

This Charity, whose annual income is about £5,000 exists for the purpose of relieving either generally or individually persons resident in the area of the Ancient Town of Hampton (which includes the area of Hampton Hill but not Hampton Wick) who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by making grants of money or providing or paying for items, services or facilities calculated to reduce the need, hardship or distress of such persons.

The Charity is about to consider the payment of grants for the year 1982, and accordingly, persons falling within the categories referred to are invited to make application by the 31st December, 1981 on a form to be obtained from, and returned to, any of the following Vicarages :-

St. Mary the Virgin, Church Street, Hampton

All Saints, The Avenue, Hampton

St. James', St. James' Road, Hampton Hill

Other persons and local associations/societies are kindly asked to bring this matter to the notice of those whom they consider might qualify for assistance.

THE PERFECT PRIEST

Results of a computerised survey indicate that the perfect priest preaches exactly 12 minutes.

He frequently condemns sin, but never upsets anyone.

He works from 8 a.m. until midnight and is also a janitor.

He makes \$60 a week, wears good clothes, buys good books, drives a good car and gives about \$50 a week to the poor.

He is 28 years of age and has been preaching 30 years.

He is wonderfully gentle and handsome. He gives of himself completely, but never gets too close to anyone, lest he be criticised.

He speaks boldly on social issues, but must never become politically involved.

He has a burning desire to work with teenagers; he spends all his time with senior citizens.

He makes 15 calls daily on parish families, visits shut-ins and the hospitalised, spends all his time evangelising the unchurched, and is always in his office when needed.

from the CATHOLIC SUN (USA)

MEALS AT CHRISTMAS

As in previous years the Community Care Group is hoping to supply Christmas meals for all the people in the area who cannot cook for themselves. And not only on Christmas Day itself, but on all the public holidays when the Council does not operate Meals on Wheels. The dates are 25th to 28th December and 1st to 4th January. Obviously quite a few volunteers are needed. Maybe you feel you can cook a little extra and take a meal round to someone near you on one or more of these days. Or indeed, invite someone to share your Christmas dinner with you in your own home. Whatever help you feel you can offer, either contact the CCG officer tel. 979 9662, or tell someone in St. James's; we'll pass the information on.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

LEAD ME FROM DEATH TO LIFE
FROM FALSEHOOD TO TRUTH.

LEAD ME FROM DESPAIR TO HOPE,
FROM FEAR TO TRUST.

LEAD ME FROM HATE TO LOVE,
FROM WAR TO PEACE.

LET PEACE FILL OUR HEART,
OUR WORLD, OUR UNIVERSE.

People around the world are offering this prayer for one minute at midday every day. This means that there is around the globe a continuous vigil. Please join in. The initiative is based on the conviction that there is power in prayer, particularly in united prayer/meditation/positive thought. We believe that this prayer, offered by millions of people around the world, will form a continuous chain to encircle the earth and help achieve the profound change of heart that is needed at this perilous time to ensure the survival of the planet.

It is intentional that the prayer begins with the individual: "Lead *me*". The seeds of peace must germinate within each of us; they will then flower naturally into the collective and the universal; "Let Peace fill *our*". Mother Teresa of Calcutta made the first public pronouncement of the prayer at an inspiring meeting in St. James' Church, Piccadilly, on 7th July, 1981. The prayer was officially launched at a significant and uplifting interfaith service in Westminster Abbey at midday on 6th August 1981 (Hiroshima Day).

Although the prayer will be offered with particular focus on the Second Special Session on Disarmament at the UN General Assembly in 1982, in the hope that world governments will have the wisdom and courage to implement a comprehensive programme for world disarmament, it is hoped that the prayer will continue as a regular part of people's lives for a long time to come.

THE CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

"The Church was light, not only with the flames of the candles, but with the joy in the faces of the young people." So a churchwarden described the reaction of the congregation after the annual Christingle Service at the Parish Church. Similar sentiments are echoed by thousands of people in churches up and down the country which regularly hold the services in aid of the Church of England Children's Society.

The Christingle is an orange with four sticks of fruit a red ribbon wrapped around and topped by a candle. The word Christingle means 'Christ Light'. The orange represents the world. The sticks of fruit the four seasons and their produce, the red ribbon the blood of Christ and the candle the Light of the World, Our Saviour Jesus Christ.

As well as joining in the service everyone is helping the children and families in need with whom the Children's Society Works, as groups and individuals exchange their gifts for the Christingle orange. It is a family service where

children learn to give to others in need; where parents and grandparents can share the enthusiasm of the young and where the Christian message that we love because Christ first loved us is seen in action.

If you would like to know how you can help the Society in the future please contact your local representative or write to the Public Relations Department at Old Town Hall, Kennington Road, London SE11 4QD.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Object: to care for and support children and young persons in need, whether material, physical, mental, emotional, spiritual or otherwise.

- Aims:**
- 1) To work with teenagers, to give them a purpose in life, reduce juvenile crime and provide an alternative to delinquency.
 - 2) To work with the handicapped so that they can achieve an independent life.
 - 3) To work within the community so that those vulnerable to the pressures of society can learn to help themselves and cease to become dependent upon the state.
 - 4) To work with children and their families to reduce the incidence of children received into residential care.

LOOKING BACK

1953 – P.C.C. Minutes

March Members still active in the Parish: Mrs. L. Mills, Mrs. M. Orton, Mrs. V. Prentice, Mrs. E. Severn, Mr. S. Childs, Mr. L. Rockliffe.
Setting up of Three Commissions: On Worship, Education and The Wider Church (Old Peoples' Welfare was added to the Agenda for the latter – the convenor was that much loved personality Mr. S. Farrow founder member of Teddington O.P.W.).
Freewill Offering Scheme (The forerunner of Stewardship) Treasurer Mr. Wm. Wigginton, Church Warden.
Plans for GREAT RENOVATION DRIVE.

December: Miss Stanton, Secretary of Drive reports receipts of £925.
Death reported of Rev. F.P.P. Harvey, Vicar 1923-50.

1953 – The Spire

March: Death of Lady Stanton. She came to the district in 1912 and soon became closely connected with St. James's Church. One of the first members of Ted. and Hampton Women Citizens' Association. 1938 trained as Air Raid Warden on duty at A.R.P. Post at bottom of Park Road. In 1942 her home in Park Road was destroyed by one of our own bombers falling on it. Its wing tip touched one of the four small pinnacles round the spire. Hannah and Lady Stanton and St. James's church narrowly escaped annihilation. Lady Stanton returned to her home on its being rebuilt in 1948. From 1941-43 she worked in British Restaurants in Dorking and Kensington. In 1944, well into her sixties, she became driver to Lord Daryngton who was in charge of the warwork of the Church Army. A lady of immense courage "she fought the ill health of her last years indomitably. She was ready for anything right to the last and no one could have contact with her without being impressed by her dignity and graciousness, and realising that here was a great Christian Lady".

July: The splendid pageant "Our Sovereign Lady" was produced in the spacious grounds of The Wilderness in honour of H.M. The Queen's Coronation. Coronation Reports. About 85 members of the Darby and Joan Club and 35 members of the congregation watched the Processions and Service in the Church Hall on T.V. sets procured by Councillor Col. Futter (Mr. Stanley Childs, Mr. Beckett and Mr. Sargeant acted as stewards). In the afternoon the Hall was used for children's parties.

November: A personal note from the Vicar and Mrs. Brunt announcing the birth of their fourth child, "he came just before St. Francis Day and was born next to St. James's church so his names almost chose themselves." Many items about the Renovation Fund Drive "Guy Fawkes may walk the streets — so look out for him." (He was nearly six feet tall and the writer pushed him around in an ancient invalid chair, for allowing which the Vicar was subsequently brought to task by an irate invalid!) A mile of pennies was organised in the High Street on Nov. 28th. An ancient barrel organ toured the parish, the Vicar turned the handle and the team included "a genuine Italian barrel-organ-grinder complete with side whiskers, moustaches and a complexion dyed deep by the Mediterranean sun" (M.O.) "and a Victorian gypsy woman" (H.S.).

Overheard in a supermarket: "I've always wanted to spend money lavishly, but I never thought it would be on bread and jam."

DATES TO NOTE

December	13	THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT Services as usual
	15	20.00 Tuesday Club, Wayside, Christmas Party
	16	10.00 Liturgical Dance Group, Church
	19	15.30 near Quality Fare, High Street, Parish Carol Singing
	20	FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT Morning services as usual 16.30 Christingle Service
	24	23.45 Midnight Eucharist
	25	CHRISTMAS DAY 8.00 Holy Communion 9.30 Parish Communion 16.30 Carols around the Crib
	26	ST. STEPHENS 10.00 Holy Communion
	27	FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS (ST. JOHN) Morning services as usual 16.30 Festival of Lessons and Carols

December	28	THE HOLY INNOCENTS 10.00 Holy Communion
	30	10.00 Liturgical Dance Group, Church
January	3	SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS Services as usual
	4	14.30 Ladies Choir, Vestry
	5	20.00 Social Committee
	6	14.30 Mothers' Union New Year Party, Wayside 20.00 Holy Communion EPIPHANY
	10	THIRD SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS Morning services as usual 16.30 Epiphany Welcome Service
	12	Editorial Board, 75 St. James's Avenue, time to be advised

Regular Weekday Events (with due consideration of Christmas holiday)

Monday :	Wayside Monday Centre 10.30 to 13.30, 20.00 to 22.00
Tuesday :	19.30 Choir Practice, Vestry
Wednesday :	20.00 Catechumenate
Thursday :	10.30 to 12.00 Young Families Group, Wayside 19.15 Holy Communion 20.00 Koinonia
Saturday :	19.00 Catechumenate
Sunday :	19.30 Church Youth Club

CHEMISTS ADDITIONAL DUTY ROTA

December	13	Boots the Chemists, 59 Broad Street, Teddington
	20	Thomas, D.R., 113 Stanley Road, Teddington
	25	F.G. Martin (Chemists) Ltd., 28B Priory Road, Hampton
	26	H. Hall, 62 High Street, Hampton Hill
	27	H. Hall, 62 High Street, Hampton Hill
	28	H. Hall, 62 High Street, Hampton Hill
January	1	Boots the Chemists, 59 Broad Street, Teddington (11-12 am)
	3	F.G. Martin (Chemists) Ltd., 3 Station Approache, Hampton
	10	E. & R. Kirby, 53 High Street, Teddington

Baptisms: On 8th November Paul David Hughes, 77 Rectory Grove
Louise Carter, 48 Wolsey Road
Nicola Jane Harrison, 10 Parkside
Alexander John Wickham, 86 Wordsworth Rd.

Marriage: On 21st November Gary Ronald Ersser and Collette Jane Gray

Funerals: On 13th November Dorothy Maud Bennett, Laurel Dene, aged 85
Peter Raymond Roake, 11 Winifred Rd., aged 62

STOP PRESS: CYC are Christmas Postmen. On the last two Sundays before Christmas a special pillar box will be in church for you to post any cards for church friends. These will be distributed by members of the Church Youth Club.