

Mustard Seed

ST. THOMAS' CHURCH, BRAMPTON AND ST. PETER'S CHURCH, HOLYMOORSIDE

Free throughout the parish

December 2002



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Have we got good news for you!

Well, have we? There doesn't seem to be that much around. Sure enough, politicians and advertisers are always talking about it. But that's just spin. They are in it for what they can get, aren't they?

So what are Christians trying to sell at Christmas? What is there for us (Christian or not) in the birth of this little Jewish boy, in a stable but out of wedlock?

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. What did this baby grow into? A travelling preacher man. A healer who had a particularly sticky end and was said to have come back to life. That's not a unique story.

But what is it about this story that convinced Jesus' followers, who used to sit and eat breakfast with him, that he was God made man?

If God, who can so often seem remote, huge and beyond understanding, can come that close to us, **THAT MUST BE GOOD NEWS.**

Millions of Christians worldwide will celebrate this good news this Christmas. Why not join them and find out what this little boy did when he grew up.

Christmas Services will be held at:

St Thomas', Chatsworth Road

Sunday 22nd December

6.30 pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve

5.00 pm All Age Carol Service

7.00 pm All Age Carol Service

Christmas Day

11.00 am All Age Holy Communion

St Peter's, Holymoorside

Sunday 22nd December

6.00 pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve

11.00 pm Holy Communion

Christmas Day

11.00 am Holy Communion

MUSTARD SEED

MUSTARD SEED is your local church saying, "we want to keep in touch with all who live in our community". It is delivered free throughout the parish. Mustard seeds are proverbially tiny things which can grow and grow. We trust that something worthwhile will grow out of this MUSTARD SEED. Please read on.....

In this issue:

- A local couple tell us why Christmas is good news for them
- The new parish centre - plans afoot
- A survey of 2500 people in the parish

Local couple, Phil and Rachel Michell, tell us why Christmas is "good news"

Phil and Rachel are members of St Thomas' and are among a growing number of people in their twenties and thirties who are convinced there is more to the Christmas story than meets the eye.

"We moved to Chesterfield two years ago. It was like coming home because we first met at Cliff College in Calver, and with my family living in Sheffield this seemed the obvious place for us to settle once we had decided to move away from London", says Rachel.

"Finding St Thomas' Church was important to us", she continues, "as we were looking for a church which is friendly with a modern outlook. St Thomas' has a real family feel about it, and we have found people there our own age and with similar interests."



Phil and Rachel Michell

Continued ...

GOOD NEWS – Plans go forward for new Parish Centre for Brampton

Something is happening down at St Thomas' on Chatsworth Road – strange markings have appeared on the ground in the churchyard and behind the main church building. There are meetings taking place and drawings being displayed – whatever is going on? Mustard Seed interviewed Graham Brown, who heads up the St Thomas' Development Project Team at the Church to find out more.....

Graham Brown - "Here at St Thomas' we believe we have an asset in our land and our buildings which we want to share with the community of Brampton. We already share what we have as much as we can with local groups and community based organisations, but we need to bring the buildings up to scratch for the demands of the 21st century, and that means a whole new and exciting project for all of us," says Graham.

Mustard Seed - What are you planning to build and where?

Graham Brown - "Essentially we are looking for a solution to our needs by providing:

- a new, more visible entrance from Chatsworth Road
- a single level building on the ground floor
- between 3 and 6 new rooms depending on what we want to use them for, including opening up two rooms in the tower
- a new office / reception desk and waiting area
- significantly more toilet facilities for all ages, and for people with disabilities
- extended car parking including designated spaces near the rear entrance for those who need them, and not forgetting space for bicycles
- storage space at ground level and in the roof space
- a modern kitchen with the capacity to cater for groups of all sizes

The location for much of this work is on the site of the current meeting room and the temporary portacabins, and further to the north of the site."

Mustard Seed – how soon will all this be happening?

Graham Brown – "Well, it won't be over night that's for sure! This is a complex project with lots of people and organisations that need to be

consulted, and applying for community grants takes months of hard work. We are hoping the work may start in 2003 and be completed by 2004."

Mustard Seed – so how can people in the local community find out more, and get involved if they want to?

Graham Brown – "we would really like to hear what people think about the need for this centre, and the types of activities they would like to see taking place more locally. We have included a short questionnaire within Mustard Seed and it would be great to have a good response to this survey."

Mustard Seed – thank you Graham. Finally, is there anything else you and the members of St Thomas' want to say about this project?

Graham Brown – "yes. For us this project is a working out of our vision statement, which is to "Share the love of Jesus". We believe God is with us in this project and that through it we will be able to be even more accessible and relevant to anyone locally who wants to do business with God."

Local couple continued

Phil, a local driving instructor, takes up the story; "we also wanted to be able to find out more about the Bible and Christian teaching on issues facing all of us in an increasingly uncertain world."

The Michell's are no strangers to uncertainty and change, having moved house, changed jobs, and also changed careers. They have also had their share of sadness and have suffered ill health. Through all of this though they maintain that their faith in God has not wavered. As Rachel puts it

"being a Christian does not make us immune from life's ups and downs, but for me I know I can trust God no matter what. I have experienced a peace and joy that I have not known before, and also a sense of security in knowing God".

Rachel's use of the words such as "joy" and "peace", both "christmassy" words, mean that for her and Phil, they are planning to enjoy Christmas time as the annual reminder of God's immense love for people. As Phil says,

"I get more and more frustrated with the commercialism of Christmas and how little it has to offer, when compared with how much God has to offer us! The story of Christmas, of God becoming a baby is just so amazing, you couldn't make it up! God, the creator, becomes part of His creation so that we can relate to Him in a new way."

And relating to God is something Phil and Rachel say they both experience in their daily life, at home and at work. Helped by doing an Alpha course, they are now involved in helping to run it with others from St Thomas', so that local people are able to explore different aspects of the Christian faith for themselves.

Both Phil and Rachel are sure that they can know and trust Jesus Christ, the one after whom Christmas is named.

This certainty in such an uncertain world is what makes Christmas such "good news" for them.

PARISH SURVEY- WINTER 2002

YOUR VIEWS ARE SOUGHT ON THE PLANS FOR
A NEW PARISH CENTRE HERE IN BRAMPTON...

About this survey: as a resident in the parish you will hopefully be aware of St Thomas' on Chatsworth Road. Some of you may also have visited us - perhaps for a christening or wedding, or maybe, in more distressing times, for a funeral. Whatever your connection with us, we would value your views on the plans described in this issue of Mustard Seed for a new Parish Centre in our community.

You can answer the survey questions here and return your answers to the Church office, or you can log on to our website at www.st-thomas-brampton.org and complete the survey on-line whichever suits you best.

We think this will take just a few minutes of your time - please take time out during this busy pre-Christmas period to share your views with us. Thank you.

About Brampton:

Our research into where people in Brampton can currently meet has found the following are available:

- meeting room at St Thomas'
- community centre at Storrs Road
- school halls at Westfield Infants, Old Hall Juniors and Brookfield Community School

Please indicate whether you agree, disagree or can't comment on the following statements:

- There are not enough facilities for community activities in Brampton

Agree Can't comment Disagree

About different groups in our community:

Our contacts within the community lead us to believe there is demand for more space for people to meet, on a regular basis and also for occasional gatherings.

Please indicate whether you agree, disagree or can't comment on the following statements:

- There is a demand for more space in the Brampton area where people can meet on occasions

Agree Can't comment Disagree

- Groups I know of which are looking for a meeting place are:

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There are a number of groups already using the facilities at St Thomas'. Which of the following are you aware of (please tick those you know)

- Brampton Living History Society
- Communion & Cuppa
- Cosmic Club (for children in school yrs 3-6)
- St Thomas' Nursery
- St Thomas' Parents & Tots Group
- The Saints After School Club
- The Towns' Women's Guild
- Walton & West Community Forum

About you

In developing the plans for a Parish Centre, we are concerned to be meeting the needs of individuals as well as groups from the local area.

Which of the following issues are of interest if they could be provided via the new Parish Centre:

- Healthy living
- Spiritual awareness
- Family / parenting skills
- World of work job search; career development
- Life skills - balancing home and work
- Stress management
- Children's parties
- Catering for luncheons, receptions etc
- Other

Do you have any other comments to make about the plans from the brief amount of information we have been able to share?

It will help us when we come to look at everyone's replies if you could circle your gender and your age range thank you.

Are you Female Male

Age under 16 17 - 25
 26 - 35 36 - 45
 45 - 55 55+

Thank you please return this section to St Thomas' Church Office, Chatsworth Road, Brampton, S40 3AW

Or
 Log-on to www.st-thomas-brampton.org and complete the survey on -line

ENQUIRIES

General enquiries should be made to St Thomas' office, either by calling (it is at the opposite end from the tower) or Tel: 558461 or e-mail: stthomas@ukonline.co.uk Web site: www.st-thomas-brampton.org

Enquiries about weddings or baptisms should be made on a Monday evening between 6:30 pm and 7:15 pm.

GOOD NEWS - there is a church near you which is open all year, and where you can find out more about Jesus and what happened to him after he left the stable. We offer a range of different services and activities for all ages - why not sample one or more of the activities on offer

St Thomas' Brampton

Sundays

- 9.00am **Holy Communion**
(with Children's groups, fairly traditional)
- 11.00am **Service of the Word**
(with Children's groups, fairly contemporary)
- 6.30pm **Holy Communion or Evening Prayer**
(Youth Service 2nd Sunday)

Tuesdays

- 6 - 7pm **Cosmic Club** (during term time)
(for children in school years 3-6)

Last **Thursday** of the month

- 2.00pm **Communion and Cuppa**

St Peter's Holymoorside

Sundays

- 9.30am **Holy Communion** (with Sunday Club)
- 6.00pm **Evening Prayer**

Tuesdays

- 9.00am **Holy Communion**

1st **Wednesday** of the month

- 10.00am **Communion and Coffee**
(joint service held by the three village churches)

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Please complete this and return it to: The Secretary, St Thomas' Office, Chatsworth Rd., Chesterfield S40 3AW

- I am interested in the **Alpha Course**. Please let me have details.
- I would like to receive **Ploughshare**, the bi-monthly Parish magazine, £2.50 per year, introductory copy free.
- I would like a **visit** by someone on behalf of the church.

Name:

Address:.....

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