

It is Lent again. I was asked:

‘What is the point in giving up chocolate or puddings when half the world is starving and has no clean water?’

That is not only a reasonable but also a pertinent question. Lent was developed by the church in the first few centuries as a time of preparation and penance. Admission to the Church was by baptism at Easter as was re-admission after a period of falling away or of having seriously lapsed. It was a hard discipline, but a reminder of the discipleship and discipline (the two are intimately connected) of being a christian throughout the year, of walking a path in which the demands of love take priority over self and gain. So our personal giving up of extras is a reminder of our discipleship. In church we give up some of the exuberance of our worship - flowers, Alleluias, the Gloria in Excelsis. And we take on other things - more time for reflection and prayer, perhaps at a Hampton Council of Churches Lent group, perhaps at weekday services or at home. We use the amount saved giving up chocolates as extra charitable giving, over and above that to which we are already committed - the giving until it hurts.

‘But surely your small sacrifices are but a drop in the ocean, your Lenten discipline is not going to make the slightest difference?’

It may not make any immediate impact on the global scale, but it does make a difference. First, Lent is not a season for trumpet-blowing and ‘Aren’t we good?’ Lenten fasting and discipline is hidden within us, within God; it is up to us to decide what is right for our situation, it must be a personal, hidden and deliberate choice, so it does make a difference who undertake such decisions. Second, in denying ourselves we can take opportunity to learn how dependent we are on each other. In my pulling back from being No. 1 I get a wider picture of human relations. I can come to realise how relationships can be improved and made more whole by critical self-examination and, by saying sorry, I acknowledge my part in wrong relationships, at every level. It does make a huge difference when we start to see the inequalities in relationships between individuals or groups or nations, and our part within each of those.

‘It all sounds pretty dull stuff. Do you have to be miserable for 40 days?’

No, I don’t think austerity is the same as dreariness. I certainly hope that our self-denial and stark, simple worship in Lent doesn’t make us dull. Remembering the 40 days of Jesus’s temptation in the wilderness is only secondary, first and foremost Lent is preparation. Furthermore, Lent comes to an end at Easter. If we keep Lent more rigorously, then the dramatic contrast with the joyful celebration of Easter is even more powerful, just as our greater delight at the bursting into life of springtime follows the starkness of a particularly hard winter.

Try it out this Lent.... and Easter.

Brian Leathard

Some thoughts on Lent....

..... during which we commemorate our Lord's days in the wilderness.

'The task thy wisdom hath assigned
O let me cheerfully fulfil;
In all my works thy presence find,
And prove thy good and perfect will.' (Charles Wesley)

What did Jesus go out into the wilderness to seek? As a mortal man he must have sought those things which we all need; as the Son of God he knew where to find them - in close communion with God, his soul united with his Father's in prayer and in listening to the Spirit.

He sought quietness so that in the stillness he could be close to his Father and know him as we must also, in spirit and in truth. He sought wisdom. What is this wisdom that is God's and was Christ's, the wisdom that Jesus Christ imparted, and still imparts, to those who are willing to receive it? We are told that if we lack wisdom, if in our belief we are as yet still unbelieving - and who isn't, we are to ask for it from God the source of all wisdom, for 'He gives to all men generously and without reproaching'. We are promised that wisdom will be given to us, but we must 'ask in faith with no doubting.'

We have Jesus, God's living word, to help us, he is at hand, to share the mind of God with us. We are promised that if we seek we shall find, aid us Lord in our seeking. Jesus said to his disciples then and to us now 'Come and see'. Help us Lord

in our coming that we may be constantly refreshed according to your promises in Christ. Help us to seek and find your wisdom for living. We read that Wisdom 'goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her' and 'sheweth herself favourably unto them in the ways and meeteth them in every thought'. Help us Lord to become thus worthy.

Christ walked with wisdom in his life, with spiritual intuition, courage, strength and disciplined faithfulness. He disciplined himself to be God's faithful disciple and showed us the way to do the same.

O Lord, make us loving, disciplined disciples for 'the very beginning of wisdom is the desire of discipline and the care of discipline is love'. Let these days of Lent be an opportunity to each one of us for quietness, to go into the quiet places deep in ourselves to meet with you and to learn spiritual truths; to be still in the company of Jesus and to know in our innermost hearts that you are God and through this knowledge to live our future days to our souls' refreshment, our fellows' wellbeing and to the honour and glory of the Lord. Amen.



Matthew 4:1-11

Children's Eucharist

'Praise the Lord in the rhythm of your music,
Praise the Lord on guitar and on the drums.
Praise the Lord on the organ and piano.
Praise Him in the singing of your song!'

Well, we certainly did this on 4th February in the Children's Eucharist. It was a marvellous service with the church packed with Brownies, Guides, Cubs, Scouts, many other children, mums, dads, friends and loved ones. The hymns chosen were all familiar and as the children knew them, they could also join in with gusto. There was a bright, lively new setting for the Gloria and other sung parts of the Eucharist written by Olive and rehearsed before the service by Olive on the organ, Margaret and Paul singing and Paul also playing his guitar. It certainly made a delightful change and seemed to bring more joy into the singing, as did the cheerful hymns. After all, that's what praising God is all about - rejoicing and being happy.

Another lovely aspect of the service was the fact that members of the congregation were actively involved. Rachel and David made the opening prayers, Caitlyn read the lesson, Jeremy and Geoffrey were servers, other children took up the offertory and I, in fear and trepidation, lead the intercessions. From my point of view, it was marvellous being integrated into the service and I am sure it was the same for the others. There were also baptisms for three new members and it was lovely to see Brian encourage all the children to go up to see what was going on, so they all felt a part of it. He also involved other children to take photographs of members of the congregation during the service, and asked us all to take photographs of church activities to fill a new Church Notice Board by the time of the next Children's Eucharist. What a good idea.

Prill Smith

Our Church Services

A few changes have been made to the pattern of regular services. These are shown in the list of services towards the end of each issue of 'The Spire'.

The main change is that on the first Sunday of each month, when there is an Informal Service in the morning, which will sometimes take the form of a Children's Eucharist (see the article above), there will no longer be a Parish Communion in the evening. Instead there will be, at 6.30 pm, Choral Evensong. At the same time on each third Sunday, there will also be Choral Evensong, and, as at present, at 6.30 pm on the second, fourth and, if there is one, fifth, Sunday, there will be 'Prayer 'n' Praise' with 'The Travellers' group of musicians and singers. During Lent, Compline will be said each Sunday at 9 pm.

Weekday Holy Communion services will be held at 8 pm on Festival Days and continue to be held on Tuesdays at 9.30 am and on Thursdays at 7.15 pm. On the first Thursday in each month, the Thursday evening Communion will include the Ministry of Healing.

Morning Prayer will continue to be said at 9.15 am on Mondays to Fridays.



The Continuing Saga of Churchyard Destruction

Once again our poor churchyard has suffered severe ravages as a result of the weather. A large pine tree came down in the worst gale in mid-January, wrecking several graves along the main path. Among the damaged graves were those of Thomas Coe, Actor-Manager of the old Haymarket Theatre and Jane Barnard, a very devoted parish worker, who also has a memorial in the church itself. A few days later another conifer near to Park Road started to lean precariously, but before it could be tackled, someone rang the Fire Brigade who came and, after several false starts, and using one of the congregation's own chain saws, succeeded in felling it. Fortunately, on this occasion there was little damage to graves underneath.

Various people have spent considerable amounts of time clearing up after these mishaps, but of course the graves themselves cannot be restored to their former condition; the families have long since gone and the expense of repairing them would be astronomical, even if it were possible.

Recording of the graves in the churchyard continues, and if anyone would like to join us in this task, would they please contact me on 979 7042. Unfortunately the graves that were damaged had not yet been recorded, although it should be possible to do so in most cases.

Helen Taylor

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'Holy Week' Easter Workshop for Children

Wednesday 11 and Thursday 12 April

From 10.00 to 12.00

in St. James's Church

All children and Adult Helpers Welcome (Enquiries to Pam Atkinson on 979 6166)

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Hampton Parochial Charities

Charitable funds are available for certain young people resident in Hampton and Hampton Hill to be made in the form of educational grants to assist them in their advancement in life and to enable them to earn their own living, as the Trustees of the Charities think fit.

In addition, there are funds available to assist young people entering into apprenticeships with the purchase of their tools.

Further information can be obtained from Mr. B.M.E. Wilson (Solicitor and Clerk to the Trustees), 35 Ashley Road, Hampton.

What is Cruse?

Cruse takes its name from the biblical cruse of oil that never ran out (1 Kings 17.16) which symbolises its care for the bereaved. But the services of Cruse, which is to help bereaved people through counselling and to give opportunities for social contact, are offered to all regardless of religion.

No matter how strong our faith, the pangs of grief are the greatest mental pain that most of us will suffer. Grief itself is a job of work, a painful process of learning, which teaches us how to go on living without the person who has died.

The aim of a Cruse counsellor is to help people through these turning points in their lives. To help them to hope when all hope seems gone. To help them to find meaning in a life that seems meaningless. To help them to face the painful realities of loss and to start the long process of rebuilding a world which seems in ruins.

A counsellor, who is a volunteer, is selected after finishing a course, and is then allocated to a small group of other counsellors and the guidance of a qualified supervisor. The training is an ongoing process, with many opportunities of attending talks, seminars, etc. which are given by experienced professional people.

The clients who turn to Cruse for help, are passed to an appropriate counsellor by the referral secretary after discussion with a supervisor. The counselling sessions are held at the client's home, and are at regular intervals, sometimes for a few weeks, but often for several months, or even a year.

As a Cruse counsellor of several years, it has been a most rewarding experience and it has greatly contributed to whatever maturity I have.

Marion Nevill

Lady Eleanor Holles School Concert

Wednesday 7 March

7.30 pm

Assembly Hall, Lady Eleanor Holles School

Admission £2 (Students £1)

Rectory School Concert

Wednesday 28 March

7.30 pm

Rectory School

(Details from School or St. James's Church)

SOS



ST JAMES'S

SPIRE APPEAL

Both concerts in aid of St. James's Spire Appeal

Discipline

Throw away thy rod,
Throw away thy wrath;
 O my God,
Take the gentle path.

For my heart's desire
Unto thine is bent;
 I aspire
To a full consent.

Not a word or look
I affect to own,
 But by book,
And thy book alone.

Though I fail, I weep;
Though I halt in pace,
 Yet I creep
To the throne of grace.

Then let wrath remove;
Love will do the deed;
 For with love,
Stony hearts will bleed.

Love is swift of foot;
Love's a man of war,
 And can shoot
And can hit from far.

Who can scape his bow?
That which wrought on thee,
 Brought thee low,
Needs must work on me.

Throw away thy rod;
Though man frailties hath,
 Thou art God.
Throw away thy wrath.

*George Herbert, Priest, Pastor and Poet,
whom the church commemorates on 27 February.*

Love is

How do you know when someone loves you? That was the question posed at a recent Sunday evening service. Various answers came back - Presents of flowers, or chocolates perhaps, or an embrace.... It made me think of a friend of mine who made, when she was young, a disastrous marriage, brought up three boys, one of whom had terrible emotional problems, until finally she had a divorce. This was a very hard decision for her to make because she was a very faithful Roman Catholic. Eventually she re-married, quite unexpectedly, and we were talking about the new husband. 'When I come home from work feeling tired, he always has a cup of tea waiting for me'. So for her, knowing that someone loved her was expressed in a timely cup of tea.

We have heard much lately of how God uses the ordinary everyday things in life, so here, it wasn't the expensive flowers or chocolates that symbolised love, but a cup of ordinary tea - the one that arrives by your bedside in the morning or when you come home from work or shopping.

So Christ took the everyday things of his time, the vin de pays, the cheapest barley loaf, and transformed them into symbols of his love for us, When we share these things we draw near to his presence, something that when we love someone we also want, to be close to them sharing their life and becoming part of their family.

Have you seen the photographs people have put up in the church? They are all part of the family of St. James's Church. So bring your pictures along to put up and share a cup of tea (or coffee) and know that someone loves you!

Helen Taylor

Media Power

IF YOU believe that no one was ever corrupted by a book, you have also to believe that no one was ever improved by a book (or a play or a film). You have to believe, in other words, that all art is morally trivial and that, consequently, all education is morally irrelevant.

Irving Kristol



******* APCM ***** APCM ***** APCM *******

Attention! Keep the evening of **Wednesday 25th April 1990 FREE!**

7.00 pm Holy Communion (St. Mark the Evangelist)

7.30 pm Coffee and Chat

8.00 pm Meeting of Parishioners and

Annual Parochial Church Meeting in Church

At these meetings Churchwardens will be chosen for the coming year, Deanery Synod representatives elected and members of the Parochial Church Council elected.

Nomination Forms for these posts will be available in Church from 1st April to 22nd April.

Do join us and hear what has been happening at St. James's in the last twelve months.

If you are on the Electoral Roll, come and ask questions about the parish.

More details from the Vicar.

******* APCM ***** APCM ***** APCM *******

Citizens Advice Bureau Service

Following a grant from the Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity, the Twickenham Citizens Advice Bureau appointed a worker to provide advice for Hampton and Hampton Hill residents and to research their needs with a view to setting up a permanent office in the area. Each week, three sessions are held as follows:

United Reformed Church, High Street,	Hampton Hill, Tuesdays, 10 - 12.30
Methodist Church, Percy Road,	Hampton, Wednesdays, 10 - 12.30
The White House, Nurserylands,	Hampton, Fridays, 9.30 - 12.00

If any housebound readers would like information, advice on almost any subject or help in filling out a difficult form, would they please contact Jill Smith at The Advice Centre, 61 Heath Road, Twickenham TW1 4AW or telephone 892 5917.

SINGERS - Would you like to sing in St. James's Church Choir?

Rehearsals for

Music and Readings for Holy Week

Palm Sunday, 8 April 1990, 6.30pm and

Christ is Risen, Easter Day, 15 April 1990, 6.30pm

begin on Friday 2 March 1990 at 6.30 pm

in the Vestry, St. James's Church

Scout Group News



The Group will be taking part in the Scout National 'Go for a Million' Campaign this year. British Scouts will aim to camp for a million nights, spend a million hours helping their local communities, walk a million kilometres and complete many other challenges.

Several of our leaders have been awarded First Aid Certificates and our scouts took part in the recent District First Aid Competition.

The Venture Scout Unit is now an active part of the group and open to young people aged 15 - 20. They have been training for the annual 'Southern 50' Challenge - a 50 mile walk over the Chiltern Hills requiring orienteering skills as well as stamina.

Two forthcoming events at which all are welcome are a Car Boot Sale on the morning of Saturday 3 March at Fourwinds Press Car Park, and a Barn Dance at 7.30 pm on Saturday 17 March at St. James's Parish Hall. For further details, telephone 941 2243 (evenings).

Susan Horner

From the Registers

Baptisms

January 21 Christine Jean Casson 115F Uxbridge Road
Louise Samantha Smith *and*
Nicola Jane Smith *both of* 278 Hanworth Road

Marriage

January 6 Gavin Prince and Shirley Maslen

Funerals

January 8	Leonard Edward Norris	19 Taylor Close	Aged 73
16	Cecil Charles Manly	41 Rectory Grove	Aged 68
17	Reginald Edward Brown	12 Roy Grove	Aged 71
25	Gordon Henry Darling	32 Windmill Road	Aged 68
30	Lord Robert Boulden	Laurel Dene	Aged 89

Regular Weekly Services

Sunday	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Parish Communion (except first Sunday in month)
Monday to Friday	09.15	Morning Prayer
Tuesday	09.30	Holy Communion
Thursday	19.15	Holy Communion (with Ministry of Healing on the first Thursday in month)

Other Services and Dates to Note

March	4	09.30	Informal Service	
		18.30	Choral Evensong	
		21.00	Compline	
	5		HCC Lent Groups start	
		14.30	Editorial Board, 19 St. James's Road	
		20.00	M.U. Evening Discussion Group, Wayside	
	6	20.00	Tuesday Club: Talk - 'The Village Bakery', Wayside	
		7	19.30	
	8	20.00	Informal Lecture by Dr. Ghillean Prance, Director of Kew Gdns.,	
		11	09.30	
	18.30		Prayer 'n' Praise	
	21.00		Compline	
	17	19.30	Scout Group Barn Dance, Parish Hall	
	18	18.30	Choral Evensong	
		21.00	Compline	
	19		St. Joseph of Nazareth	
		20.00	Holy Communion	
	20	20.00	Tuesday Club: Talk with slides - 'Hampton Court Gardens',	
	21	20.00	PCC, Vestry [Wayside]	
24		The Annunciation of our Lord to the Blessed Virgin		
25		Mothering Sunday		
	18.30	Prayer 'n' Praise		
	21.00	Compline		
28	19.30	Concert at Rectory School		
April	1	09.30	Informal Service	
		15.00	Holy Baptism	
		18.30	Choral Evensong	
		21.00	Compline	

Advance Notices

3	20.00	Tuesday Club: 'Meet Charles Dickens', with slides, Wayside
	8	Palm Sunday
	18.30	Music and Readings for Holy Week
	21.00	Compline
12		Maundy Thursday
	20.00	Parish Communion
13		Good Friday
	10.30	Leave for Open-Air Service at Sainsbury's, Hampton
15	12.00	Three Hours' Meditation and Devotion
		Easter Day
15	18.30	'Christ is Risen': Music and Readings
	25	
19.00		Holy Communion
19.30		Coffee and Chat
20.00		Annual Parochial Church Meeting (in Church)
28	10.00	Worship Resources Workshop (until 12.00)
	19.30	HCC Lent Groups Service. St. James's Church