

This month something distinctively new happens at St. James! We receive, as a stipendiary curate, Freda Evans. At the front of The Spire you will find her address and telephone number. We are all about to begin a period in our parish life which will be challenging and exciting. We welcome Freda most warmly and will mark her arrival on Sunday 4th July at the 9.30 am service. Do please try to be present.

On Saturday 3rd July, Freda will have been ordained a 'deacon in the Church of God' by the Bishop of London in St. Paul's Cathedral. It will be a fine occasion in St. Paul's. About 30 men and women are to be ordained deacon this year, eight of whom will serve parishes in the Kensington Episcopal Area. So what is a deacon? Is it an apprentice vicar; is it an assistant priest; is it a lay person practising to be a priest? No.

The word 'deacon' means servant. Remember Jesus said, "I am among you as one who serves". Certainly in the early church, as mentioned in the New Testament and from other very early references, deacons were those members of the Christian Community who were set aside to undertake specific tasks of service. The 'deacon' in an ancient household was the person who served at table, ministered to the members of the household and carried out the household's tasks outside the home. So too in the church, the deacon serves at table - literally, prepares the altar; the deacon ministers to members of the household of faith at St James, and carries out the tasks of our church among the whole parish community.

This role of the deacon stayed with the entire church until the Reformation. When Henry VIII, so much beloved in Hampton, presided over the break from Rome in the mid 16th Century, the Church of England continued with its understanding of the ministry of bishops, priests and deacons. This, like so much of the church's understanding and practice, didn't change. Indeed the Bishop of London, before he ordains Freda, will remind her what she is called to be and do as a deacon (and remind everybody else - including Betty and me who remain deacons as well as priests):

"Deacons are called to serve the Church of God, and to work with its members in caring for the poor, the needy, the sick and all in trouble. They are to strengthen the faithful, search out the careless and indifferent and to preach the word of God . . . A deacon assists the priest under whom they serve in leading the worship of the people. They may baptise and do all such pastoral work as is entrusted to them."

This is Freda's commitment to us. Ours is to support her, challenge her, train her and to keep her in our prayers that she may grow more and more fully into her ministry as a deacon. We look forward also to this time next year when she will be ordained priest - but that is another story.

Let us welcome Freda into our parish, our homes and our lives.

Thank you

CHRISTIAN AID



Christian Aid
We believe in life before death

Thank you once again to our greatly appreciated house to house collectors for their work during Christian Aid Week. We collected **£1778** which included one or two generous donations.

The Christian Aid service held here at St. James's was enjoyed by a good congregation who contributed **£223**. The DIY Messiah, organised by our indefatigable Geoffrey Bowyer, raised **£1112**, which will be used by Christian Aid for our **£2000 for 2000** project at Milo Hospital.

Grateful thanks to all who collected, contributed, sang, counted the money or helped with general organisation. Be there next year!!

Margaret Taylor

CELEBRATING THE MILLENNIUM AT ST. JAMES

Many people are very excited about the oncoming millennium. Others are apprehensive, and fear computer chaos. Some of us are sceptical of both the excitement and the fears. But however excited, fearful or sceptical we may be, in this parish we will have the joy of something really meaningful to celebrate, something profoundly worthwhile that we will have achieved. Many disadvantaged Tanzanian people will be celebrating with us.

In the March edition of the Spire you will have read of our **£2000 in 2000** appeal. We will welcome the new millennium by a donation of at least **£2000**, we hope a lot more, to the Christian Aid Health Education project in the Diocese of South West Tanganyika, based near the Milo Mission Hospital. This project is to provide clean water, sanitation and basic health facilities in the area where very few exist at present. Our money will mean the difference between health and disease, maybe life and death, for many of the residents in the area. In terms of the overall need it is not a large sum, but it will be targeted directly to the needs of the people. The project will give both immediate and long-term benefit; the more we can collect the wider that benefit will be.

We are firmly committed to the **£2000** at least. We began collecting money for our appeal with the Good Friday "Messiah", which raised **£1,112**. Further donations brought the fund to **£1,210** in June. By the time you read this, it should be even more.

Contributions to our appeal are welcome from anyone at any time. Cheques, made out to the PCC, and money are best put in an envelope marked "**£2000 in 2000 Appeal**". They can be put in with the weekly collection, or given to the vicar, the treasurer, or the churchwardens.

SILVER AND GOLD STRANDS

There is a rather lovely prayer which runs:

"Then shall I know . . . not till the loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly shall God unroll the canvass and explain the reason why the dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skilful hand as the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He has planned".

It seems to me that our lives are indeed made up of a wealth of different strands, each one enriching the others. It is only as we get a little older and look back on our lives that we begin to realise just how much one thing inter-links with another.

One of my earliest, formative memories is when I was in the sixth form and attended a residential weekend on social justice. Being brought up on a Welsh mountain, I found it an eye opener and it gave me insight to the subjects of poverty and racism. During those teenage years everything was felt passionately and another light which was also set burning was a thirst to have more spiritual teaching. Because there was really nothing around, I resorted to material through the post and had I not been confirmed already, I might well have become a Roman Catholic. Instead, my journey took another turning and I became intensely interested in politics believing that was the way to change the world into a better place! During my years in London politics featured in my life in a big way; the last ten years of those being spent as political assistant to Chris Patten. Interestingly, interweaving with the political strand in my life was my involvement with Crisis, the charity for homeless people and during my chairmanship, it was possible to enable housing ministers to meet homeless people and to see for themselves what it was like to be on the streets. With that clearer picture emerged the Rough Sleepers' Initiative which provided finance for cold weather shelters in London and other major cities during the winter months.

A visit to Holloway Prison unravelled another strand in my life as a prison visitor and then as member, and Chairman, of the Board of Visitors. During my hours in prison(!) surrounded by women with such huge problems and often empty lives, any nagging worries I might have could always be put into perspective.

With the loss of Chris Patten's seat in Bath in 1992 my life was turned upside down since I lost my job too. My future seemed uncertain. Where would I go from there? Would it be politics? I had no idea. In the short term, I became deputy director of a charity for young people on the streets and eventually decided to go off on a silent retreat at a convent - something I had never contemplated before. There I reflected on where God was in my life and where He might be leading me. He had been alongside me all the time, of course, in the homeless 16 year old runaway, in the bleakest pain of a prisoner in solitary confinement. But He had also been there in the many wonderful, compassionate people whose lives have touched mine and helped to mould me into who I am. God's plan for me gradually unfolded before my eyes. As I become ordained and move to Hampton, I am aware of the richness of His tapestry, and how, even in dark moments, there are the silver and gold strands waiting to be woven into our stories.

Freda Evans

REPORT BACK FROM THE PCC

The first full meeting of the new PCC was held on 26th May when, amongst the usual business, two important items were discussed.

The Diocese of London has published child protection guidelines to help parishes provide a safe environment for their work with children and young people. The members of the PCC had read a summary of these guidelines before the meeting, and we discussed how we were fulfilling them in our work with the Sunday School and Young Church and what still had to be done. One matter to be looked into is adequate insurance cover. The guidelines include the appointment of someone to act as a Children's Advocate in the Parish with the responsibility of implementing them. Jane Newman, a member of our congregation who is a teacher and has teenage children, had been approached and has happily agreed to take on this work. The PCC were delighted to approve her appointment.

We also discussed in some detail, a section of the Diocese of Oxford Seeds of Hope working party report, entitled "The role of the parish in combatting racism". This offered guidelines for the PCC to consider, and suggestions for possible action. It was felt that our congregation reflected the small number of ethnic minorities in the local community. It was regretted that there was no longer any ethnic minority representation on the PCC. The report suggested Romans 15:1-6 and Acts 9:26-30 as appropriate Bible study, "An outsider accepted and commissioned". We discussed the strategies for action, and how we were fulfilling them, including leadership, membership, worship, teaching, local outreach, and monitoring. We accepted that, though St. James tries to be a welcoming church for all (as stated on the notice outside the church) and takes an active part in the local community, there was room for improvement in our attitude to worship, membership, teaching and leadership, and that these need to be monitored.

The next meeting of the PCC is on Tuesday 6th July.



**Found in the magazine of St Andrew's Church, Kyrenia,
Cyprus by Margaret and Tony Lawrance -**

Hereby a warning to those of you about to embark on the Internet:-

. . . . "A Wisconsin businessman travelled to Louisiana on a business trip. Upon arrival he immediately plugged his laptop into the hotel room computer port and sent a short e-mail back home to his wife, Jennifer Johnson, at her e-mail address - JennJohn@world.net. Unfortunately, in his haste, he mistyped a letter and the e-mail ended up going to JeanJohn@world.net. Jean Johnson in Duluth was the wife of a preacher who had just passed away and had been buried that morning. The preacher's wife took one look at the e-mail and promptly fainted. It read - "Arrived safely, but it sure is hot down here!"



MISSION IMPOSSIBLE BUT NOT IMPROBABLE

Angela Mullens, who wrote the following, is employed by the British Council to train teachers in Botswana. The Charities Committee would like to send £250 to St. Paul's Church, Molepolole.

Working in Botswana can seem to the Europeans impossible. Problems seem insurmountable and the conflict of the European preoccupation with time and resources, and the African Christian calmness and faith and assurance in God, reflect both ends of the spectrum. It is a hard lesson to stand still and wait.

The faith of the African Christians is truly awe inspiring. Sometime ago I was driving my priest's wife towards the border hills of South Africa. As we drove we talked about the education of the priest's children. State education in Botswana is far from adequate and clergy stipends are only £145 a month. Private education was the only alternative for these children, who come from Zimbabwe. My priest's wife talked about the Lord providing and trusting in the Lord. I was a complete doubting Thomas. I did not believe that the children could be educated in Botswana. Where would the money come from? As I turned the car towards the hills, I heard a voice inside me that said, "My faith can move mountains". A few weeks later the children went to be interviewed at the school and were offered places and bursaries. I had seen what faith and trust in the Lord meant.

The aids epidemic is strong here, though there is still denial by many people that they or a member of their family has aids. Last October an aids counselling centre was opened in the village of Molepolole, staffed by volunteers who support aids victims and their families. There is only limited funding for this project, though it is estimated that of the 44,000 inhabitants, 1000 children are orphaned by aids. A day orphanage has been set up, supported only by small voluntary contributions.

The Parish of Molepolole is hosting a Mothers' Union Diocesan Conference this coming August. Over 600 women from all over the diocese will have to be fed and given accommodation in a local school. Though money is slowly coming in, the target is a long way off.

Our most urgent need is for another parish vehicle. Our two priests share a small pick up truck to cover a vast area which includes duty in the capital city some 60km away, and visiting 5 outstations up to 40km away from Molepolole. At the moment the priest's are dependent on using whatever transport is available.

Please pray for God's work in Molepolole, and ask your Parish to contribute at least £200 towards the Mothers' Union Conference, Aids Orphanage or another Parish vehicle.

Yours in Christ's Love
Angela Mullens



In April our church sound system was overhauled by a team of acoustic engineers. The specification for the upgrading was drawn up by Paul Revis, who was responsible for the design of the old system. The old system served us very well, but modern technology has enabled us to make several improvements. There is a new slim loud-speaker fitted in the north aisle, the microphones no longer boom when someone walks near them, and an "anti-feedback" unit stops the awful whistle that occasionally used to burst out if the amplifiers were turned up a little too high. The loop system, which is invaluable for anyone with a hearing aid, is also improved.

The microphones in normal use are on the pulpit, each of the two lecterns, and the personal radio worn by Brian or Betty. The volume of each can be individually adjusted by a mixer unit. This is installed at the west end of the north aisle. The system gives best results when it is kept adjusted by an operator during the service, though this is not essential.

We can record on tape from the microphones, and replay from tape through the loud-speakers. There is also the possibility of one-way audio-visual link from the church to the hall. This will enable a small monochrome picture of the chancel, with sound, to be received in the hall. We hope to get this installed soon.

SIGNS OF GROWTH IN LONDON DIOCESE

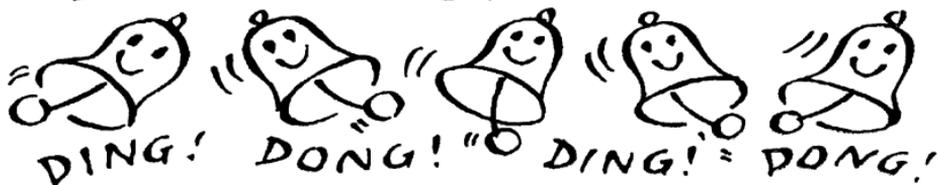
Figures available for 1998 indicate that the number of people in the Diocese currently training for the ordained ministry is 118. This is an increase of 31% over two years. Of the 118, one hundred are opting for stipendiary ministry. In the same year, electoral rolls continued to rise for the third year in succession by almost 4% to 57,300. More than 2000 people were also confirmed. Of these, almost 1000 were adults, who, by definition are likely to be new church members.

Diocesan statistics for church attendance in 1997, the latest available, show that the average Sunday attendance was 42,303 an increase of 3.4% on the '96 figures. These do not take account of attendance at mid-week services. In the same year, Christmas communicants rose by 6.8% to 59,103. The Easter communicants fell slightly by 0.6% to 50,652 and baptisms rose by 2.9% to almost 7,000.

Statistics for giving in 1997 are not yet available but are likely to reflect the trend in recent years for above inflation increases. By December 1998, even though more than 40% of parishes are designated Urban Priority Areas, more than £10m had been collected for the Diocesan Common Fund.

Commenting on the statistics the Bishop of London said "These are encouraging figures. The variety and rich texture of the Church life from which they are drawn is even more encouraging".

BELLRINGERS WANTED



Contrary to the belief of many local people, the bells which you hear at 9.15 every Sunday morning, after weddings and at New Year are not rung by an automatic mechanism. They are rung by REAL people up the bell-tower! Our bells are somewhat unusual in that they are rung by only one person at a time, but we generally have at least two ringers as it is quite tiring to ring continuously for more than a few minutes.

We currently have 3 adult and 3 teenage bellringers working on a rota basis, but the adults are getting older and the boys will be off to University in a year or two. Consequently, I would like to start training some new ringers so that we can keep the tradition alive. Anyone, adults or young people from the age of 11 upwards, can learn to ring. I hope to start in July or August; dates and times can be very flexible.

Please contact me if you are interested or would like a trial ring to see what is involved.

Susan Horner 979 9380

ST. JAMES'S DAY

Sunday 25th July

Celebrate our Patronal Festival

Parish Communion at 11.00 am

(The only service that morning)

Afterwards the spire will be open for visitors -
an alfresco lunch - beating the bounds by bike

PARISH WEEKEND

If you have not already done so, please put these details in your diary:

Parish Weekend - The Grail - 22nd - 24th October 1999

Application forms will be available soon. Anyone wishing to start saving, please contact me. A few people have expressed anxiety about the lack of single rooms at The Grail. Rooms will be allocated on the basis of "first come, first served". However, if people do insist on a room to themselves, it will limit numbers. Anyone who feels that he/she cannot cope with sharing a room, please speak to me. There may be a solution. In any case, if you asked first, then you have priority. As in previous years, I would not ask anyone to share a room without the agreement of both occupants.

Ruth Mills

THE CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

The "New" Commissioners

Change

As part of the reorganisation of the Church's central structures, the Commissioners were re-constituted from 1 January this year and a number of our functions have been transferred to the Archbishops' Council. The Council has taken on responsibility for distributing the money we make available to help pay the clergy stipends (salaries) and our role as Central Stipends Authority in setting recommended stipend levels.

. and Continuity

The Commissioners' mission is unchanged. It is to support the Church of England's ministry in areas of need and opportunity. Our duty in fulfilling this mission is to maximise the return on our assets for the support of our beneficiaries - the clergy. Our membership, continues to reflect our unique dual accountability to Church and State to whom we report annually on our work.

Support for the Church's Ministry in 1998

From 1st January 1998, parishes took on the cost of funding clergy pensions. The Commissioners remain legally responsible for clergy pensions earned from service prior to that date and these will be a substantial cost met from our fund for many years to come.

Our total support for the Church's ministry amounted to £158.9 million. We spent £109.6 million on pensions provision, of which £23.2 million was used to help dioceses and parishes in taking on the cost of paying pension contributions. We distributed £14.7 million to dioceses on a selective basis for stipend support. Over £10 million of this was concentrated on the twelve neediest dioceses, with eleven dioceses receiving no selective support. We also paid guaranteed annuities of £5 million to clergy in parishes covering all dioceses. We paid the stipends of all diocesan, suffragan and full-time assistant bishops, met the working costs of bishops and made grants towards cathedral staff salaries.

Looking to the Future

Our current spending level (excluding the special pensions support from 1998-2002 of up to £65 million to help parishes and dioceses take on the cost of funding clergy pensions) is now much closer to the sustainable rate than it was. The willingness of parishes to pay a greater proportion of the cost of ministry has freed the Commissioners from the need to achieve unsustainably high levels of income. This has enabled us to change our investment strategy to concentrate on providing the necessary growth in our investments to pay for our long-term expenditure commitments. We have made significant progress but, largely due to taxation changes on dividends for charities, our expenditure is still slightly more than we estimate that we can afford over the long term. We remain committed to paying up to £65 million of transitional pensions support and to paying £20 million per annum in parochial ministry support.

In summary, the changes that have taken place in the last few years in the way in which the Church's ministry is financed, made possible by the generosity of parishioners, have helped to ensure that the Commissioners will be able to continue to provide support for the neediest parts of the Church not only today but in generations to come.

Catherine Skinner
Corporate Affairs Officer



We are very glad to welcome home again, from Morocco, the Lawson family, Jeannette, Andrew, Oliver, Jessica and Abigail who was born in Africa. Andrew and Jeannette will be back at work in London again by the time you read this. Thank you to Alan and Helen Taylor from those who visited their house and garden recently. And thanks are also due to those who opened their gardens on 27th June, and to Alison and Bob Hampton and their helpers for their efforts at the Carnival on Saturday 12th June.

Jonathan Brignall is making good progress in his

recovery from his serious illness. Ruth Gostling and Marion Nevill are both feeling better after operations, and David Nunn continues to improve and would welcome visitors (by arrangement).

Best wishes to Sally, daughter of Sheri and Ali Sazegar, on her marriage to Keith early in July. And good wishes also to Peg and Sylvia Boarder who are becoming rather house-bound.

Please remember in your prayers our Churchwardens Dick and Ann, who have recently been "sworn-in" for their next year's service to the Parish. We are grateful for all their hard work on our behalf.

Thank you to all who generously responded to the appeal in *The Spire* a couple of months ago for donations towards its costs. So far we have received nearly £1300.

On Sunday 25th July, Maggie Revis is undertaking a 5 kilometre run to raise funds for research into female cancers. She is looking for Sponsors - 0181 255 4923.

WOMEN'S FORUM SUMMER PARTY

Wednesday 21st July at 7.30 p.m.

Church Hall (or outside if fine and warm)

Barbecue - Salads - Strawberries and Cream

Tickets £3.00

available from WF Committee Members

FROM THE MAY REGISTERS

Baptisms

- 2 Scarlet Cox, 42 Malvern Road, Hampton
8 Phoebe Johns } 67 Hampton Road, Teddington
Amanda Johns }
9 Luke Harris, 140 Fulwell Park Avenue
16 Callum O'Reilly } 28 Taylor Close
Natasha Jones }

Wedding

- 22 Simon Rosam and Claudia Manning

Funeral

- 24 Beth Wallis O'Flaherty, 12 Edward Road, 5 days old

DATES TO NOTE IN JULY

- 1 2 p.m. Magazine Committee - Vicarage
3 Thomas the Apostle
5 p.m. Ordination of Freda Evans as Deacon - St. Paul's Cathedral
4 9.30 a.m. Welcome to the Reverend Freda Evans as our Curate
6 Thomas More and John Fisher, Reformation Martyrs 1535
8 p.m. PCC
10 6.30 p.m.- Churches Together Around Hampton
9.30 p.m. Swim and barbecue - Hampton Pool
11 12 noon Hampton Hill Junior School Fête
2.30 p.m. Churches Together Around Hampton
Rounders Match, Tangle Park
13 8.15 p.m. Stewardship Committee - 75 St. James' Avenue
14 John Keble, Priest and Poet 1866
15 St. Swithin, Bishop of Winchester c 862
19 Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa 394
22 Mary Magdalene
25 St. James' Day - Patronal Festival
11 a.m. Parish Communion
Followed by lunch in the garden and bike ride
Church and Spire open
27 Brooke Foss Westcott, Bishop of Durham
Teacher of Faith 1901
29 Mary, Martha and Lazarus, Companions of our Lord
30 William Wilberforce, Social Reformer

COPY DATE FOR AUGUST MAGAZINE: 11TH JULY