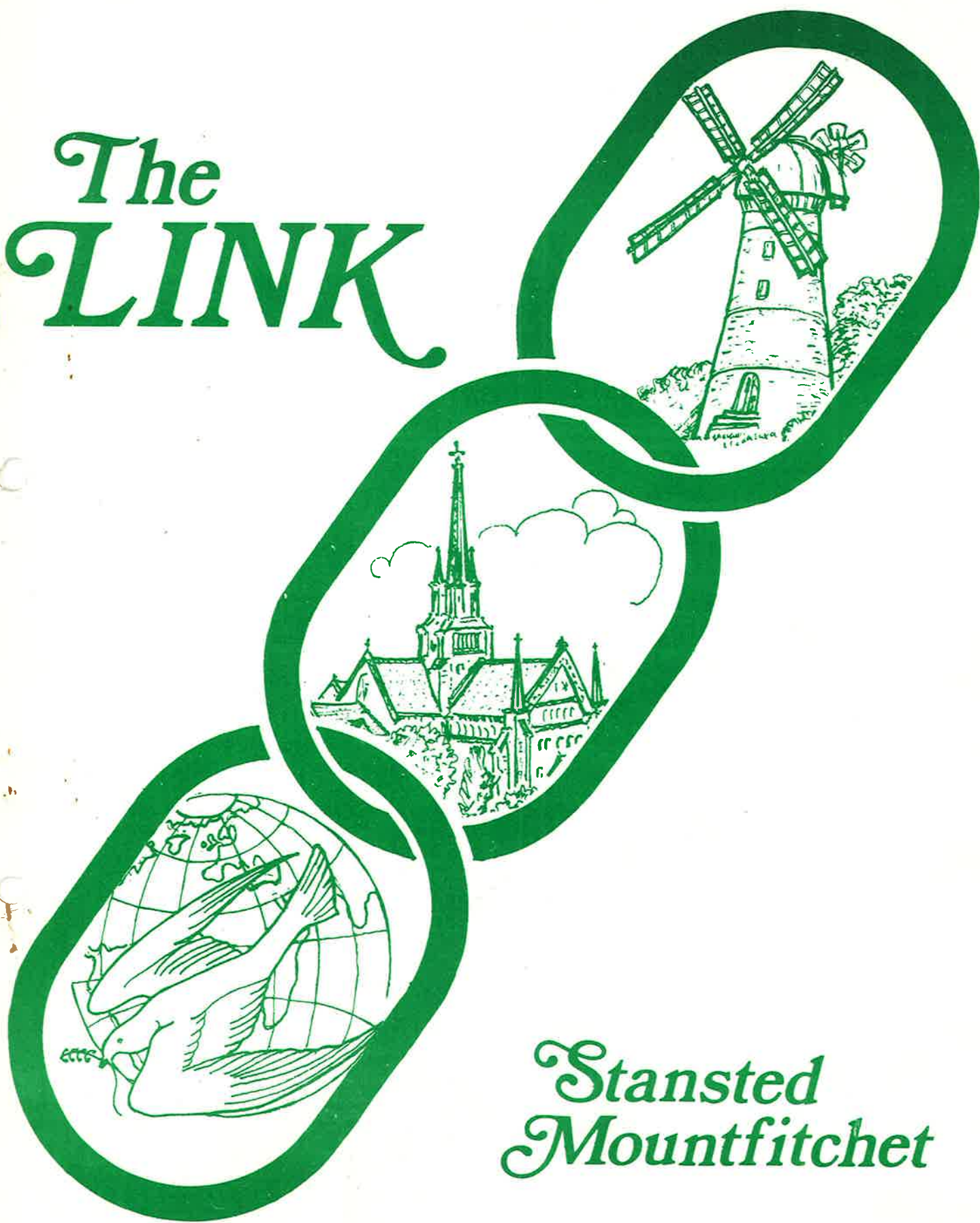


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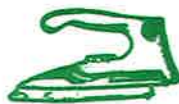
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Come and Sing Carols
Wednesday, December 19th
in the
Memorial Gardens
at 7pm

in aid of Save the Children Fund.
Coffee afterwards in St. John's Hall.
(please bring a torch)



THE LINK

The Link is published monthly by the Stansted Association of Christian Churches.
Annual subscription is £1.75. To order a copy please contact
Mrs Jan Taylor, 27 St John's Crescent, Tel: 813891.

Items for publication should be delivered to
Mrs Mair Muir, 48 St John's Road, Tel: 812289.

Opinions expressed in this magazine are given freely and do not necessarily represent those
of the SACC, its member churches, village organisations or advertisers.

Copy to reach 48 St. John's Road by
10th December for January issue - please note early date!
17th January for February issue

AFTER ONE WORLD WEEK

During One World Week we learnt that exciting things are happening 'across the border' in Bishop's Stortford. A follow up event in November deserves to be shared with other members of SACC. Bishop O'Brien, Chairman of the Roman Catholic Committee on International Affairs for the Bishops' Conference of E & W, and Brian Davies, Director of Education for CAFOD, conducted a seminar for the Hertfordshire Justice and Peace Group.

In his address 'Spirituality and Justice' Bishop O'Brien reminded us that we were commanded to love God with all our being and our neighbour as ourselves. His preferred definition of 'love' was taken from St. Thomas, to desire the good of the beloved. Bishop O'Brien, who only 24 hours before had returned from Central America, described the political scene in the area and how on the extreme right one found exploitation and cynicism and on the left cruelty, oppression and deprivation of human rights. He felt the place to look was upwards to God. He saw no easy answer and warned that the Church was no expert in economic or political affairs. It was particularly challenging that he reminded us that as Christians we must love the oppressor as well as the oppressed. However, I found his message optimistic as he pointed out how all the traditional Christian Churches and other Faiths are a public witness to social justice and human rights, and how love in individuals can burst out in a commitment to justice.

Brian Davies had just returned from the Phillipines where as an educator in World Development he had been educated himself by living with the very poor. He had seen how much easier it was for them than for the rich to share what they had, and had found that they had a better understanding of what was needed for Development. What the south needed from the north was less political interference, less emphasis on aid, often unsuitable, and more emphasis on changes in the structure of trade and finance which transferred 60% of the wealth created in the south each year to the north. He said we should not seek to place blame for what he described as structural sin but that as Christians we were all committed to overcoming it.

Thankyou Sister Judith and Martin for making this inspiring event possible.



HELPLINE

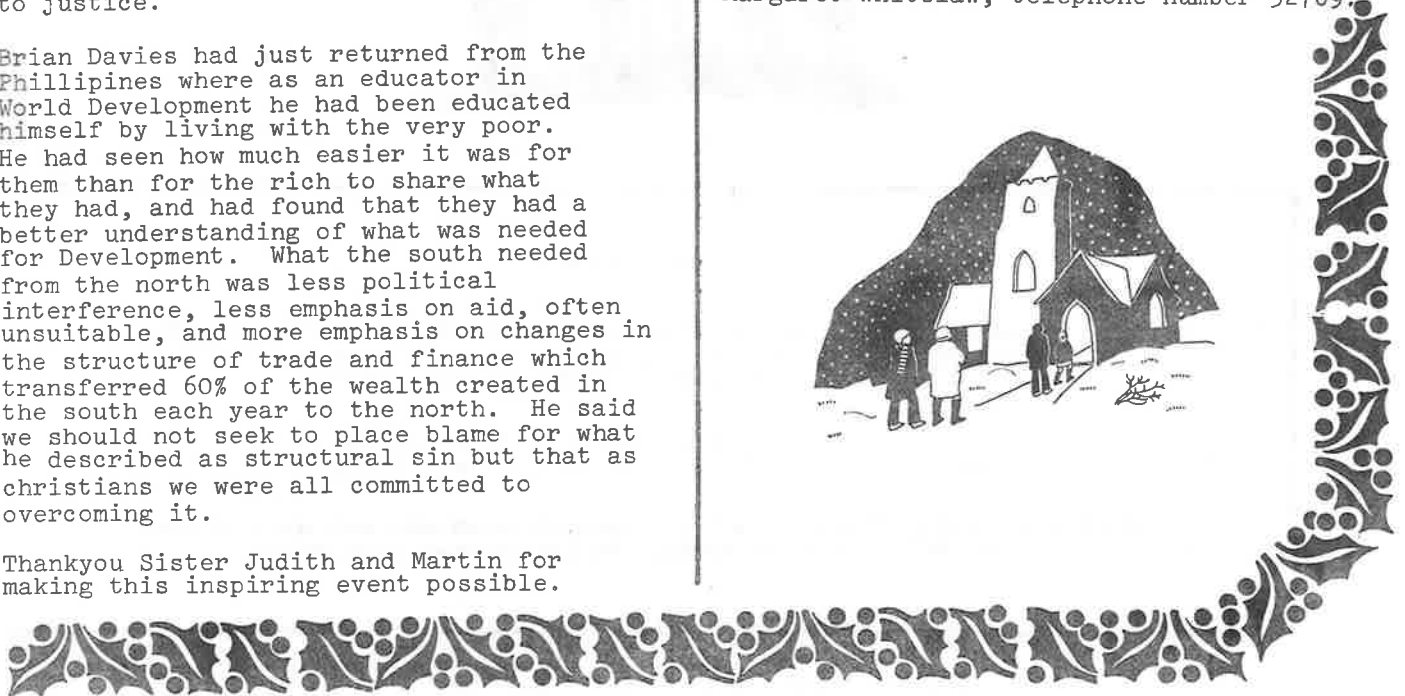
The Helpline community care scheme began operations on 1 November at 10 am. The scheme was opened officially by its Chairman, Tony Bundock, and Organiser, Peter Pavitt, during a small celebration for volunteers held at Stansted Day Centre.

CHRISTMAS DAY MEALS FOR THE ELDERLY OR INFIRM

If you are an elderly or infirm person who will be spending Christmas Day alone, you may like to have a Christmas lunch delivered to you by Helpline. Details of this service can be obtained by telephoning Helpline on 816008.

We are distributing to every home in the parish a Christmas leaflet giving details of all our church services.

We apologise to the Society of Friends in that the name of their Clerk is now Margaret Whitelaw, telephone number 52769.



Church of England

Clergy: The Rev'd Barry Rose
The Vicarage, St John's Road
Tel: 812203

The Rev'd Anthony Bundock
43 Gilbey Crescent
Tel: 814463

Deaconess Margaret Booker
Moorlands Cottage, Burton End
Tel: 812684

Services: Held in St John's, St John's Road and
St Mary's, Church Road

Holy Communion	-	8am
Family Communion	-	9.30am
Children's Church	-	9.30am
Creche	-	9.30am
Holy Communion (1662) (2nd and 4th Sundays)	-	11.15am
Evensong	-	6.30pm

Holy Communion is celebrated on:

Tuesday	-	7.30pm
Wednesday	-	10am
Thursday	-	7.30am
Friday	-	8am

In summer months some of these services are held in St Mary's. See notice in church porches for further details or ring one of the clergy.

VICAR'S NOTES

"Why does a loving God allow all these people to suffer?" must be the question in our minds as we watch the starving people of Ethiopia. There is no full or adequate answer to this question. Over the centuries men have grappled with the problem of suffering but there never can be an answer which completely satisfies our minds. But supposing it were possible to explain why men suffer, would that in itself help those who are experiencing hunger, disease, poverty, bereavement or sickness? Not at all. To try and help the sufferer with philosophical talk is like trying to feed a starving man by giving him a lecture on the chemistry of foodstuffs.

Christians believe that the God who created this world is not remote or uncaring but is within the suffering of the world and can be discovered in the torments and griefs of men. This is the message of Christmas. In Jesus of Nazareth God reveals Himself as the God who stands alongside and within men in every part of life.

The new born baby lying on the wood of the manger was later nailed to a wooden cross, but not before he had identified himself with the despair of man in the words "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" The despair of Jesus was followed three days later by the joy of the disciples in experiencing the power of the risen Lord. They had learned that God's love, as

revealed in the manger and on the cross, does not protect us against all suffering; rather it protects us in all suffering.

To realise that God is alongside man in his hour of need does not remove from us our responsibilities to those in need. The helpless child in the manger evokes from us a response to help and relieve those who themselves are helpless and suffering. Surely this Christmas we cannot be over extravagant in our celebrations of the birth of a child born in poverty. Rejoice and celebrate we must, but, at the same time we must also give to those who will not be deciding what to eat but wondering whether they will eat.

As usual Christian Aid envelopes will be available in our churches. Please take one and pass it round the family some time during Christmas day. Have a joyful and happy Christmas. It will be all the more happier if we share what we have with others.



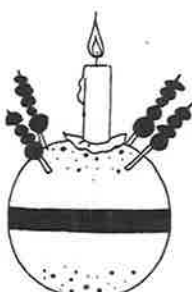

MOTHERS' UNION

There will be NO meeting in December, as you will I'm sure be otherwise engaged, the date being Boxing Day!


So a very happy and blessed Christmas to you all and a prosperous and peaceful New Year.

But we hope to see as many of you as possible to help with serving the tea after the Christingle Service on Sunday, December 23rd. Any small cakes or biscuits for this would be appreciated, please let Phyllis Jordan or myself have them or bring them on the day.

Dss Margaret.



CHRISTINGLE
SERVICE
ST JOHN'S
CHURCH
23rd DECEMBER
3.30 p.m.



Youth News

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR

Churches throughout Britain will be marking January 6 (Epiphany Sunday) as the start of International Youth Year by using the prayer below, which has been prepared by a group of young Christians from England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

Lord God
Thank you for the gift of your Son
Who came into this world, not for some,
but for all.

Thank you for this day and this year
With its special focus on youth
and for the energy, vision and
enthusiasm of so many young people.

We remember your Son
Who was poor but joyful
humble but wise
despised but glorious

And we pray, through Him
that in our own way
we also can offer our lives
in all our joy and weakness
vigour and failure
as a thank-offering - to you.

We ask for your help that all
within your family, young and old,
may use their gifts in serving one
another

so that we can experience the joy of
being
one body - one people - united by
Your love.

And we ask for your guidance in this
International Youth Year
That young and old together
may search for truth and justice
and in seeking may find
Your Peace.

There will be a special service to mark the start of International Youth Year in St. John's Church, Stansted, on January 6 at 6.30 pm. All are welcome.

PARISH REGISTERS

BAPTISMS

4 Nov Jeremy Philip Denny,
43 Coltsfield
Robert Christopher Vaughan,
1 Alderbury Road
Jennifer Middleton,
32 Rainsford Road

DEPARTED

Jessie Florence Frost, 2 Grove Hill,
Aged 69 years
Ernest Arthur Robinson, 5 Rainsford Road
Aged 81 years
Ida Bertha Wells, 84 Stansted Road,
Bishop's Stortford Aged 77 years
Percy Johnson, 32 Stoneyfield Drive
Aged 68 years



PARISH DIARY

DECEMBER

- 2 Advent Carol Service 6.30 pm
 - 4 Holy Communion Mead Court 10 am
 - 6 Holy Communion Normans Court 10 am
 - 8 Christmas Bier Keller - St Mary's School 8 pm
- (For Christmas Services see separate item)
- 26 St Stephen - Holy Communion 10 am
 - 27 St John the Evangelist - Holy Communion 7.30 am
 - 28 Holy Innocents - Holy Communion 8 am

JANUARY

- 1 Holy Communion Mead Court 10 am and at St John's 7.30 pm
- 3 Holy Communion at Normans Court 10 am
- 6 Epiphany of our Lord

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

- | | | |
|-------------|---|-----------|
| 23 December | Christingle Service 3.30pm | St John's |
| 24 December | Midnight Mass 11.30pm | St John's |
| 25 December | Holy Communion 8am | St Mary's |
| | Family Communion with special emphasis on children 9.30am | St John's |
| | Communion and Carols 11am | St Mary's |
| 30 December | Holy Communion 8am | St John's |
| | Parish Communion 9.30am | St John's |
| | Nine Lessons and Carols 3pm | St Mary's |
| 6 January | Holy Communion 8am | St John's |
| | Parish Communion 9.30am | St John's |
| | Youth Service 6.30pm | St John's |



United Reformed

Chapel Hill

Minister: The Rev'd Eric McIlwain
18 Cambanks, Union Lane,
Cambridge.
Tel: (0223) 313152

Group Secretary: Miss Dorothy Oswald
3 White Bear
Tel: 814758

Services: 11.00 a.m. each Sunday

For details of services at Clavering,
Newport and Widdington please ring the
Group Secretary.

DECEMBER SERVICES

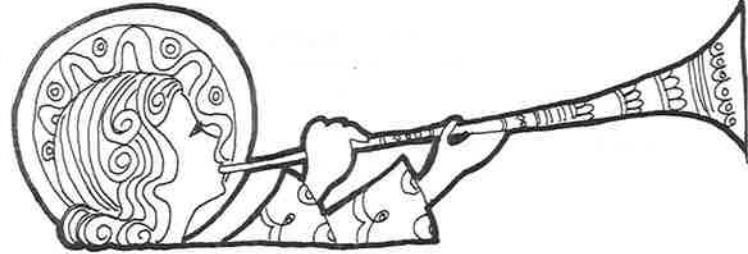
- 2 11.00 am - Communion, Mr McIlwain
6.30 pm - Advent Carols at St John's
- 9 11.00 am - Mr R Milroy of Cambridge
- 16 11.00 am - Mr McIlwain
- 23 10.30 am - Mr McIlwain - Group
Christmas Service -
Special offering for
Famine Relief - Sweets
offering for other
children - coffee and mince
pies to follow in the
Lecture Hall
- 25 10.30 am - Christmas Day Service
for all the Family -
Mr McIlwain
- 30 11.00 am - Mr J Doggett of Ugley Green

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH GUILD

At the first meeting of our new Session we were pleased to welcome Mrs. H. Cowan. She shewed us her slides of Norway and these were some of the best we had ever seen. She also commentated on these in such a friendly way which added to the enjoyment.

At our second meeting Mr. & Mrs. Calvert brought their slides to show us. They depicted the four seasons and we all appreciated the beauty of the countryside they portrayed. Many of these were views of Stansted at different times of the year.

M. C. Johnson



"JOY to the World"

Does "Merry Christmas" sound a bit hollow this year in the Global Village?

Not only in view of the famine in Africa, which may make the traditional Christmas dinner seem a bit out of tune with the times.

And not only in view of the miners' strike (which one wishes to be over when you read this, but if wishes were horses) which is doing increasing damage to the fabric of this nation, and to its self-image.

And in South America (e.g.) where repressive regimes are becoming even more desperate in their attempts to hold power, India in turmoil, and America and Russia still glaring at each other over the tops of their atomic stockpiles and ideological stockades.

But surely Jesus said "Let my JOY be in you so that your JOY may be complete" - "Your sorrow shall be turned into JOY and that JOY no one shall take from you."

And do we not bear "tidings of great JOY for all people"? And did not the Star fill the wise men with "exceeding great JOY"?

These are not hollow words to those who belong to Jesus and who follow his star.

Even in the 20th C. it is some joy to know that Christian Aid Organisations (yes, the Red Cross too) have been the first and the fastest and will be there after this governmental flurry is over, just as they were there before.

Even in the 20th C. it is a shared joy to know that Christians are opposing oppressive regimes and the misery and poverty they bring.

It may even be that, as Government, Union and Coal Board continue their adversarial war, the Church will have a reconciling part to play.

Christian joy is not just mirth and rejoicing. It is "KARA" which is closely related to KARIS (grace) and KARISMA (gift).

It follows that the joy of Christians is the free gift of God's grace, not to be taken away by all the suffering and evil of this world - no, not even by a Cross.

Joy and Peace at Christmas.

Eric McIlwain

Methodist

Meets in Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill.

Minister: The Rev'd Harold Fisher
2 South Road, Bishop's Stortford.
Tel: 54475.

Services: Morning Service - 9.30am.

Charles Wesley sang of the Incarnation:

He deigns in flesh to appear,
Widest extremes to join;
To bring our vileness near,
And make us all divine;
And we the life of God shall know,
For God is manifest below.

Wesley claims that the Incarnation says something vital both about deity and about humanity, about God and man. Left to ourselves we are groping and confused about the nature of both; we are crippled by two crucial illusions - our image of God and our image of man. Both are diseased and distorted without the unique healing light of Christ.

Voltaire made the piercing observation, "God made man in his own image; and man has returned the compliment", And so we have, often, and in many different ways. The image of God which we project on to the screen of our minds and which we display to others is ourselves writ large, if there is no Christ to correct our illusions. On our own we create God out of the materials of our unhealthy and twisted imaginations, from hearts that are sick, sad, guilt-ridden or fearful. As Hugh Lavery points out, "To natural eyes God seems alien and aloof, not for us, but over us, even, at times, against us. At best he seems indifferent; at worst, hostile." Thomas Hardy, for instance, in his poem "Nature's Questioning", has all created things asking,

"We wonder, ever wonder, why we find us here!

Has some Vast Imbecility,
Mighty to build and blend
But impotent to tend
Framed us in jest and left us all to hazardry?
Or come we of an Automaton
Unconscious of our pains?....
Or are we live remains
O Godhead dying downwards,
brain and eye now gone?"

Made out of our own ideas God may be a blind indifference, an incompetent fool, a cruel joker, a savage monster, or whatever. We cannot deliver ourselves from our false and dangerous images of God. Only God can do that by making himself known, which he does most wonderfully in Jesus. "And we the life of God shall know, For God is manifest below." In Christ God is limitless, unconditional, undefeatable love.

In Jesus we also see what man is. It is not only that "no man has seen God at any time", but also that no one has ever seen man, not man in the fullness of his humanity, at any time. We fall far short of being really human because of our brokenness, folly and evil. All of us to some degree are sub-normal or abnormal. Only in Jesus do we see the norm, humanity as it really is. To quote Hugh Lavery again, Jesus "is made of the same clay as ourselves, enclosed in human weakness, knowing all the shocks the flesh is heir to, traduced, taunted, rejected and doomed to die. He is not a super-man. Not a super-star. He is, simply, man. He is the norm, we the abnormal. He is the concentric, we the eccentric. He is the rule, we the exception He is for real; we for illusion. Jesus Christ is the fully human." So our Lord points to our real humanity, to "make us all divine".

My warmest Christmas Greetings and love to you all.

Harold Fisher



Society of Friends

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill.

Local Contact: Mair Muir
48 St John's Road.
Tel: 812289.

Meeting for worship: 11am.

MEETING NEWS

The last two months have seen some changes in our numbers as we said 'Goodbye' to our two families who provided most of the members of our children's class. Richard and Ruth Bush and their four children moved to Dorset at the beginning of October, with Richard taking up a senior post in social work in Bournemouth. Richard Bush will be remembered by some in Stansted as a recent Chairman of the Association of Churches, representing Friends in that position. We shall miss his presence in the Meeting, and also that of Ruth, who was our Treasurer and Lettings Secretary. We also said goodbye to the Webb Family, although only Peter has left for South America so far, to continue his work in prospecting for oil in Columbia:

he was our collector of articles for 'The Link', and we have yet to find a replacement! Eileen Monk-Jones will also be moving soon, to Saffron Walden, to be near her sister. She has been a tremendous worker for peace, both within our Meeting and our Quaker central committees, and as secretary of the United Nations Association in Bishop's Stortford ; we have all admired her determination.

In a wider context, within our 'Monthly Meeting' group of five meetings, a conference was held at the end of September, at Stansted, for newly-joined Friends and 'attenders' to try and give some more background and information about the history and beliefs of Quakers, and to answer questions about the nature and organisation of the Society today. Nancy Tennant was one of the speakers ; about twenty people came and found it a worthwhile day, which may lead to similar occasions in the future.

Within the monthly meeting we are now trying to raise the sum of £500 to help send a 'Young Friend' from a Third World country to the world conference of young Friends in America next year. We are also trying to promote a booklet which has been produced by members of Haverhill Meeting in conjunction with the local historical society, on the History of Quakers in Haverhill (copies available from me at £1.00 each!)

Margaret Whitelaw (Clerk)



Roman Catholic

St Theresa's Church, Millside.

Priest: The Rev'd David Chapman
12 Millside (flat above Church).
Tel: 814349.

Services: Sunday Masses - 8am and 10.30am
and at Henham - 9.15am.
Holy Days - 9.15am and 8pm
and at Henham - 7pm.

Christmas Masses:

1. First "midnight" mass : 9.00 pm
St Anthony's Chapel - Henham
2. Second Midnight mass : midnight
St. Theresa's Church - Stansted
Preceded by Carols at 11.30 pm
3. Christmas Morning Mass : 9.00 am
Henham
4. Christmas Day Mass : 10.30 am
Stansted

Christmas?

Eyes open
Forget to stretch
No time wasted
Forget to yawn
Down the stairs
Stand and watch
Look and wonder
What have I got?
Rip, quick
Cor, Ahh!!
Kiss for Mum
Kiss for Dad
What's that you say,

Jesus?

Born?

Today?

TODAY???

Oh no, sorry I forgot,
There's always next time
And maybe then
I'll not forget
to stop, think and

remember.

by Caroline King.



Extracts from the Diary.

Tuesday

The sun is shining today and the Autumn colours are depicted so fantastically in the countryside. Walking the dog early this morning a great shaft of sunlight came through the trees casting it powerful rays through the early morning mist into the lane. It was quite heavenly. The brown earth now turned and sown with winter wheat basked in misty air and birds flew overhead twittering their morning greetings. I always feel I should make the most of Autumn before the winter comes in. The sloe berries are profuse this year, a shy bloom on their blue-grey clusters. The hawthorn and rose-hips hang in thousands, food for hungry birds. There is nowhere in the world like an early morning in the English Autumn for me, the air is utterly delicious, if I could drink it I'm sure I would get quite tipsy. Lord I thank and praise you for Autumn.

Thursday

Do you ever feel you are just unable to cope Lord? I bet you don't; well I do at this moment. I feel languid, there's loads to do, housework. I mean - but I don't feel like doing it! It's pouring down with rain, the tumble-dryer's broken and a precious jug from Florence has been smashed and I'm waiting for the third thing - they seem to come in threes - breakages.

St. Therese of Liseux, my favourite saint said once 'If you can't overcome it - undergo it' so please Therese would you mind interceding on my behalf and plead with Our Lord to give me a bit of energy with which to tackle today? I would be more than grateful for a little word. Good heavens the rain has stopped, it seems to be brightening up.

Friday

Not many shopping days until Christmas now, I always mean to start early but never do. There are so many things to think about that we often forget the real meaning of all these festivities, the last minute presents for the distant relative or friend, the shopping - the pudding, the crackers, the turkey. I dreamt last night that I had forgotten to buy the BIRD! It became a nightmare in the end and we all ate Shepherd's Pie for Christmas Lunch. Help me Lord in all this busyness to keep the meaning clear in my heart, so that when I am tearing my hair out with too much to do I can always turn and see you there in the midst of it all.



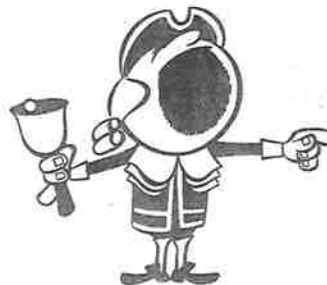
Christmas is the anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ. More than likely we do not know the exact date. It does not really matter. Nor do we know what he looked like - that too does not matter. We have no record of anything he wrote - that does not matter. There were no tape recorders or video recorders to preserve for future generations anything about him - that does not matter. There is something supremely better and enduring and more reliable - that is His Spirit.

Because of his life, death, and new life after death, he sends the 'Spirit' of God to those who accept him, accept his message and endeavour to live according to his message. This message is really how we ought to relate to God, and relate to one another - this message is found, not merely in a printed word, called the Gospel, but in the living community of believers.

On behalf of all the members of this community I wish all readers a joyful, lovable and 'mind-fulfilling' Christmas.

Fr. David Chapman

Village News



FUTURE EVENTS

December

- 5 8.00 pm World Development Group
42 Sunnyside Dr Sheh Shah
- 5 11.00 am Dr Barnardo's Christmas
Fayre, Bentfield House
- 5 & 6 1.30 & 7.30 pm "Aladdin"
St Mary's Primary School
- 10 8.00 pm Conservatives Christmas Supper
- 14 Day Centre closes till 3 Jan.
- 14 10.00 am St Mary's Infants' Carol
Service
- 17 11.00 & 7.30 St Mary's Juniors Carol
Service
- 19 & onwards See "Carol Singing" - times
and places
- 23 3.30 pm Christingle Service St John's

January

- 5 8.00 pm Conservative New Year Ball
Stansted Hall
- 6 6.30 pm St John's. International
Youth Year Service
- 12 8.00 pm Stansted Alliance Parties
New Year Party. Stansted Hall

BENTFIELD COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Any unsuspecting visitor to Bentfield School on the evening of November 2nd may have been in for a shock. Ghosts, ghouls and witches were on the loose at the P.T.A. Halloween Disco when the mums and dads, who are usually to be found sensibly standing waiting for their offspring, took over the school hall, letting down their hair and, in some cases, sprouting fangs. Spooks, spectres and zombies, all had a good time, and while raising the roof also raised funds for the P.T.A.

Back to 'normality'. During the school term Bentfield pupils are able to take part in many 'after-school activities', with the assistance and encouragement of the staff. Subjects covered range from sport, music and drama, through calligraphy and lacemaking to science and computing.

Four young reporters tell you about their particular interests.

Gymnastics

On Tuesday a Gymnastics Club is held by

Mrs. Jacobs. It lasts three quarters of an hour. We work on the badges that we are on at the moment. The club is for 3rd and 4th years only, and there is a club for 1st and 2nd years on Thursday. We have started to work on some sequences for a competition coming up in the summer.

Usually we start off on the mats for about fifteen minutes, then for the rest of the time we do vaults on the box.

Karen Gallie and Helen Meadows

Drama

At Drama Club we play games and make up plays, and act them in front of the school. We learn more about our bodies and what they can do. We play 'trust games' and do stretching exercises and we make shapes with our bodies. Sometimes we play a game called 'Snowballs'. You pretend that you are making a snowball and you pick it up and you throw it, but as you throw it you must shout a word. We enjoy our sessions.

For more details see Mrs. Steward, Class I.

Katharine Luck

Chess Club

There are fifteen people in the Chess Club, John Crosby is the best of us all (at the moment), really the only competition he gets is from Patrick, well, usually. What we do at chess club is varied, though normally we have games between each other. We have a chess ladder where I am No. 6. We can challenge people up to two places below us, or accept a challenge from people up to two places above me. Each Monday we learn a different technique or move, like foolsmate, or how to prevent it. We also use the computer, with a program called 'White Night' (BBC Micro) for the people who have nobody to play. We often go on outings to other schools, so far we've played Mountfitchet High School and Newport, and we're going to play R.A. Butler. At the moment we're holding a big chess competition for the whole school, when we started it there were 38 entrants, but now there are only 7 left.

Rupert Sliwa

More about some of the other clubs our children are involved in another time.

Happy Christmas to everybody from all at the school.

Rachel Irven



ST. MARY'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Drama Club

The Drama Club will be presenting their version of the pantomime Aladdin in the school hall on the following date, Wednesday, December 5th at 1.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. and Thursday December 6th at 1.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

The children are in the midst of rehearsals and there is lots of hustle and bustle around the school. Last minute alteration of costumes, final touches to the scenery and Mrs. Johnson thinking it will never be ready on time but it will, so why don't you come along and see the school's production of Aladdin. It promises to be a super pantomime.

Carol Services

The infants will be holding their nativity and carol service on Friday 14th December at 10 a.m. in the school hall. The junior carol service will be held in the school hall on Monday 17th December at 11 a.m. and 7.30 p.m. All parents and friends are very welcome.

Football and Netball

The boys are having a good start to the football season. Both 11 a-side and 5 a-side teams are unbeaten so far. Adding to the glamour and excitement of their football, the teams are feeling extremely proud displaying their new football kit. Well done boys! We look forward to a 100% record of wins by the end of the season.

The girls are also enjoying their netball this term. They have played two matches so far, losing the first but gaining an outstanding victory in the second match. The girls seem to be getting it together.

The staff, children and friends of the school wish all readers a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Christine Hope

CHILDREN



Dear Children,

Thankyou for all your work you sent me this month. I expect you are all looking forward to celebrating Christmas. I hope Santa is kind to you this year. If you write early to him - his address is "Reindeer Land" The North Pole - and pop your letter in the post box (no stamp needed) you will get a reply.

Look forward to your stories in the New Year. Have a lovely Christmas and hope there is lots of snow during the holidays.

Christine Hope

BONFIRE NIGHT

Bonfire night
is tonight
Oh what fun
Catherine Wheels burning
And children running
Oh what fun
Sparklers flashing around
And rockets taking off the ground
Oh what fun.

Insiyah Alibhai
Age 8

GUY FAWKES NIGHT

Guy Fawkes Guy Fawkes
Was a naughty man.
Trying to blow up Parliament
But good old Guards
Spoilt his plan.

Tom Baker
Age 8



BOOM BANG

Boom, bang, rockets go clang,
Over the moonlit sky,
Never forget the firework code
or you'll be blown up high.
Fireworks night is a lovely sight
When Guy Fawkes used some dynamite.

Andrew Turner
Age 9

FIREWORKS POEM

There was an old man called Guy,
Who tried to blow up the sky,
The catherine wheels went round and round,
The jumping jacks fell to the ground,
The rockets set flight,
To a tremendous height,
And that was the end of Guy Fawkes night.

Louise Potter
Age 8

FISH AND CHIPS

I like fish and chips
The chips are yellow and greasy
The chips are nice with ketchup
And are lovely in little pieces.

I like fish and chips
The smell is really delicious
But if you have it in the shop
It is served in great big dishes.

Georgine Kelsey

FISH AND CHIPS

Fish and chips are nice to eat
They have a nice taste and plenty of heat
Fish and chips are cosy and warm
I like them best when they're straight
from the shop.

Katy Brooks

HALLOWEEN

The Dark Demon

The Devil has bats on his shoulders,
A pair of wings like a bat.
His throne flies out to peoples' minds
To make them dark and see the mark.
Our white, white skull
Shining bright.

His throne flies out to peoples' hands
To make them do what he commands.
His throne flies out to peoples' feet
To run, run, run to beat
Down, down, down
To the cavern glum.
To the darkest demon of all
Is the power source he stores
Blue light, green light
Burning flames.
The chain around his neck
Gives the devil
His heart's delight.
He has a horse occasionally
To cross the skies
In disguise,
To seek vengeance;
Vengeance is his capital
Vengeance is his money, his might.
But he hasn't got the right amount
To destroy the human world.
Down with the devil
People say.

David Richardson

STANSTED GUIDES/BROWNIES

A PLEA OF HELP! We need a Brownie Leader and Ranger Leader. At present there is no Ranger Unit in the village and we are anxious to start one. If you can offer your services please ring Dawn Lidster, B/S 814317.



NATIONAL CHILDBIRTH TRUST

Anyone who read their Herts and Essex Observer of Thursday, November 1st will no doubt have noticed the amusing picture covering the 'One World' evening at the Quaker meeting house on Wednesday 24th October. The NCT were pleased to be invited to take part in the proceedings, and we provided the means, and of course the expertise, to oversee the men changing nappies. The evening was made up of role-swapping and films of women's role in the Third World. It certainly gave us plenty to think about, and I might add there turned out to be some very capable nappy-changers among the men - especially the Reverend H. Fisher.

Talking of amusing photographs, let's hope the photographer's afternoon, at Jenny's on Wednesday 14th November, produced some smiles from the children concerned. All will be revealed in the processing.

If you have a baby due in March or April 85, don't panic - there's still time to book antenatal classes with Jenny Adamson on B/S 813958. Even if you've done it all Even if you've done it all before, it's never quite the same next time is it?

The tiny arrivals in the special care baby unit at Harlow would appreciate any spare breast milk you could manage to supply. If so, let Cathy Leek know, on B/S 813068. Cathy is also the Mava agent for our area. She has an ample range of products for expectant and nursing mothers. For further information give her a call on the above number.

Lastly, talking of expectant mums; if, after the birth of your child has long passed, you're still in your maternity clothes, perhaps you should have gone to Pat Bastin's talk (at Barbie's) on 'getting back into shape' after your baby!

It remains only to wish you all a very Happy Christmas: And remember these dates for your diary -

Christmas Party, St. John's Hall,
Friday 14th December
Bring and Share Party, Friday
21st December

Jo Gamon
B/S 813116

MISS G. M. HOWEY

It is with sadness that many people in Stansted will hear of the enforced departure of Miss Marjorie Howey from her home in the Cambridge Road to a Rest Home in Bexhill. This move has been brought about because of Miss Howey's increasing frailty. Over the past few years many of us have been distressed at her frequent falls and noticed her dependence on her stick, but she has kept on with her voluntary jobs for as long as possible.

Voluntary work has made up a great part of her life since she moved with her mother and other members of her family to Stansted in the 1930s. She was industrious in her support of the local Conservative Association and was for many years Secretary of the Women's Branch and later its Vice-Chairman. For a while she sat as a member of the Parish Council.

She had organised the Lifeboat Collection both here and in Bishop's Stortford for so long that the RNLI awarded her its Long Service Medal. To augment RNLI funds she had of recent years shared with Mrs. Gabb an October "Morning Market" which has become a permanent feature of village life.

In the past, she had acted as Secretary of the Victoria League local branch. For thirty years she had been Secretary of the Stansted Dr. Barnardo Committee, remaining a member of the Committee after her retiral as Secretary in 1982. She was still Secretary of the Charities Committee when she went into hospital at the end of September.

Miss Howey, with her dog at her side, was one of the familiar sights of Stansted, and from her beloved dog as well as her home she has had to be separated.

Before she left the Herts and Essex Hospital, Miss Howey expressed regret that she was not able to write letters, but she wished to express her thanks to the staff at the hospital, to social workers, to neighbours and to friends who had given her help and support during these last difficult weeks.

We, for our part, hope Miss Howey will be as happy as possible in her new surroundings, where she will be within easy reach of her cousin, who is her only surviving relative and who has taken full responsibility for her.

Mair Muir



Since our last item in the Link we have had a quiz (when we discovered that our minds are not as lively as we fondly imagined); an excellent talk on the Trades Union Movement (and didn't mention the miners strike until the end!); an evening discussing topics related to Halloween; and have visited Stansted Hall. Our programme planning evening produced a shorter, but hopefully just as varied list of subjects for us to think and talk about during the next 4 months. There will be only one meeting in December, when we will be taking a brief look at India. Four of our members will be looking at this vast subject from differing angles, and the rest of us will be studying our cookery books and providing Indian delicacies.

The books chosen for our next Book Group meeting, which will be in January, are "Does she know she's there?" by Nicola Schaeffer (pub. Futura); "The Day of the Scorpion" (second of the Raj Quartet) by Paul Scott (pub. Granada); and "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald (pub. Penguin).

A copy of our current programme is on display in the library.

Please contact the Local Organiser for further details of any of the meetings at the numbers below.

Sharon Frogley 812617
Angela Khalil 813582

STANSTED AFTERNOON W.I.

November:- Our A.G.M. has come round once more, with the committee and officers returning and new ones elected. Mrs. Sally Walker, one of our V.C.O.s chaired the meeting.

Our President, Secretary and several members not seeking re-election.

Mrs. Styles was voted as President, with a committee of 9 members. Reports were read and adopted and Mrs. Gibson and Mrs. Lockwood tied for the Competition Cup. Mrs. Smith of the Essex Federation of the Associated Countrywomen of the World told us of this work and how our "Pennies for Friendship" were used.

STANSTED WORLD DEVELOPMENT GROUP

'How History Can Hinder Development'

Dr Sneh Shah has not only studied Development as an academic subject but, coming from India, and having lived in East Africa as well as the UK, she is particularly well qualified to talk on this subject. Anyone interested is welcome to meet her at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, 5 December, at 42 Sunnyside, Stansted.

The AGM on 18th October saw the retirement of Mrs. K. Stevens, who had been Chairman of the branch for the past four years. She was replaced by Mrs. B. Little.

Officers for the coming year are:-

- President - Mrs. R. Gabb
- Vice Presidents - Miss G. Trott
Mrs. Prior
Mrs. Q. Sweet
- Chairman - Mrs. B. Little
- Vice Chairman - Mrs. J. Bugg
- Secretary - Mrs. K. Whall
- Treasurer - Mrs. V. Levey
- Committee:- Mrs. J. Brace, Mrs. P. Clower
Mrs. J. Fuller, Miss E. Tame,
Mrs. B. Traveller, Miss D. Wiffen,
Miss E. Winckworth.

There will be no branch meeting in December but the annual carol service will be held at Newport Church on Sunday, 9th December.

Pat Clower



SIDEWAYS NURSERY SCHOOL

We held our A.G.M. in St. John's Hall recently and a new committee was elected. The hall was covered with the children's art work and it looked really splendid. If you frame some of the paintings those small artists produce I would challenge anyone to detect any difference from works hanging in the Tate Gallery. In fact, I have purloined a couple of their unclaimed pictures for my own walls. A cheese and wine party followed and everyone enjoyed themselves.

It's Father Christmas time again and I hope he's woken up his reindeer by now and gets them in harness in time for our Christmas Party on Saturday, December 8th. May we all wish everyone a very Happy Christmas.

Janice Wray



VILLAGE CAROL SINGING 1984

Begin your Christmas by a little old-fashioned carol singing for a good cause. The chosen charity is the local branch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society. Everyone is welcome, to sing or collect, from 7.30 on the following evenings:

Thurs 20 Dec Meet at corner of Bentfield Rd and Bentfield Gardens
Fri 21 Dec Meet at corner of Maitland Rd and Church Rd
Sat 22 Dec Meet at corner of Spencer Close and Chapel Hill
Mon 24 Dec Meet at corner of Recreation Ground and Chapel Hill

Hope to see you there on one or all of the evenings.



THE WOMEN'S OWN

We celebrated our 66th birthday on Nov 12th with a lunch for all our members prepared and cooked by the committee. After lunch we were entertained by the Curate and Mr . Booker singing songs we knew and were able to join in. The afternoon was rounded off by a cup of tea and a birthday cake.

Our meeting was the outcome of a Prayer Meeting started in the first world war by the wives and mothers of the men serving in the forces. When Armistice was declared it was decided to carry on as a meeting with a speaker and hymns, etc., and this has been successfully going on every Monday. We welcome anyone to a friendly meeting and a nice cup of tea in the U.R.C. Hall on Monday at 2.30 p.m.

H. M. Jordan

CONSERVATIVES

This seasons monthly meetings at the Football Club are in full swing.

On Monday 10th December the Christmas Party will be held at the Football Club at 8 p.m. Tickets £1 for a Christmas Snack Supper.

The Annual New Year Ball will be held at Stansted Hall on Saturday, 5th January from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Tickets £8 a head. Dress - Black Tie optional.

Tickets for both these events may be obtained from any member.

There will be a meeting at the Football Club on Monday, 7th January at 8 p.m. with a guest speaker.

STANSTED ART AND CRAFT MARKET

The 6th Annual Stansted Art & Craft Market was held on 13th and 14th October and broke all records. As you will probably have seen in the local press, 113 pictures were sold, about 2,500 people visited the market and profits, at almost £1,500 were the highest ever recorded.

The committee is grateful to the many helpers who assisted before, during and after the event. All have been written to, but if anyone has been omitted, please accept this expression of thanks.

The profits this year are being divided between the Peter Kirk School, Stansted Scouts & Guides, St. John's Church Appeal, Stansted Windmill Appeal, the Mountfitchet High School and Bishop's Stortford Talking Newspaper for the Blind. The presentation is to take place on 21st November at the Peter Kirk School and a report will be carried in the January issue of "Link".

After six years, the Art & Craft Market is now firmly established as a true village event, but as ever, more help is always welcome, and the committee would be pleased to hear of anyone who is willing to devote a considerable amount of time and effort to this worthwhile event.

Geoff Wright (812599)



DAY CENTRE

There is now a new coffee machine at the Day Centre and it really does make delicious coffee. It is still the same price per cup so why not come in and try it?

Ted Martin still desperately needs help with transport and would be pleased to hear from drivers able to spare a small amount of time (telephone 814006).

The piano is also waiting patiently for someone to come and play it - any time between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Anyone who can play will be most welcome, you do not need to be a senior citizen.

Dates for December:

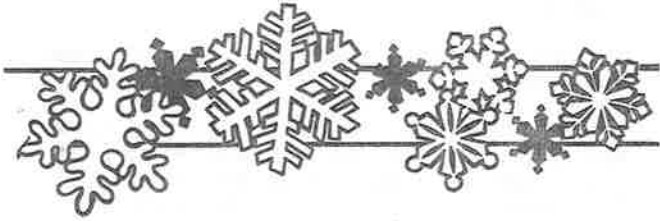
6th Dec Keep Fit 2.30 p.m.
7th Dec Bingo 7.30 p.m.
11th Dec Beetle Drive 2 p.m.
11th Dec Trading Stall 11.30-2.00 p.m.
13th Dec Keep Fit 2.30 p.m.

The Day Centre will close on Friday 14th December and re-open again on Thursday 3rd January.

DR. BARNARDO'S CHRISTMAS FAYRE

The Annual Christmas Fayre, in aid of Dr. Barnardo's, will be held at 11.00 a.m. on Wednesday, 5th December, at the home of Mrs. Browne, Bentfield House, Bentfield Bower, Stansted. Aswell as the well-known generous raffle, there will be stalls of Christmas gifts and decorations, cakes, delicatessen, 'bring and buy', etc. and guessing the weight of a turkey and a cake.

Come and enjoy yourself in a good cause. Entrance 40p, including refreshments.



CHRISTIAN AID

Several generous donations have been made to Christian Aid in response to the appeal for aid in Ethiopia. A sale of the produce from St. Mary's School harvest festival and the SACC harvest service at St. John's Church raised over £200. The Methodist Church sent a cheque for £100.

Collections taken at the One World Week social evening and the SACC Joint Service at the Friends Meeting House were also sent to Christian Aid.

As usual there will be a Christian Aid envelope collection in the churches at Christmas. This year's Christian Appeal is "For those in plight and in poverty" - a theme which recalls the first Christmas and which reminds us of the plight of millions of people today, not only in Ethiopia but throughout the world.

Catherine Dean

HUW JOHNSON CLUB FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS

When we had our club evening on November 10th we juggled the dates and had a combined Halloween and Gyy Fawkes party.

It started off with making tall black witches' hats with straggly paper hair. Great fun was had by plonking hats from behind our unsuspecting victims. It was hilarious to see various members peering through their "curls" like old English sheepdogs.

I ended up with a hat firmly stuck, as the glue had seeped through onto my hair - result being that on reaching home I had the second shampoo of the day!

Later, we all trooped outside, with hats at various angles, and watched our firework display. There were the usual "oohs" and "aahs" and then sparklers were handed round with all the necessary warnings. The helpers, of course, were extra vigilant and all went well. Then, after the final rockets, it was back into the hall for hot soup and a halloween cake in the shape of a witch. Another happy evening was over.

In December we celebrate our 10th birthday - I'll let you know what we get up to.

Betty Lockwood



MISSIONS TO SEAMEN AND BLUE CROSS

MORNING MARKET

The H.Q.s of the Missions to Seamen and Blue Cross send grateful thanks to all who contributed and helped in so many ways with the above Market to raise funds.

The proceeds amounted to £309 which included the sale of CHRISTMAS CARDS.

THANK YOU ALL - very much.



STANSTED TENNIS CLUB

There are still 3 places available for the Christmas Dinner on Wednesday, 5th December, at the Fleur-de-Lys at Widdington. All details are on the club noticeboard.

Sunday morning tennis sessions are in full swing and enthusiasts are starting to play by 9.30 a.m. Leaf sweeping is quite a chore at this time of year, but most of the leaves are now down and we have had many keen and energetic volunteers to do the work.

We have joined the Floodlit Winter League at Bishop's Stortford, whose new courts with floodlighting have recently been completed and officially opened.

We have 2 mens doubles matches before Christmas and then 6 more mens doubles and 4 mixed doubles matches in January, February and March.

We also hope to be able to arrange some ladies doubles matches against Bishop's Stortford.

Winter Membership

We would be very pleased to hear from anybody interested in joining the club for the winter season which ends on 31st March 1985.

All enquiries to Janet Hollis,
B/S 812073.

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET SENIORS CLUB

It was a real musical treat when Mr Booker and Rev. Tony Bundock came to entertain us on October 3rd. Everyone enjoyed joining in the singing of old familiar songs, and Rev. Tony Bundock's solos. We do thank them very much.

Joined by seniors from Birchanger we visited Great Maplestead Church for a Harvest Festival Service on October 1st. It was a glorious sunny afternoon, and the ride through the Essex villages very beautiful. The service taken by Rev. K. Belben much appreciated, and this was followed by a cup of tea and biscuits, and a good journey back to Stansted.

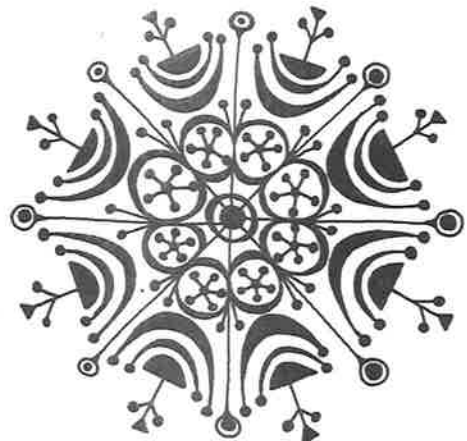
On 8th October we welcomed seniors from Good Easter, Great Chesterford, Birch and Layer Breton and High Roding to a Harvest Festival Service in St. John's Church taken by Deaconess Margaret Booker and Rev. Tony Bundock, who also sang a new song for us and taught us the chorus. Rev. B. Rose played the organ excellently and welcomed our visitors. Our wonderful helpers provided tea and biscuits in the Day Centre and also St. John's Hall as we had to divide the visitors into two parties. From a letter received from GoodEaster Over 60's I think our Day Centre was much envied and admired. Thank you to all who made the afternoon such a happy one.

ACTION RESEARCH

Those who attended the supper theatre will know what an enjoyable evening this was. It also raised the marvellous total of £230 for Action Research. Many thanks to all those who supported us.

Inspite of the sudden end of the good weather, a large number of Stansted Teddy Bears turned out for the picnic on the Recreation Ground in September. They played games with the children who brought them, and didn't get a look in when the sandwiches and buns appeared. At the end of the afternoon Paddington was £20 better off, and says a big thank you on behalf of Action Research.

Catherine Dean



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The Mill is open between 2.30 and 7.00 pm on the first Sunday each month from April to October and every Sunday in August. Also open at the same times on the Sunday and Monday of the three Bank Holidays. Admission is 40p for adults and 20p for accompanied children. Parties can be catered for at other times—Ring B.S. 813214

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