

A stylized purple figure, resembling a person with arms and legs outstretched, is centered on a white oval background. The figure is set against a background of red and white curved stripes. The text 'ABIDE IN ME' is printed in a light blue, sans-serif font across the upper part of the figure's torso.

ABIDE  
IN  
ME

**St. Nicholas News**

June 1980

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June 1980

30 Barrack Lane  
The Park  
Nottingham

Our Dear Friends,

As we write this, the Summer School prayer is well under way and we want to record how very thrilled we are with your response. We know that for some of you it has been a very real sacrifice to forego the link groups for eight weeks to make this school possible. Thank you for being so willing.

People, predictably, react to new ideas in a variety of ways. May we mirror back to you some of the reactions which we sense knocking around at the moment. Some undoubtedly are thrilled and excited to open new doors of adventurous, even painful prayer. Thank you those who have fed back how much the course has already meant to you. It is always encouraging to know when the fruit of much preparation is being used by God. Rightly or wrongly, it spurs one on to even more diligent preparation.

Others, it seems, find it difficult to lay aside preconceived ideas, cherished beliefs (even when they are erroneous) and the prejudice of years. All that is quite understandable. We would want to say though, that, as we read the Bible, prayer is a gift of the Spirit of God who will not stand still, who will not be confined to the musty coffers of our stale prejudice, who refuses to be stereotyped or hurried or held back. He is the wind who blows where He will, when He chooses. He is the fire who burns up the dross, refines the useful with devastating accuracy. Like water, He washes through our lives, dislodging the silt of years.

We must not try to prevent Him from blowing

through our fellowship as the warm summer breeze rustles through the corn fields gently coaxing them into motion. Rather, we must ask, what is the Holy Spirit saying to our Church for today? As Stephen Verney so rightly warns: There is nothing more dangerous than to hear the word of God and not to do it.'

Another gut reaction when one hears talks on prayer is this. 'What right has anyone to challenge my prayer life? It's alright as it is.' Is that your assessment or God's?

Let us underline the aim of the Summer School once more. It is to spread the table before the fellowship, indicating some of the ways in which God is opening our eyes in these days to new vistas of prayer. It is aimed, too, to enable us to discover as a fellowship, what the Lord is saying to us about our prayer life as a fellowship.

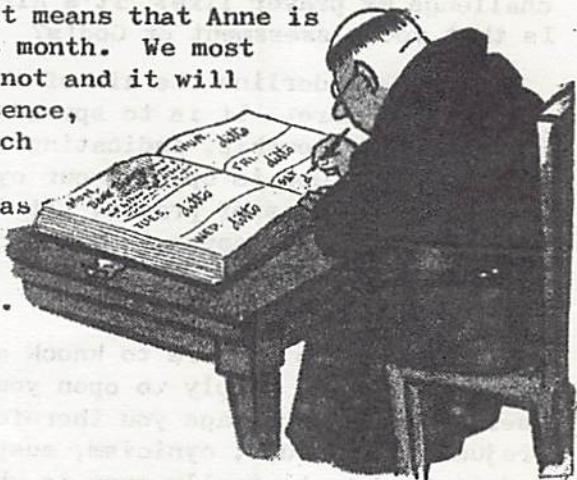
There is no desire to knock at your present prayer patterns, simply to open your eyes to new ones. May we encourage you therefore to lay aside prejudice, hang-ups, cynicism, suspicion, fear, and instead to be really open to what God is wanting to say to you, the groups to which you belong and to the Church as a whole about His unique gift to us, the language of communicating with Him.

May we request, too, that we do not allow the subject of prayer to become a case for division amongst us? We said at the beginning that not every one would agree with everything that was said. If you find yourself disagreeing, would you please earth your feelings with us rather than chuntering, grumbling and expressing dismay to others. These reactions sow the seeds of division, factions and disrupt the fellowship. If others gossip to you in this way, gently nip it in the bud with a twinkle in the eye and the gentle reminder that they might come back to us with criticisms about us.

As an aside, that applies not just to the teaching on prayer but to all situations in the Church. After seven years in the Church we don't need to tell you that we are far from perfect! The way to help imperfect people is to come alongside them with understanding and prayer and love not to criticise them behind their back!

### Anne

Perhaps none of us have really taken in what it means that Anne is leaving us this month. We most certainly have not and it will only be her absence, we suspect, which underlines how very much she has contributed to the fellowship in so many ways.



Anne was a member of the congregation a long time before we arrived. In those days she was quiet, unobtrusive, and who would have imagined that her many gifts would be so greatly used by God. For us, it was a moment of great joy when, years ago, she agreed to join the staff as Director of music. We don't need to remind regular worshippers how powerful and effective the ministry of music has been under Anne's leadership.

Pastoral and teaching gifts have also been dedicated to God by Anne and used in a variety of ways. So many people will miss her inspiration, her loving visits, her practical care.

The one word the english language affords

# THANK YOU

for such a time as this-is, alas, all too inadequate, but there is no alternative, Thank you.

Our great loss will be the gain of Hull. Let's covenant to hold Anne and Peter before the Lord as they venture forth as shepherds of another flock. As we miss them, others will rejoice in their fellowship.

'Whatever comes next to us comes with Him'. As we move into the summer months, may it be with anticipation for God has riches in store which we have not even begun to imagine.

*With our love,  
David and Joyce.*

P.S. We are all so sorry to hear that George Hammond is in hospital after an emergency operation last week. We pray for a speedy recovery and that the Lord will minister to him at this time. As a consequence of his illness, the Magazine has had to be curtailed - indeed, we are grateful to those who have enabled us to have a magazine at all this month. Our apologies to those magazine contributors whose articles have had to be omitted to lack of space.



## Dates for Women's Fellowship in June

Monday 2nd: Richard Hawthorne speaks to us on:  
India - Rich and Poor.

Monday 9th: Meet outside church at 1.15 pm for a quiet afternoon at Belper. Return just after 6.00 pm.

Monday 16th: Meet at 9 Lenton Road, The Park at 12.30 pm for a buffet lunch and farewell to Anne.

# HOSPITAL WARD SERVICE



Peter Bates is the new coordinator of the Sunday afternoon Ward Service at the General Hospital. There will still be tea beforehand at the Wrights (9 Lenton Road, The Park) for those participating.

He is going to be asking people about involvement in this work in order to make a rota system to cover the year's work, and he would be glad to hear of interest before he gets to you!. The Area of Ministry List produced many names but attendance has not really validated the interest expressed.

Here is a valuable ministry to the sick and the old; an opportunity to share in the services, to lead, to speak, to read or to play or simply to talk to the patients. Pray for Peter, Sinclair Payne and Di Bratt as they exercise this ministry.

Our thanks to Frank Wright for his many years of patient and faithful involvement in this caring work, and for the Wright's home which has provided a stable basis upon which to sing and teach.

Don't forget, 5.19 pm Sundays, assembling at the Chapel or 4.00 pm at the Wright's home; get to Peter to express your wish to be involved before he gets to you!.

TOWARDS THE DAWN by Clifford Hill (Fount, £1-25)

To those who have not heard him, Dr. Clifford Hill will be an unknown quantity. His path from ordained minister to sociology lecturer, BBC race relations expert and East End community worker will not surprise the cynics. But as a liberal socially involved proponent of justice and equality he has been met by God and his life radically re-ordered. He now works as Secretary for the Evangelical Alliance's Decade of Evangelism.

As a Sociologist and Biblical Christian, Dr. Hill fully uses the tools of his varied past in his new book, a prophetic look at today's Britain. He gives the background to the seedbed of discontent, and the factors which are bubbling just under the surface. The danger signals for Britain are writ large for those with eyes to see. She is sliding hopelessly towards economic and social collapse, or revolution ... or a radical spiritual renewal. Which, he asks, will come first?

He urges Christians to wake up to the true picture. He challenges them to own up to their true vocation, and look up for their inspiration. He tells tradition bound churches to be open to the Spirit's blast of renewing vigour and for a return to prophetic witness in the Church. He stresses how our country needs first to hear God's voice addressed to its corruption before she can respond to evangelism. Prophecy always evokes the need for help; no felt need, no desire to seek a solution. Britain's plight needs a solution.

Jerusalem in Jeremiah's day preferred to hear the easy reassurances of the false prophets, that all would be fine. We can't afford to. All wasn't fine, and Jerusalem fell. Don't shrug off this timely challenge - read the book, judge for yourself.

M.W-L.

# **GOD** *is my* **FATHER**

This will make most sense to those who attended the first week of the School on Prayer, though others will find value in reading through some of the insights CARLO CARRETTO shares on the Fatherhood of God. The quotations come from his book, 'Summoned by Love' published by DLT. You might like to read them through at one sitting, then take one sentence per day for a week or two and respond to it with your intellect, your imagination, your senses.

God is making me his son (John 1: 11-13).  
I am not to enter his house as a picture to go on the wall, but as a son.

"God is my father and looks after me,  
God is my father and loves me."

"If God is my father, I no longer fear darkness"

"If God is my father, I count for something  
and in him find my own true dignity."

"If God is my father, I shall not attribute  
daily events to chance but shall consider  
them as signs of his love."

"Yes, if God is my father, I can be calm and  
live in peace; I am secure for life, for  
death, for time and for eternity."

"Succeeding in saying 'Father' sincerely and  
lovingly means that an important stage in  
divine regeneration has been reached."  
(John 1: 12-13)

"If God is my father, he will discipline me."  
(Heb. 12:7)

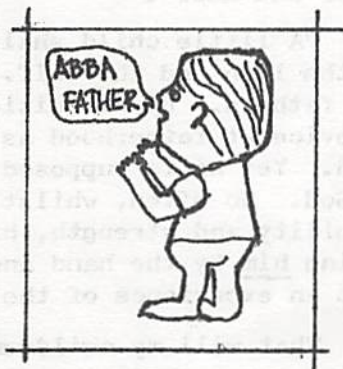


If God is my father  
I am his son.

To understand what  
being his son means,  
We have to look at the first - born son  
Jesus.

He came to us  
He dwelt among us  
living his adventure  
as Son of God -  
the Christ.

Imitating Christ is  
hence the way for us.



## ON BEING A FATHER

Read Laurie Lee's volume of occasional writings 'I can't Stay Long', and read in it his magical little essay, 'The Firstborn'. If motherhood has been beautified, procreated in chains of shops, special magazines and pages of Sunday newspapers and preserved in support groups, pressure groups and charitable trusts, what about the unsung heroes of the midnight cradles - the fathers? Laurie Lee shows that here to can be romance and enchantment but also pain and exposure. He writes of his newborn daughter:

"I am fearing perhaps her first acute recognition, her first questions, the first man she makes of me".

"I have got a daughter, whose life is already separate from mine, whose will already follows its own directions, and who has quickly corrected my woolly preconceptions of her by being somewhat remorselessly different. She is the child of herself and will be what she is. I am merely the keeper of her temporary helplessness".

"...I see her leading me back to my beginnings, reopening rooms I'd locked and forgotten, stirring the dust in my mind by re-asking the big questions...with her, my tardy but bright-eyed pathfinder. I may return to that wood which long ago I fled from, but which together we may now enter and know".

"A little child shall lead them", says Isaiah of the lion and the wolf. He might have added the fathers. By definition a father is as much a novice at fatherhood as his child is at childhood. Yet he is supposed to mirror the fatherhood of God. So often, whilst Dad apes firmness, stability and strength, his little child is taking him by the hand and leading him trembling into an experience of the fatherhood of God.

What will my children make of the fatherhood of God, when their experience of fatherhood was me? I even had to interrupt the opening of this paragraph to go and harangue them for disturbing their father at his work! I can so easily eclipse the divine fatherhood by overshadowing it with my unfairness, inconsistencies and ineptitude

Yet fatherhood has offered me a vision of that love which is infinite and exceedingly complex - a pale understanding maybe, but a glimmer of its possibilities. There have been those hours I have sat with a sick child with every nerve alert to her, oblivious of the discomfort and passing of time, totally involved in her. There have been those little setbacks, losses and rejections they have suffered which have lacerated me so that I have wanted to reach out and sacrifice anything to take on their suffering for them. Yet I have had to reluctantly allow them the space to grow through pain. There have been those moments of anger when, worn down by weeks of broken nights and confronted with an intractable iron will, I have raged and shaken a child and then confused her and given her mixed messages by smothering her with kisses, weeping over her in bitter and frustrated love. Perhaps there may

children have unconsciously exerted the finest form of torment. They so often steadfastly refuse to do what is good for them so that my anger and love blend into an ecstasy of muddled inner pain. Then I have to punish and there is a loss of harmony within us and between us. There was that time one had kept me awake night after night, then howling for three hours destroyed yet another night's sleep. Eventually I went in and walloped her. She slept the innocent slumber of childhood after that and I lay awake the rest of the night overwhelmed my guilt and self-loathing.

But there is also the splendid joy of seeing the children grow and mature and express uninhabited love. As a father, not only do your children grow because you love them, but you grow because you are loved in a spontaneous and very demonstrative way.



Through fatherhood I have had an inkling of the fatherhood of God and of how anger and pain can intermesh with love and joy. Above all I have sensed how love and the desire to nourish and protect, yet allow freedom to err, can stir the father to cry out over his broken and wayward children and present his own blood and heal their wounds.



#### Under New Management - the Library

Jean Walker and Di Bratt are most grateful to Margaret Addis, Geoff Atkinson and Kate Hewitt who have agreed to take over the library from them as of now. So requests, suggestions and constructive criticism to them please.

your

Q

Answered



From the Summer School on prayer

**Q.** "You said that prayer is not demanding, clamouring, I thought that was the whole point of the parable of the unjust judge and the friend at midnight. Have I been interpreting those passages wrongly?"

**Ans:** William Temple writes this, 'If you have a false idea of God, the more religious you are, the worse it is for you - it is better for you to be an atheist'.

Take a look at Luke 11:5-8. Is it conceivable that Jesus is likening the sleepy, reluctant neighbour to His Father who 'always listen', who 'never slumbers or sleeps', who is an abundant giver? The whole point of this parable is contrast, not comparison. Rabbinical literature uses this style of writing frequently so the Jews would readily interpret Jesus' real intentions.

It is worth noting that the word 'ask' here (v9), means literally crave. Jesus promises, those who crave the Holy Spirit, deeply desiring Him, will receive this gift from God. We must beware of a western attention to detail which was not intended by our Lord, and of removing the passage from its context.

Similarly, in Luke 18, two errors must be avoided. The Unjust Judge must in no way be compared with the just and Holy God and His dealing with His children. Neither must we fall into the trap of believing that our prayers will

be answered because of our insistence. God, unlike the judge will not become wearied, worn down by our pestering and give in resentfully. The inference from this parable is this. The widow, though all the odds were against her, persisted, believing in her cause. Similarly, when we pray in the Name of Jesus (i.e. in accordance with His personality and perfect will and redemptive plan), Jesus encourages us not to faint, nor give up in despair, Even if the odds are not in your favour, keep on leavening the dough. True prayer is not for the faint - hearted, but for stalwarts .

Q. "I don't spend much time actually praying. Isn't life prayer and prayer life? My prayer is my service for God."

Ans: St. Teresa of Avila, a woman of prayer of the C13 and Brother Lawrence whose thoughts are recorded in a delightful booklet, 'The Practice of the Presence of God' seem, at face value to support the views expressed above. St. Teresa 'found God in the pots and pans' (housewife please note) and brother Lawrence felt closest to God when elbows deep in potato peelings. (He was the monastery's cook!). But wait a moment . If prayer is developing a love affair with God, won't we want to withdraw from serving Him from time to time. Just to be with Him? I take a dim view of an over busy husband who spends no time strengthening his relationship with his wife. If Jesus needed to withdraw to the source, the origin, His Father, so that His words were relevant, His perspective clear, how much more do we need the rhythm of work - prayer - work - prayer if we are to live effectively. We're back to the old question, 'should I be a Martha or a Mary? Most of us are called to intertwine the learnings of both, but notice our Lord's special commendation of Mary.



# Pray for missionaries.

You might like to use some of the methods high-lighted in the School of Prayer as we pray this month for Fay and John and Helen in Uganda.

Focus first on the greatness of the heavenly Father.

Remind yourself of His love and His control.  
Be conscious of His victory.

Then focus, fix your full attention on these three members of the fellowship.

Recall what you have seen in the press and TV and heard on the radio of the troubled land of Uganda.

Picture them in the middle of it all.

Hear the gun shots.

Visualise the killings.

Imagine the deprivation and hunger as food supplies run short.

See Fay and John and Helen (new to it all) in the middle of all this turmoil.

Then lift them into the arms of the only one who can really help, comfort, strengthen and console - the Lord Himself.

If you begin to pray in this way, you may feel pain, you may begin to weep, or to groan. The Holy Spirit is the interpreter of this kind of prayer. Do not despise it.



Betsy Marlowe is recently out of hospital. Lets surround her with prayer during her time of convalescence.

Maisie writes gratefully from Bristol. For her, the time with us at St. Nics was productive and a time of rich learning.



Lynn & Elaine Failing are at home in Nottingham at the moment trying to discover Gods will for their next term of service with CMS. This is a good time to catch up on their news, renew friendship - pray for them.

Ian and Cathy Pullinger feel God is calling them to work full-time overseas. As they make plans, may we be right behind them in prayer as as fellowship.

Women's Fellowship and the Seminar on Evangelism enjoyed exploring the garden at Maid Marian way in the recent spell of summer weather. Congratulations to GEORGE HAMMOND for a most enterprising and attractive use of that piece of greenery in the city centre, our thanks for his hard work. Two wedding couples will have cause to thank him when they enjoy their reception in the church hall and garden.

Congratulations to Stephen and Sandy Waldron On the safe arrival of a son, weighing 8lbs exactly. (Sandy was a student at the University and Worshipped with us in those days).

Congratulations to Dennis Butcher and Peggy who announced their engagement recently.

Accomodation Wanted in the autumn for Khee-Poh and Chooy Lam and their two small children as they return to Nottingham, preferably close to the University and cheap! Contact Phil Orchard if you can help.

# ST. NICHOLAS PARISH CHURCH NOTTINGHAM

## STAFF

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Counsellor: (and Magazine Editor)	Joyce Huggett	Tel: 411383
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Diocesan Reader:	Tom Robinson	Tel: 45470
Treasurer:	Richard Watmough	Tel: 92-60682

## SUNDAY SERVICES AND WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

### Sunday

- 10.45 a.m. Morning Worship.  
Creche. Climbers. Explorers. Pathfinders.
- 5.20 p.m. Hospital Ward Service
- 6.30 p.m. Evening Worship.  
Coffee is served in Church after the Service

### Each week

- Parish Fellowship Group Studies and Prayer
- Worship Workshop Thursdays 7.30 p.m. Lower Lounge
- Mid-week Lunch Wednesdays 1.00 - 2.00 p.m. Lower Lounge

### Fortnightly

- Area Link Groups Wednesdays and Thursdays 8.00 p.m.
- Women's Fellowship Mondays 2.30 p.m.
- Coffee Club Wednesdays 10.15 a.m.